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Charity
In Judaism.

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of
Isaac L. Rypins.

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Charity in Judaism.

Introduction.

The common object of all religion is moral development. This development has a deeper meaning and a wider significance than that implied in the term mental development. The last generally means the rebuilding of man's intellectual activities, the widening of his sense perceptions and the broadening of his mental field of vision. It has little or nothing in common with that

part of man's being called the heart, the emotions, the affections, - the soul. Religion on the contrary directs her first and primary aim at the heart, the centre of man's existence, and branching forth thence in pure simplicity, embraces the entire being of man, mental as well as spiritual in all its complexity. Thus religion obtains a wider range of influence and a greater extent of activity.

Hence religion in a wider sense means both moral and mental development, the upbuilding

of the activities of the mind as well as those of the soul; the unfolding of man's nature in all its fullness and the evolving of his entire being in perfect harmony of mind and soul.

The means whereby this complex development of religion is accomplished is two-fold, subjective and objective, or as the Rabbis classified this division,

דברים לבן אדם

דברים לבן אדם

"Duties of man towards God and duties of man towards man."

This twofold classification, as may readily be seen, arises from the fact

that religion finds her standard in God, the all good and perfect Being whom she ever endeavors to emulate and whose perfection of nature she ever tries in some degree to attain. This forms the subjective part of religion, or in the language of the Rabbin שְׁמַרְתָּ לְפָנָיו (לְבָבוֹ) וְעָשִׂיתָ
 "Duties of man towards God."

This prime division of religion is necessarily confined in its extent. It is rather the theoretic part of religion and in its very nature is limited. For, however clear our conception of God or however

plain ~~our~~ knowledge of Him, His manifestations and attributes, it is withal but a conception, a knowledge of a subjective nature and hence its narrow range.

The second division of religion however viz: the objective part of it or in the language of the Rabbis

חובות הבריות (Duties of man towards man) is by virtue of its practical nature of a wider extent. It embraces all moral duties of man ^{and} has its culminating point in man's effort to imitate, to become like his Maker. Hence its most

fitting designation of Righteousness.
Right doing.

But the term of Righteousness, even in its figurative sense, viz: Charity, does not cover all the exigencies of the second prime division of religion. In this sense it applies to the needy and poor and the living only, but has no concern with the fortunately situated or with the dead. The meaning of the objective part of religion is however, farther reaching. It means the upright, the righteous conduct towards all men, rich or poor, living

or dead, and hence arises the fit subdivision of the objective part of religion into $\gamma\beta$ charity, and $\delta\beta\alpha\gamma$ acts of grace or beneficence. The active practice of both of these subdivisions of the objective part of religion, combined with the subjective part viz: the true knowledge of God, forms religion complete in its widest sense and deepest significance.

Having thus set forth the ~~five~~ divisions of religion in its broader sense, in their logical connection ^{and} meaning, a few words on the main

body of this thesis, I think, will now not come amiss.

I now glance at the title, so that this work is concerned, primarily with the objective part of religion, viz: the duties of man towards man. Its aim is to illustrate in a compact and logical form the wide field this branch of religion covered in Judaism. It formed one of the main pillars of our pure religion in the past and has become the main stay of our sacred faith in the present.

The method pursued is strictly

Rabbinical and intends to convey a faint idea of the peculiar methods of interpretation and the exactness in the provision of law for every circumstance of the Rabbi. The division of the subject into chapters and the arrangement of these chapters in this form was mainly done for clearness and for what the writer considered logical order. There was no attempt made at originality, as the writer means to set forth the Rabbinical treatment of the subject and not his own.

With these few words of explanation, may it be hoped that this work, meagre and crude as it is, will add some little to the vast store-house of Rabbinical thought and precept on pure and sweet charity.

The Author.

Part First
Chapter I.
Poverty.

Denotation.—According to the many^{various} varied Biblical applications of the poor we understand by the term poverty not only that condition of the needy who are deprived of all means, but also even a helpless^{and} want suffering state of man. The expression "poverty" denotes the antithesis of "riches", the deficiency in the fulfilling of one's own desires, the restrictiveness in the satisfying of one's needs; the utter helplessnessⁱⁿ any undertaking.

Charges.— It was a sharp sighted glance into the social condition of man when Nozairism, despite the laws for common ^{III} distribution of property; or the restitution

1) Prov 18, 23; 19, 4.

ii) Ibid.

III 471. 26, 54, 55; 53, 54.

of lands ^{and} possessions to their original owners in the Jubilee year; for the mutual relations between the several members of families etc gave voice to the expression: "כִּי לֹא יִמָּוֶת בְּיָדְךָ הָאֲדָמָה" For the needy shall not be wanting in the land.² The cause for this phenomenon is clearly stated in the Bible

The seven appellations given to the poor (עָנִי, עָשֹׂר, עֲלֵי, אֶלֶם, אֶלְמָנָה, יָתוֹם, זָרָה) and their distinct categories viz: Widows, orphans, strangers, Levites and poor; also the admonitions in the later Biblical writings against the causes that lead to poverty, characterised both the cause of poverty as being two fold, (a) objective & (b) subjective. To the first belong the defects which obtain in the institutions of the state for the help of the poor; objective calamities that

¹ Ibid.

² 5. 16. 15, 11.

force themselves upon the state *vs.* scarcity; *vs.* immigration of strangers that are without a livelihood, invasion of the enemy &c. The second class embraces such moral weaknesses as of themselves bring on poverty. These are Indolence², Idleness³, Sluggishness⁴, Disdain of every instruction⁵, Unlawful acquisition⁶, great Avarice⁷, Discontentment⁸, Licentiousness⁹, Rancination¹⁰, Intoxication¹¹, Lethargy¹² and the like.

Means for alleviation of poverty.—The means for overthrowing poverty are not to overthrow the order of the state; to dissolve all social conditions^{and} to subvert everything that exists, in order to build up

(1) Ruth 1, 1; 1 M. IV, 9; XLII, 1; XLIII, 1; 2) Nehemiah 5, 18;

3) Prov. XXVIII, 19; 4) Prov. VI, 1; 5) Prov. I, 1; 6) Prov. XXVIII, 18;

6) Ps. CXXII, 11, 37; 7) Prov. VI, 24; 8) Sir. XXIV, 32;

9) Prov. XXIV, 1; 10) Ibid.; 11) Ibid.; 12) Prov. VI, 9-11;

society anew, where every impoverishment
 will in future be obviated, because the
 utter annihilation of the state of affairs
 can never be attained. The expression,
 "For the needy shall never be wanting
 in the land" plainly indicates the ab-
 solute impossibility of perfect equality
 of all in social relations; ^{and} at the
 same time confirms the law of in-
 equality, as it obtains in human so-
 ciety. Not society's utter annihilation
 but a proper subordination of class
 distinctions is what ought to be traced.
 The Bible gives a simple but decided rem-
 edy for this which needs but application
 to see its proof. As the causes for pov-
 erty are two fold, viz: objective causes
 pressing from without upon man; ^{and}
 subjective causes brought about by man
 alone, so are also the means for over-

coming poverty given from two points
of view. a) Means for those that come
from without for assistance ^{and b)} of those
that are themselves in need. Since the
chapter on Provision for the Poor (Chap. II) treats
of the first, we are here to consider the
last only.

In enumerating the causes of poverty
its condition is clear ^{and} certainly pointed
out in the admonition "not to look for
salvation from without but to find it
by active work." This self help is (a) the
assuming of more assiduous activity ^{and}
b) the clarifying of our customary views
^{and} the strengthening of our moral conduct.
To the first belong an absolute abandon-
ment of "Indolence", Idleness, Lethargy ^{and}
on the other hand an active applica-

1) Prov. II, 11; II, 4;

2) Prov. XXVIII, 19;

3) Prov. II, 7-11; Ecclesiastes II, 8.

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tion to real work. The second extends to
 a leaving off of everything that is sin-
 ful, to wit: the depriving of others²; the
 unjust gain³; squandering⁴; drunkenness⁵;
 the disdaining of every instruction⁶; the
 improvement of one's disposition and
 conduct as to fear God, to practice virtue⁷;
 to appropriate contentment⁸; not to pursue
 association with the rich⁹; not to mur-
 mur against God in time of misfor-
 tune¹⁰; to consider poverty as the road
 to honor¹¹ etc.

A further development of these teachings is
 given in the second. The Biblical denota-
 tion of poverty, as a condition of human

1) Prov. I, 4; XII, 24; 2) Prov. 21, 16; Ps. CXX, 9; LXXXV, 16;

3) Ps. CIO, 11; LXXXV, 16; 4) Sir. XII, 1; 5) I bid.

6) Prov. XII, 18; 7, Job. IX, 22; 8) Prov. XII, 7;

9) Sir. XIII, 24; IV, 22; 10) Job. I, 21

11) Ps. CXXI, 7-8; 51, 1, 18;

want of every ^{and} any kind, obtains alms
 "Talmud. The expression ^{וְלִצְלוֹן} "alms; charity"
 is not considered to mean in the Tal-
 mud the extorted gift to the beggar, but
 every anticipated assistance for the allevi-
 ation of distress. The difference between
 the beggar and the distressed consists
 in that the former can obtain
 aid from the public distributions of
 charity, while the latter is dependent
 on private assistance alone. In this
 sense are the seven Biblical appella-
 tions commended and explained.

יָד יָדוּרָה i. e. according to the natural mean-
 ing of the word.

יָד יָדוּרָה i. e. he who longs for much but
 can obtain nothing.

יָד יָדוּרָה i. e. he who is forever in doubt
 of his assistance.

1. Mid. Rabba 3. 17. acc. to Mathew 23. 12. ^{מִן הַבַּיִת}

- 1) "impoverished" i.e. he who has lost his goods.
- 2) "he who has come down in life", i.e. he who has lost ^{all} his possessions.²
- 3) "humbled" i.e. he who must humble himself ^{more} everything.³
- 4) "oppressed" i.e. he who sees many things but may not enjoy any himself.⁴

The conception of poverty will be better understood after the exposition of the following maxim. Not the want for external goods, but rather the accustomed means of livelihood and the sense of pain arising from the interruption of the same are given as the scale of charity. One may feel himself poor when he is in need of bread, another when he is in want

- 1) Ibid. הן הן הן
- 2) Ibid. הן הן הן הן הן הן
- 3) Ibid. הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן
- 4) Ibid. הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן הן

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of a garment; still another when he can
no longer have the horse which he had
to drive.

For the following three life is no
life: ~~the~~ who is forever expecting something
from the table of another, he who is
domineered over by his wife ^{and} he who
is visited by affliction and sorrow.²
Four are considered as dead: the poor,
the blind, the childless ^{and} the leper.³ Fur-
ther he who has to wait for a meal from
another, the world is darkness to him,
as it is said: "He wandereth abroad
for bread, saying, Where is it? Truly
the day of darkness is ready at his hand."
He who is in need of the help of man
is as if he were exposed to a double
death, as it is said: "Thou causest the

1) Kethuroth 67; Nedarium 40.

2) Beza 32.

3) Nedarium 6; Aboda Sora 4;

4) Job 22, 23, Beza 32.

man to ride over our heads, we have
come between fire ^{and} water". Further "There is
nothing in the world more painful than
poverty; it is the severest of all suffering,
if you place all the suffering of the
world into one side of a balance ^{and} pov-
erty in the other side, it is certain that
poverty will outweigh the other suf-
fering." This allegory is used to explain
Ps. 36, 31: "Take heed, regard not iniquity for
thyself, lest thou be chosen rather than affliction."
Sympathy is especially bestowed on one who
loses his possessions, through any acci-
dent or misfortune. "The poor that are cast out
into the world" are the illustrious
men who have lost their possessions.*

The causes of poverty are, according to the

- 1) Ps. LXXV. 12; Berachoth 6; 2) Midrash Raba
- 2. No. 31. 3) Isaiah LXXX. 7;
- 4) Midrash Raba 3. No. 34.

above Biblical statements more closely determined. The first cause of poverty is the want of knowledge and circumspection. "Who is poor? He who is poor in learning." There is no other poverty than that of learning.¹

Other causes are found in the weakness of man. There is none poor but the crafty wicked.² I never saw a layman spending his resources in a field, says a Rabbi of the Chasidim, nor a fox pursuing his cunning "thou art his support." Of these that are created for the service of man have their support, should we not receive our support without suffering want? Truly so, but the end of my deeds has increased it, according to the saying: "Our sins have caused it."³

1) Midarim 40;

2) Sanhedrin, 76;

3) Kiddushim 82;

4) Kiddushim, 82.

The statement of the two opposite extremes
 viz. extravagant liberality ^{and} insatiable
 need; also refinement which is irritating
 on the one hand ^{and} wild rudeness
 on the other are given as sources of po-
 verty. There is a teaching that says: The days of
 the poor that are sensitive, compass-
 ionate ^{and} choleric are forever sad. Another
 teaching: "The end of all who pursue after
 enjoyment is poverty." "He who builds
 large houses becomes poor." "Pride is a
 sign of poverty."

Just as we recognize in the above
 the overstraining of one's energies as the
 cause of poverty, thus also on the other
 hand the suppressions of one's powers
 may also lead to a similar result.
 We hear concerning this: "Impoverishment

1) Baba Batha 147. 2) Sankhadin 70.

3) Sota 11; 4) Sutta 29.

follows penny¹. Four things deprive man of his possessions: keeping back the wages of the day labour; denying the wage of the hireling; throwing one's own burden upon others ^{and} haughty conduct towards men². Three things lead to poverty: violation of the rules of decency; neglect of cleanliness and mutual disregard for one another in married life³. How to overcome poverty - Also here the Talmud adheres closely to the Biblical ground form *לֹא יִפְתָּוּ בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים* 4. 5. "For the needy will not be wanting in the land". An overthrow of everything that exists, a dissolution of every social condition or state^{and} a beginning of a new construction will offer no guarantee for the absence of poverty in the future. The teaching is plainly given in the following narrative:

1) Bala Kama 92. 2) Lucca 29. 3) Sabbath 82.

R. Elizer lived in extreme poverty so that very often he was in want of the most common necessities of life. At one time he became sick and was bedded. He had nothing more nor better in his house than a piece of garlic, whereby he refreshed himself after an attack of his weakness. Immediately thereon a pleasant sleep overtook him. His friends called on him to enquire of his well-being. They entered the room and were surprised at the peculiar actions of their friend. Now he wept in his sleep ^{and} now he laughed. When he awoke they asked him the reason for his peculiar conduct in his sleep. "He saw you weep ^{and} laugh." "I had a strange dream", answered he, "God to whom I complained of my want stood by me and when I finally asked: How long O, God, will I suffer? I heard an

answer 'My son, do you desire that because of your poverty I should destroy this world ^{and} create it anew in order to chance to give you a better lot? Lord, you cried out, 'Does it require so much ^{and} perhaps Thou wilt hearken to this: Will it I have lived longer than I should live?' You have come the unhesitating reply. Then I decline my request. These were my last words and I awoke."

Self help to set aside all evil ^{and} to create new sources of gain aided by benevolent mutual assistance of man, forms the ground basis for the alleviation of poverty. In particular are the following given for the alleviation of poverty: Work, ²love of neighbor, mutual assistance⁴, contentment⁵, not to boast of gain⁶, resignation

1) Isaiah 24. 2) Ibid 24. 3) Ibid 25.

4) Ibid. 5) Sanhedrin 20. 6) Ibid.

to one's fate, with the consideration that poverty is perhaps the road to spiritual wealth² etc. These statements are made clearer by enumerating the experience of many. R. Akiva married the daughter of the rich Halba of Jerusalem, contrary to the will of her father who on that account disinherited her. He lived with her in extreme poverty, so much so that if they did not gather for themselves straw, they had nothing to lie upon. R. Akiva, used to denial, would have endured that condition for a long time, but he perceived that this distress was very painful to his wife who was not accustomed to poverty. Often did he say unto her consolingly, "If I were rich, I would purchase for you a golden *menorah*" (an ornament for ladies with a picture of Jerusalem.) Once as they were sitting

1) Nedarim 50;

2) Taanith 28.

confidentially together, a man opened the door of their house and asked for some straw for his wife, who had given birth to a child and had nothing to lie upon. R. Akiva shared his straw with the man and said to his wife who stood looking on "Do you see that we are not the poorest yet."

Poverty is considered a wise gift of Providence to which we are to accommodate ourselves. R. Joshua b. Levi was traveling to Rome

there with a remarkable experience. He saw in a certain place monuments covered with the finest curtains. But not far from that place sat a man who had scarcely a few patches with which to cover his nakedness. He thought over this strange affair and found this solution. To the statues abounding in wealth, he addressed

1) Taanith 25.

the following words: "Thy goodness, O God, is like the mountains of the Lord". But to the poor he said: "Thy Righteousness is like the deep abyss²."

The teachings of the Rabbins concerning self help are as follows: Perform every kind of work and do not say, "I am a priest, a great man". "Every father ought to take care that his sons should learn a trade and let him place his trust in God as to poverty or wealth." In this teaching the Rabbins led the example for their people. The great teacher Hillel the first, is said to have worked daily⁴ and have spent his day wages half for his living and have for the door-keeper at the academy.⁵ A similar story is told of R. Akiva. (Abot de R. N. 6 + 10).

1) Ps. LXX. 7; 2) Ibid. Mid. Rabb. 116. 33.

3) Berachim 112; 4) Kiddushim 81; 5) Yoma 35.

R. Gamliel on visiting R. Yehoshua was surprised at the poverty of this great and wise man.

R. Yochanan b. and R. Simon b. Abba had

a wide reaching fame in their learning through their poverty viz: that they often did not even have bread to eat.²

R. Ushiya and R. Chananya supported themselves by making shoes.³

Concerning R. Chanina b. Dosa it was said that the world was upheld through his study, and yet he was so poor that he was in need of the very necessities of life.⁴

The greatest teachers pursued a trade in connection with the study of the Law.⁵

And especially did they apply themselves to farming.

Thus said Abaya to his disciples: "I say you do not come in Spring at the time of the cultivation, nor in Fall at the

gathering in of the fruit, that you

1) Berachoth 20.

2) Horajoth 10.

3) Pesachim 11.

4) Tannith 20.

may experience no want during the year. Rabba admitted his disciples R. Papa and R. Sana to his lectures only when they vowed to him that they had procured a piece of land for their support.²

Chapter II

Alms. 73

Conception and Precept of Alms as a handing over of a donation to the importunate suit or hoi, is not recognized in the Bible. Only do we find the expression and there it means the freely anticipated gift to the needy. It does not resemble the expression alms. Thus also the Bible has no expression for beggar and begging. The expression beggar is found in one place paraphrased by

1) Berachoth 17. 2) Toraioth 10. 3) Esther II, 22.

or ¹desires or seeker of bread" and in another place by ²!6! But both these citations indicate rare exceptions, generative of God's curse. The reason for this was not that the Bible did not desire such acts of beneficence, but because such acts were superseded by the laws for the care of the poor, or because the Bible did not wish acts of beneficence practiced under the degrading meaning of the word "alms". The expression ³ used in post Biblical times "alms giving" had a more comprehensive meaning. It meant "Righteousness", Right action, "the doing of right"⁴, or it had both meanings together, or any transaction from a sense of fairness, justness, reasonableness⁵.

1) Lev. 37, 25:

2) Ps. 109, 10.

3) 5 M. 24, 13; Isaiah 29, 40; Ps. 37, 7:

4) 2 Saml. 19, 29; Prov. 14, 34; Isaiah 32, 17:

5) Ps. 106, 3; 1 M. 18, 19; Jerem. 9, 23:

and at the same time expressed every act that is done out of Right and Love. From this nobler point of view the giving to the poor was considered and commanded as an act that is a mean between the extremes of Right and Love. This idea is closely joined to the penetrative Biblical idea of the dependence of the poor upon God. The administering of the land²; the advancement of its growth, or increase through the timely and seasonable rains³; the blessing of the profit or grain⁴; the enjoyment of the family and festival joys⁵ are often promised with the condition to deliver part of the blessings to the needy. Accordingly the possession of the Israelites was conditional and charity was in a manner a right or obligation to the

1) Compare 2. Mo. 22, 20-26; 5. Mo. 24, 10-22.

2) 5. Mo. 26, 15-16; 15, 15:

3) Malachi 3, 10:

4) 5. Mo. 15, 10:

5) 5. Mo. 16, 14-15

poor. Thus ²³ "doing right" is an act, mean-
 between Right ^{and} Love, a conception closely
 united with the spirit of Scriptures, which
 could not find its expression in the word
 alms. This estimation of beneficence was
 so deep rooted in the life of the Jewish
 people that the mention of the covetously
 obtusiveness ^{and} of the outstretched hand of
 the poor very seldom occurs in the
 Bible ^{and} where it does occur it is an
 striking example of the direct furnish-
 ment of God (Ps. 109, 10, while Ps. 37, 5 is called
 the non-furnishment of that love and bless-
 ing of God which protects the children of
 the righteous); while almost at all times we
 speak of the anticipating helping hand
 of the one that gives freely. "Open thine
and ²"; "Do not shut thine hand"; "He stretcheth

1) Ps. 109, 10 & Ps. 37, 25 are the only 2 places in the Bible

2) 5. Mc. 15, 8;

3) 5. Mc. 16, 7.

out her hand to the poor, she reacheth forth her hand to the needy: "Deal thy bread to the hungry and bring the poor that are cast out into thy house," are urgent cries of warning of the Jewish breast. Since by the term poverty we understand every condition of human want according to the many and varied Biblical designations of the word, צדקה, which is used for giving of charity does not mean simply the alms given into the hand of the beggar, but also every aid to the needy.

The Actuating Motives. - Not the sordid selfishness but the profound upward gaze to God and the unobtrusive exaltation of man are given as the actuating motives for the distribution of alms in a narrower sense and for acts of beneficence in a wider sense. The reference to God as the Father

1) Prov. 31, 20

2) Isaiah 58, 7.

of the forsaken; the command for the love of neighbor; The ~~raising~~ ^{raising} of the poor brothers as also the reminder, "God hears the poor when he cries to Him, for He is gracious;" are the warnings that accompany the laws of giving alms. Aside from the above ground that the Israelite is to consider his possession and his joys with the understanding to hand over part of the gifts of the same to the poor, works of his are recommended in later Biblical writings. These acts are considered as a sign of reverence to God,² as if these gifts were given to Him himself;³ a sign of thankful recognition of God's favor towards us;⁴ The beautiful expression of Isaiah concerning this is very befitting here: "Open the snares of wickedness, undo the bands of

1) 2. Mo. 32, 26;

2) Isaiah 58, 7;

3) Prov. 9, 17.

4) Ibid. 3, 27.

of the yokes and let the oppressed go free
and break asunder every yoke. Distribute
thy bread to the hungry, bring the afflicted
poor into thy house and where thou seest
the naked, clothe him and hide not thyself
from thine own flesh!

Chapter III

What is Charity, and To Whom Shall It
be given? Who shall give it?

1 Assistance in Charity shall embrace all
that appertains to aiding and comforting
the suffering both those that have come
down in life from affluent circum-
stances as well as those who are needy.
Begin with. In particular the laws
prescribe not to refuse a loan to the poor;

1) Isaiah 58, 1-8;

2) Lev. 23, 19; 24, 22, 25; 15, 15, 12.

not to give him that loan on interest and usury¹; to accept a pledge in a most delicate manner²; in the Sabbatical year not to collect any debts³ and not to refuse a loan to the needy in that year; to allow the needy to take part in our meals of joy and festivity⁴ etc.

Certainly do the ^{words} records of Job define charity.

"⁵ For the needy was I a father, to the blind eyes, to the lame, feet, and the cause which I knew not I searched out."⁵

The Talmud goes still further and designates the different classes of the poor according to which charity is to act. These are (1) he who feels himself neglected by all; (2) he who has lost all his possessions; (3) he who has become poor through misfortune; (4) he who cannot procure that which he

1) Ibid. 2) 2 M. 23, 26: 3) 5 M. 15, 1.

4) 5 M. 12, 12; 14, 22; 16, 10: 5) Job 29, 14, 15:

like and as he likes; ^{or} he who feels himself humbled before all etc.

In general does the Talmud teach that charity shall extend to the full needs of the poor as much as he needs, to the full extent of his indigence i.e. he who is in need of bread shall receive bread, and he who needs money, money. In like manner the unmarried should be assisted to marry; provision should be made in the case of man for fitting up a house, in the case of woman for a dowry. Another expression of the Talmud points even to the supply of the accustomed comforts of the one in need, "As much as he needs" i.e. even the horse to drive and the servant to take care of him, if he in time of his former good condition made use of such luxuries. See

1) Sifris.

example, it is pointed to Hillel I, who gave a horse and a servant to a poor man of a higher class for daily use and who one day when he could get no servant for him walked in person before him for three miles. The highest degree of charity is when the poor receive assistance better in kind than that to which they were accustomed.

The Agada narrates: "When Job complainingly brought before Divine Providence his lamentable days, saying: 'Had I not fed the hungry? did I not give drink to the thirsty? did I eat my bread alone? did no orphan take part of it?' A voice of God answered, 'Grieved at you were, but far not like father Abraham; you remained at home and the weary wandering way-farers had to look to you. Am you

your bread who was in the habit of eating bread: meat to the one accustomed to it &c. Abraham surpassed you in that he did not wait for his guests but went in search after them; to him accustomed to eat bread he gave also meat ^{and} to the one in the habit of eating meat he placed even wine etc.¹

Methods of Charity. Concerning this we have in the Pentateuch and in the later books of Sacred Scriptures, happy and telling intimations which would have the practice of charity to be observed freely², at the proper time³ without delay⁴, with freedom of heart and with friendly eye, without reproach or rebuke with full pity and sympathy⁵. Far more beautiful are these teachings in the Talmud. Accord-

1) Aboth de R. Nathan, Chapt. 7. 2) 5 M. 15, 7-10.

3) Lev. 3, 28.

4) Ibid.

5) 5 M. 15, 7-10

ing to the Talmud acts of love should be secret, so as not to put the recipient to shame; most acceptable when the one that gives does not know the one that takes: or when both the giver and taker find out nothing about each other. "For God judges the deeds, whether they are good or bad" is said concerning him who gives charity openly. "He who gives charity publicly is a sinner, but he who distributes secretly is greater than Moses. 'I have myself the trouble' said R. Jannai to a man who distributed charity publicly, 'for it would by far have been better had you given nothing than put it to put to shame the poor.' The Talmud cites many examples from the lives of its Rabbins illustrating this teaching. R. Akiva used to distribute charity

1) Koheleth 12, 14

in the following way. Dressed as a poor man he placed himself among the poor and thus unobserved would let fall a handkerchief in which there was tied up money, but paid attention that no unworthy one should pick it up. Mar Akba had a poor neighbor at whose door he daily placed four pias. At one time the poor man determined to gain knowledge of his benefactor. It was dark when the latter accompanied by his wife approached the home of the poor man for the purpose of placing his daily allowance at the usual place. Hardly had they left his door when the poor man noticing it, ran after them. Mar Akba, fearing lest he be recognized jumped into a hot water urn and hid himself. When people afterwards inquired about it, he said "Better far

is it to throw ~~oneself~~ into a hot oven
 to put a fellow man to shame?

To give money as a loan to the poor, which
 may be returned after he has improved
 his condition is recommended as a
 common way of assisting. Praiseworthy
 is it to assist the needy by advancing
 him money, but praiseworthier still is
 it, to take him into one's business.

Maimonides also sets forth degrees of
 charity. The first degree is doing charity
 by giving presents, giving loans and
 employment thus to save the impover-
 ished from taking alms.

- 2° That giver and taker shall not know each
 other; 3° when the giver only knows he takes;
- 4° when the poor ascertains the distributor;
- 5° One anticipates the needy with the gift;
- 6° When the need of the poor is obtained only

1) Ketuboth 67. 2) Baba Metzia 107.

through force; 7° Where the desire of the poor is not entirely satisfied, but the little that is given him, is given him with friendly words; 8° Where the giving is accompanied with insult.

III The Persons to whom Distribution is to be made — According to the Biblical conception of poverty by which every condition of human need is to be understood, not only those are to be considered poor who are actually in want but also those who need assistance. To the first class belong widows, orphans, strangers, levites ^{and the}

To the second class belong the needy, the fallen, the embarrassed, the sick, the impoverished and the like. Under this class also no Israelites are included. The Talmud adheres strictly to the Biblical command

1) Maimon. l. Matnot Aniam 10)

but in addition sets forth the following
 laws. The maintenance of one's ~~own~~ life
 takes precedence to the support of the
 life of the poor; the support of parents
 to that of children; the support of
 children precedes that of the poor of the
 family; of the poor of the family, precedes
 that of the poor of the city and the sup-
 port of the poor of the city precedes
 that of strangers. Further, preference
 should be given to the maintenance of
 life rather than to clothing; to the re-
 deem of the impoverished than to the
 maintenance of life and of clothing.

To give alms to a woman is more
 commendable than to a man.² Preference in
 charity is otherwise strictly warned against
 by the following text saying: 'He who disre-
 gards the one and does not allow the

¹ 1. ore dea 2-1.

² Ibid.

other, but helps a third - , commits a robbery on the poor."

IV Who should be Charitable? - In the Mosaic law no special individuals are mentioned for that purpose since the law knows ~~that~~ no exceptions and binds all to the practice of charity. It is only in the Targumim that we find the instruction that all should give from their possession, even the poorest who takes 'alms'.² In general the command that ~~the~~ rich shall distribute much the poor little but all shall give in sincerity of heart was taught and understood.³ The Talmud also enforces the practice of charity upon all even upon the poor who are dependent upon charity.⁴ According to law every

1) Mid. Raba 3. 16. 33.

2) Lereh.

3) Tobid 4. 9.

4) Gittin 7.

could be forced to give alms to his
 poor relatives! The Talmudic injunctions
 concerning the degree of wealth of the
 giver in relation to the duty of charity
 are of a later origin. According
 to the same the rich is to sup-
 port the poor entirely if his means
 allow it. If that be not exactly
 possible, he is to give $\frac{1}{5}$ of his pos-
 sessions in the first year, and in
 the second year $\frac{1}{5}$ of his gain.
 More recent is the injunction to give
 $\frac{1}{2}$ of one's gain yearly ^{and} still more recent
 to give it at a stroke. From this last in-
 junction not even the poorest is ex-
 cepted. These injunctions are accompanied
 by the following Biblical reference. "He
 that is kind in deeds of charity, like
 a coat of arms" i.e. just as in the
 1) Petukoth 50 2) Baba Bathra 9. 3) p. 59, 7.

coat of arms every scale is a part of the whole, so does in charity every gift ~~aid~~ in making up the entire work of good and noble acts. Again, like texture are our acts of charity,² just as to a web belongs every thread, so is every deed made one by the distribution of alms.³

In general they had that beautiful saying "Be compassionate and those who are hungry, clothe the naked, and of them who are said, say ye to the righteous that at noon - some will with-
 4) Those teachings were held in high esteem through the exemplary deeds in life and conduct of the ancient Patria, of whose excellent distinction, see

1) Baba Bathra 10.

2) Isaiah 48, 5.

3) Baba Bathra 10, from R. Chanina.

4) Isaiah 5, 10.

in the practice of charity the Talmud dis-
 cusses. In Midrash Rabba, 3rd 34, it is
 related that R. Tarphon gave at one time
 a large sum of money to his friend
 R. Eliva to purchase a piece of land
 from the income of which they both
 were to live and to pursue the study
 of the law. But the scribes to whom
 appeared more profitable to support
 the learned poor took the money
 and distributed it among the poor who
 of extraordinary application and
 diligence had distinguished themselves
 in learning. One day R. Tarphon asked
 R. Eliva if he had carried out his
 proposition. "By all means" came the
 ready reply. "Well then, show me the
 purchased land." "You shall see that
 directly. Immediately he brought
 his colleague the learned poor

among whom he had distributed that
 sum of money ^{and} pointing to them he said,
 "This is the acre which I have bought."
 R. Farphon who interpreted these words
 to mean that his friend sold the acre
 that he had bought ^{to} those people
 asked for the Probit. To that R. Akiva
 replied "The Probit, my friend, you will
 find with King David, who says, "He who
 gives to the needy, his virtue stands
 eternally."

Eliezer of Bartosze was in the habit
 of going over to the collectors of charity
 when they would meet him, whatever
 money he would have about him: since
 he did not belong to the financially
 able class the collectors often avoided him.
 One day while he was going along with
 a considerable sum to purchase the

11 Ps. 112, 6.

outfit for his daughter's wedding he
 met the charity collectors. They avoided
 him as usual, but he ran after them
 and begged them to accept his share
 towards the prepared collection. He was
 engaged, replied they, in getting up an
 outfit for a betrothed couple. "By Heaven"
 cried he, "that takes preference to my
 daughter" ^{and} gave the whole sum with
 the exception of a few pence which he
 retained for himself. With this paltry
 sum he purchased wheat and gained
 through repeated exchange a consider-
 able profit. He said his wife, "what
 God does for you." "By Heaven" he answered,
 "this blessing should be to you a sancti-
 mary of which you are to enjoy only
 as much as any other poor man."

Mar Ukba had in his neighborhood

1) Tamarth 24.

a poor man, to whom he was in the habit of giving on the day before the Day of Atonement 400 pes. One day he sent this sum with his son, who surprised, returned and related to his father how his charity goes to the hands of the unworthy. "I saw" reported the son the man with his family seated at a table board where they all were drinking wine." Well," answered the father, "now that that poor man at one time had better days. I often did wonder how he makes ends meet with this little sum. Take to him, also this sum ^{and} in the future double the alms for him."

1) Kethuboth 67.

Chapter IV

Providing for the Poor: Taking Care of
the Poor: *לפי צרכיהם* : also Collecting of tithes.

To provide publicly for the poor in order to alleviate their wants, was a custom from the earliest times among the Jews. The origin of this custom constitutes an important part in the laws of Moses. The wise prophecy 'For the needy will not be wanting in the land' as an unavoidable consequence in the ordering of every state, necessitates certain provisions which, if they could be removed entirely the condition of those suffering from want, at least should be made as comfortable as possible. These provisions were interpreted especially in favor of the distribution of Charity to the individual. On harvest not to cut off

1) Deut. 15, 11.

the low corners of the corn-fields, but to
 leave them to the poor; not to pick
 up the accidentally forgotten sheaf;²
 to make free for the stranger, widow and
 orphan the gleanings from the fields, the
 vine and olive;³ in the sabbath year not
 to gather in the produce of the after growth
 from the corn hills but to leave it free;⁴
 to grant free the plucking of the fields of
 the olive branch and of the vine; to
 pasture the hungry;⁵ to give a tithe after
 the harvest to the poor.⁶

It is on these accounts that the
 wandering beggar is no longer rare here
 the distribution of the Hebrew state to the
 nations in the Bible. The Hebrew
 there are now of necessity measures in
 the provision for the poor sprang up in the
 newly self organized communities. I have

1) 3 M. 19, 21, 22, 23; 2) Ibid. 3) Ruth 2, 2.

4) 3 M. 25. 5) 5 M. 23, 24 6) 5 M. 14, 28

and how they obtained through ordinary collections and distributions of alms. Already when the destruction was it customary to lay up in a separate room of the temple the "old cell of the silent" alms for those who were ashamed to ask, because of their noble descent. Later after the dissolution of the state when the greater part of the people became impoverished through the plundering and oppression of the enemy it was decided that two collections should be instituted for the extremely poor. The one was to bring together food for daily distribution and the other to make weekly collections and distributions of money contributions among the higher class of the poor.

The one was called the alms of the dish ^{and} the other that of the box' ^{and}
dish ^{and} ^{and} the other that of the box' ^{and}
 1) Ibid

To guard these, three men were usually appointed, who were distinguished for their uprightness, learning and piety, and possessed the confidence of the entire community. Harmin'gly did the Rabbi say, "One would not give a single penny into the charity box if a man like R. Chanina b. P. is not placed over it." These men had to see to it that a donor should not be put to shame by the forwardness of others, but also that no one should keep aloof from giving. They also possessed the power to see that no one as well as to compel one to contribute. Every one had to contribute to the collections, to the ^{מקדש} if one remained 30 days in the same place ^{and} to it after 3 months. From this the

1) Ibid.

2) Baba Bathra 10.

3) Ibid. 8b.

4) Taanit 24.

4) Ibid.

5) Ibid.

practitioners were considered free.

By the first collection there had to be present three men and by the second often only two.² During the collecting everything that might lead to suspicion had to be carefully avoided. The collectors were not allowed to separate from one another during the time of collection that they should not accidentally turn into their pockets the money which they might have collected, but that they should put everything directly into the ^{bag}.³ The distribution of these alms took place directly after the collection.⁴ This distribution usually took place in the presence of three men, namely the directors of the alms ^{and of} every class of poor people.

1) Ibid: Sanhedrin 26b. 2) Ibid

3) Baba Bathra 10.

4) Yore Deia 25b.

ceived a portion in a ratio proportioned to the circumstances of each individual class. It is said that the poor of the heathen should be given as well as the poor of the Jew, if it be to be given.

The handing over of the charity to the poor should be done in as delicate a way as possible in the manner of a loan, so as not to make the recipient feel ashamed. On the other hand caution should be taken against the fraud of those who through cunning or through external appearances excite sympathy. Yet this tempting must not go too far so that the fear for fraud should not destroy the love for deeds of charity. "Come, let us thank the deceivers," cried R. Eliezer to

1) Ibid. 2) Gitten 61. 3) Ketuboth 67.

4) Tuv Yore & Sea 25b.

5) Ketuboth 67. Baba Bathra 8.

his wife, who complained of the luxury in the house of one who lived on and was supported by charity; for without him we would be daily committing sin, for as you should not give them anything they would cry unto the Eternal ^{And} you shall not sin.

Collectors of Charity. Since the Bible made sufficient provision for the protection of the poor and had no need for the collecting of charity, we find nothing therein concerning charity collectors. Only after the dissolution of the Jewish state ^{and} the confiscation of its property, when the Biblical provisions for the poor became impracticable ^{and} other measures had to take their place we find mention made of charity collectors.

This new step for the care of the poor consisted of two separate collections,

a daily collection of various kinds of food which was called ^{אג} ~~אג~~ ^{אג} a weekly collection consisting of money contributions called ^{אג} ~~אג~~ ^{אג}. In every city men were appointed to preside over these charity contributions.² The qualifications for this position were honesty, uprightness and prudence, and general confidence.³ He who did not possess these qualifications was not entrusted with charity. As a pattern it is often referred to R. Chanina ben who had distinguished himself for piety and who carried the matter so far that he distributed among the poor a sum of his own money with which charity money had been accidentally mixed.⁴ This thankless office for

1) Baba Bathra 8: 1a. 2) Ibid. 3) Ibid. 4) Ibid. 5) Ibid.

2) Ibid.

3) Baba Bathra 10: 4) Ibid.

came the more burdensome by the duties connected therewith. Hence the admonition: "Greater is the reward of him through whom charity is dealt out, than of the one who deals out."

Considerable care and attention had to be paid in the collecting of alms, as of whom to ask, so that the one asked should not from a sense of honor give his very last¹. This care and attention is to be observed to a degree still greater, in this distribution viz: to whom to give and whom to refuse; and how much each one should receive so that neither suspicion nor misapprehension nor actual deception should occur. The great and thankless burden of that office is aptly pointed out by one oft repeated saying: My lot is the

1) Baba Bathra 17.

2) Ibid 10. Taanith 24.

collectors of charity, but not of the distributors of the same. And yet the actual reward of the office is estimated the higher by its very depreciation. The officer or collector of charity is not to act proud and imperious, but to attend to all charitable duties in a manner open and free from all suspicion. Strict account had to be rendered by the collectors but this was left to their own consciences, and they were not restricted, to wit: The collectors were not considered free from giving charity. Their duty was based upon the well known teaching of Mat 23. There are four classes, taught the Rabbin, among those who give charity: 1) The who is willing to give but does not wish that others should give,

1) Before Lev. 257:

2) Ibid.

hath an envious eye towards others; he who likes to see others give but will himself not give, hath an evil eye towards himself; he who is willing to give and that others should also give acts piously; he who will not give and likes not that others should give acts wickedly!

The burden of this office was further made acceptable by empowering its officials with certain authority. They had the sole right of collecting or giving permission to collect charity¹; they alone could dispose of the money², and in the case of private donations where the donor did not stipulate the manner in which his money should be distributed, they have the power of distribution. They also decided all doubtful cases.

1) Arab. 5, 16.

2) Pers. You Sea 2567.

3) Ibid.

4) Ibid.

Chapter V The Distribution of Alms.

The distribution of alms is recommended in the broadest sense of beneficence as a service of love towards God, an uplifting of man to deeds that are God-like. In this estimate there is contained at the same time, the further development of the Biblical teaching which also improves charity as an act towards God,¹ while in the expression "to become like God" the more perfect form of that virtue is indicated. He who gives presents to the poor gives loans to God.² This expression also serves in the Talmud for one admonition of beneficence.³

וְיָקָרָה לְךָ לֵאמֹר אֶתְּנָה לְפָנָיו וְיָקָרָה לְךָ לֵאמֹר אֶתְּנָה לְפָנָיו

1) Prov. 19, 17.

2) Ibid. 3) Baba Bathra 8.

4) Isaiah 5, 16.

And the God of hosts is magnified
 by judgment ^{and} the God of holiness is
 sanctified in righteousness (charity). This
 verse gives expression to two teachings,
 viz: He who hides his eyes from char-
 ity, ^{אפס}, is a worshiper of idols.
 But he who gives charity participates
 in the heavenly presence ^{אפס}.² While
 on the one hand charity is held
 in prominence as a service toward
 God, it receives on the other hand
 great distinction in its ennobling
 meaning as a work that is God
 like. After the Eternal your God you
 shall walk³ In what way? asks the
 Talmud He is merciful, gracious
 and long suffering so shall you be. As
 God clothes the naked, is present at

1) Aethuboth 61. 2) Baba Bathra 11.

3) 5016, 13, 15.

the sick bed, consoles the mourning,
 & shall you do. The three expressions
 merciful, gracious and long suffering
 found their complement among the
 ancient teachers. R. Johanan b. Saccai
 taught "Charity is greater than the
 bringing of sacrifice, for sin offerings
 could atone for Israel only, while
 charity atones for the sins of the
 Gentiles." R. Assi urged, "Great is Char-
 ity for it outweighs all the Command-
 ments."

These teachings entered so much into
 the life of the Jewish people that we
 meet on all hands during the
 entire Talmudic period a contin-
 uous repetition of them in the varied
 expressions of its teachers. There is

1) Sota 13.

2) Baba Bathra 10.

3) Ibid 9.

no bet^{ter} sowing than that of charity.
 "Only for the sake of charity does God
 support the world." He who is chari-
 table fills the world with God's
 grace. "The worth of fasting consists
 in giving charity." On the fast day
 when the distribution of alms is
 suspended, a crime of murder is
 committed. "No learned man ought
 to live in a city where charity
 is not practiced." These and simi-
 lar sayings were oft repeated
 words of warning of Judaism.

In the practice of this virtue
 there is recognized a second sanctu-
 ary upon the altar of which are
 to be brought the sacrifices, the

1) Avoda Sora 5.

2) Berachoth 7.

3) Succa 49.

4) Berachoth 6.

5) Sanhedrin 35.

6) Ibid 17.

deeds. ^{of} love. Thus said R. Yochanan b. Saccai
to his disciples who were weeping after
the destruction of the sacred altar. My
sons, do not grieve, we have yet left
places for offering which equal the de-
stroyed ones viz: Charity; for it is said,
Love do I desire but no sacrifice; the
recognition of God rather than burnt
offerings. The following story strikingly
reaches this teaching. Monobaz, a
proselyte to Judaism and a friend
of Adiabaz had his treasures ^{and}
those of his father distributed among
the people in time of famine. His
brothers reproached him for it. "How
fathers" said they, increased the treas-
ures, but you not only do not add
anything to them, but spend them."
To this he answered, "Alas I heap up treas-

1) Hosea 6, 7. Abot de R. Nathan Chap. 4.

use, but with this distinction. They ac-
 cumulated them here below; I store
 mine up there above; they placed them
 upon unsafe ground, but I hide them
 where no human hand can reach;
 what they saved brought them no
 profit; what I save brings me profits
 manifold. They preserved gold and
 silver, I rescue human life; they heaped
 up treasures for this world; I treasure
 them up for the future world, ac-
 cording to the Scriptural saying, "Your
 acts of kindness will walk before
 you ^{and} the glory of the Eternal will
 follow you." The Biblical ground for the
 obligation of the distribution of Char-
 ity is extended in the Talmud to
 every possession and gain. "A tenth
 part shall be given to the poor of every

gain." In the third century this obligation was extended even to the gain to be acquired in the future. "Give a tenth part in order that you may become rich" was the explanation of the law for tithes which R. Lachish gave his brother-in-law, R. Johanan. A further extension of this teaching is the reference to man's dependence upon God. Anticipate the poor with business, as R. Chiza his wife, in order that your children may be anticipated with the same, for Poverty is like a sphere, which runs through the entire world and touches every one.² Rich and poor meet each other for God alone created them both,³ i. e. if the poor receives his gift of the rich, God brightens the eyes of both; but if he

¹ Jer. LXXII 249. ² Sabbath 107.

³ Prov. 22, 2.

depart empty handed from the rich, a voice crieth out "He who created the rich can make them poor and he who brought them to poverty can bestow riches upon them." This teaching is further made prominent by the view that even Nature owes her maintenance to mutual assistance. The day, it is held, lends to the night, the night to the day; the moon lends to the stars, the stars to the moon; light lends to the sun, the sun to light; wisdom lends to the understanding, the understanding to wisdom; the heavens lend to the earth; the earth to the heavens and so on.²

1) Mid. Rabba 3. 16. 34

2) Mid. Rabba 2. 16. 31.

Chapter VII

The Taking of Alms.

Only towards the close of the second commonwealth was it decided upon the manner and purposes of taking charity and this was most probably done in consequence of the great excess in poverty. Begging is considered in the Bible as a curse which befalls the children of the godless; in contradistinction to the children of the righteous who are not exposed to that dire curse.¹ Earnest admonition against the importunateness for charity we first find in the Apocrypha. Then the stinging sense of the recipient is considered the ground for dissuasion so that one ought to rather prefer

¹ Ps. 9, 10. Job 20, 10.

² Ps. 37, 25.

death to begging' and the life of one who longs for the strange table can in no wise be regarded with honor.² In general the saying goes 'Activity is better than begging'.³ The Talmud lays particular stress on the moral ground as an admonition against taking charity in unnecessary cases. Its teachings concerning this are as follows: "Make your Sabbath with reference to your needs, to a week-day and do not become a burden to other people."⁴ Accomodate yourself to the work, however unaccustomed you may be to it, take your pay and pay not, Am I not a priest, a great man?⁵ He who takes charity without needing it, does not die until he becomes poor and is in need of the same; but he who is dependent upon

¹) Sir. 40, 29. ³) Sir. 10, 20. ²) Ibid. 30.

⁴) Pirachim 112; Baba Bacia 110. ⁵) Ibid.

charity and refuses it, merits in old age to distribute charity, for concerning him it is said, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose hope is in the Lord." More pointed warning is given against deception^{and} trickery in order to bube the external appearance, "He who is neither lame nor blind, but makes himself appear so, does not die until he becomes so or lame; for it is said:

וְהַיִּתְּתֶם לְפָנָיו פְּדֻתָּיִם. Righteousness, righteousness thou shalt pursue, in order that thou mayest live."

In general the following rules obtained as a standard of the estimation of the wealth or worth of charity receivers. He who has sufficient

1) Jerem. 17. 17. Pes. Chapt. 8 Mishna 9.

2) 5, 16, 16, 20.

Part Second

65.

Chapter I Acts of Love or Beneficence.

Denotation—This term differs from
charity, which is akin to it in that it
does not signify like $\gamma\lambda\alpha$ an act out
of sympathy, a deed out of excited
feeling of pain for the poor and
suffering, but it means noble actions
performed from a sense of love. Hence
 $\gamma\lambda\alpha$ as the final expression of the purest
humanity obtains morally on a higher plane
of virtue than the act of charity which is
a sense of just imperative in us, ^{and is for the}
the act of man's homage, placing to his Maker.

The truth of this teaching is brought out with greater faith in the Talmud where it is taught that it gains superior rank to charity in three respects. Charity obtains only by means of money while Gemiloth Chesed finds its expression in personal efforts as well as in money. Acts of charity are performed towards the poor only, while Gemiloth Chesed obtains for the rich as well as the poor. Finally acts of charity are performed towards the living only, while Gemiloth Chesed may be performed towards the dead as well as towards the living. Still further teachings of the Talmud may be cited to show the great stress laid on the acts of *Gemiloth Chesed*.

למען יתן לך ה' אלהיך

למען יתן לך ה' אלהיך

"The love of beneficence" means Gemiloth
Chasadim.

הוא המצוה להעניק חסד לזולתו

Charity is rewarded only so far as it
contains the element of beneficence in it.²

הוא המצוה להעניק חסד לזולתו

"He who performs works of love ought to
pursue the poor in order to do the
good for him."³

Simon the Just taught

הוא המצוה להעניק חסד לזולתו

"The world rests
upon three things: upon the moral law,
upon the worship of God and upon
acts of beneficence." The Rabbins further
considered Gemiloth Chasadim an act pleas-
ing to God, the reward of which is re-
served for the life to come, while its
benefits are given here below for useful
enjoyment.⁵ Raba, one of the most promi-

1) Succah 49, b. 2) Ibid. 3) Sabbath 154.

4) Aboth 1, 2. 5) Psa 1, 1.

ment tea" is at the academy of San-
 patita gave public voice to the following
 sentiment: "The sons of Israel, the worthy
 followers of the divinely selected Abraham
 must make themselves known by three
 distinct and prominent traits of char-
 acter, viz: by tender sympathy with
 those suffering, by moral sense of shame
 and by active ~~marked~~ acts of kindness."

Commandment — The law for the further
 performance of Gemiloth Chesed is includ-
 ed in the laws for the love of neighbor
 and stranger; for the poor and unprotected;
 for the fugitive slave and the like.
 Needs of love are emphatically set
 forth in Scripture as acts worthy of
 imitation. For I have shown thee love?
 "Thus we shall act in love towards Thee"

1) Jeremiah 79 a.

2) Joshua 2, 12.

3) Ibid. v. 14; Judges 1, 2 f.

"And Thou hast performed acts of love towards the Israelites: His father has shown me love." I sing of the works of love of the Eternal.¹

The laws and teachings of Gemiloth Chasodim have obtained a further estimate and presentation in the expression of the Talmudic writings.

לֹא יָבִין אִישׁ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים אִם לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה חֲסִדִּים וְעֲשֵׂת לֵב
 "Charity and works of love outweigh all the commandments of the Law." "He who busies himself with the Law and does not practice works of love is practically without a God."²

לֹא יָבִין אִישׁ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים אִם לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה חֲסִדִּים וְעֲשֵׂת לֵב
 "He who denies the necessity for the practice of deeds of love, it is as if he denied the existence of God." R. Simlai says

1) 1 Samuel 10, 6.

2) Ibid. 10, 2.

3) Psalm 89, 2.

4) Jerusalemi Pes. 1, 15 b.

5) Avot de R. Nathan 16 b.

6) Mid. Rab. to Shema.

of the command of Gamiloth Ched in the following words: 'Our sacred Bible begins with ^{Aug} ~~gson~~ ^{ending} ends with the same. The narrative of the first apparel of our primitive parents which is an expression of a work of love is found upon its first page; while the story of the sepulture of Moses our teacher, which is no less a strong expression of love is on its last page. These two acts of love the sacred book ascribes to the Most High alone, the more pointedly to bring before our hearts ^{and} minds the necessity of practicing the same among our fellow-men.'

1) Lota 14, a.

Chapter II Regulations for Gemiloth Chasodim in General.

There are common acts of kindness which we ought to perform at all times to our fellow-man. There are others again which have reference only to certain states and conditions of human life. To the first belong that love and discreet relation toward all those whose acquaintance we cultivate ^{and} with whom we come in contact ^{and} towards those who belong to the circle of our family and business friends. To the second belong all such actions which clearly and undeniably show our fullest love ^{and} goodness viz: cheerful participation in the pleasant as well as the unpleasant.

and accidents which befall our fellow-
 beings. R. Yehuda b. Yeheskel calls him
 who is a faithful adherent to the Law
 of God and who feels himself called
 upon to consecrate his whole life to
 it Chasid, the truly pious. He should
 strive to conduct himself with perfect
 justice; he should be in all his
 actions that touch upon the rights
 of his fellow-man exceedingly careful,
 should weigh them all in the most
 sensitive scale of conscience; that no
 one should ever suffer through him
 even the slightest injury. Rabbins,
 also called Rab, placed the standard
 of the Chasid still higher. In addition
 to the above he said, he must further
 strictly observe all those teachings
 which the first teachers laid down
 in Mishna and which contains the ethics

the teachers of the Mishna as the dictate and guide for our manner of life and action. According to another version the real Israel shows himself by words of praise and benedictions by which he manifests that he unites with his heavenly transactions truly God fearing and holy thoughts.

From the above quoted passages of the Talmud, the later Rabbis derive corresponding rules of conduct for universal Gentile and Chared.

1st In business relations with his fellow man the Israelite should never insist upon the strict precise claims of justice, but he should be as lenient and as accommodating as circumstances will permit. In his work-

1) Bata Kama 30a.

ings and doings for others the sharp
 by drawn line of justice should not
 form the narrow and impassable
 barrier which would tend to confine
 his deeds of love, but that he should
 rather accomplish more than the law
 of justice prescribes. His whole living
 and striving should be particularly use-
 ful and comforting ^{and} that he should spe-
 cially guard against it, that no
 one should ever directly or indirect-
 ly sustain any injury through him.
 2nd The Oracle who exercises Lembo's
 Chacodim must work incessantly for
 the spiritual elevation and improvement
 and therefore he must industriously
 study the works of the ancient sages,
 which treat of morals and morality, so
 as to grow every day in virtue and wis-
 dom.

It is a part of the practice of Gemiloth Chasidim that one should ever possess the inward conviction of the unlimited goodness and love of God for His creatures; that his life and the life of his family might overflow with praise and benedictions of the Most High Being, who in His all wise providence cares so tenderly for us. He who carefully observes these doctrines ^{and} acts according to them, who never contradicts himself; with whom actions, thoughts and speech are in perfect harmony; who exercises love and kindness at all times, his whole life is the purest stamp of the most sincere Gemiloth Chasid!

1) Menoroth Hammar 230

Chapter III Regulations for Gemiloth Chasodim in Particular.

R. Chama son of R. Chanina taught: "The expression 'The Eternal thy God shall thee follow' cannot be taken in this literal sense but it must be understood in its figurative meaning. As God himself clothes the naked, so should we clothe the naked; as God visits the sick so should we visit the suffering and sick and prostrate brother: as God brings consolation to the sorrowing so should we seek to comfort the afflicted soul of the mourning brother with loving words of consolation: as God himself visited the grave of Joseph, so should we show the last honors to the remains of our fellow-man." Of these

Leta 14 a. Bala Metzia 80, v.

acts of benevolence, the first viz: the clothing of the naked belong to charity rather than to Gemiloth Chesed and hence shall not be treated of here. To the latter belongs the visiting of the sick ^{and} the burial of the dead. We shall therefore treat here in their order of the two special acts of Gemiloth Chesed, viz: the visiting of the sick ^{and} the burial of the dead.

Chapter IV

ענין ביקור חולים The Visiting of the Sick

At Time - The purpose of visiting the sick is soon told and the time of visiting is dependent upon the state or condition of the sickness.

Personal Attendance to the Sick - One of the dis-

While Mr. R. Aciba took sick and because
of the contagious nature of his sickness,
his fellow students felt reluctant in
coming on him. The noble teacher, however,
overcame that timidity, entered the
sick chamber and found the sick dis-
ciple in a most pitifully critical
condition. The sickness in itself was
not so bad, but the neglected condi-
tion of the sick youth, the deep
sorrow that surrounded him had made
the bad worse and had richly gen-
erated the germs of the disease. The
human teacher above all endeavored
to remove these harmful surround-
ings. He therefore had the room
where the patient lay thoroughly
cleaned and all the dirt and filth
removed. The patient soon after entire-
ly recovered. With great joy dishe-

without his innermost heartfelt ap-
 preciation for and his sincerest thanks
 to his savior and teacher in the
 following words: Rabbi, to your noble
 efforts and care alone, do I owe
 my life's recovery. R. Meir made
 use of the case in a public lecture
 in which he set forth the follow-
 ing assertion: "Whoever keeps himself
 aloof from visiting the sick commits
 indirectly a murder." R. Dimi
 taught concerning this: "Whoever visits
 his sick fellow man causes his re-
 covery and he who does not call
 on him, hastens his death."

Inasmuch as the first injunc-
 tion recognizes the needs of the sick
 one ought to seek to satisfy the
 same in order to accelerate his
 recovery. The second injunction on

the other hand implies that in as far as one does not concern himself with the suffering of his fellow-man he incurs blame upon himself if the sufferer dies through his indifference!

2nd. Relief should be brought to the sick by visiting friends. R. Akiba ben Hanina observes: One sixteenth part of all the pain and suffering of the patient is taken away by the visits of his friends and associates. While the lively and cheering conversation of the visiting friends causes the patient to forget his pains for the time being, on the other hand his spirits are quickened and his countenance brightens by their presence.² In order to ~~attain~~ attain this and only such just

1) Sederim 40 A.

2) Ibid. 39 B.

should be visited who actually derive pleasure from such visits, but in no wise should those be called upon who find themselves troubled or who cannot endure a lively conversation; since talking would be injurious to them and their fever would be heightened. If one wishes to know the conditions and needs of the sick in case of dangerous sickness, he should enter the ante chamber only, but not the sick chamber.

32. The visiting friends shall inspire the patient with hope and at the same time they should turn with the most ardent prayer to the Almighty Dealer in heaven for his recovery. Pinchas b. Chama explains the

1) Mishna Berachot 34a.

following verse: "The fury of a king is like the messenger of death, but a wise man will appease it." allegorically as follows: "If the King of all kings in his anger sends the angel of death in the shape of a severe sickness, the wise man, i. e. the pious, God fearing man can by prayer atone for him." His teaching recommends that he who has a member of his family afflicted on the sick bed, shall have a wise and pious man supplicate on the way for the sick one. Hence arose in ancient times the custom among the Jews that in case of sickness they went to the learned men, to ask their intercession with God. Afterwards there was introduced in all Jewish congregations the custom of

1) Prov. 6, 14.

2) Baba Kama 116a.

offering a special prayer (the well known
 Missherach) for the sick person with men-
 tion of his name!

Especially is this duty incumbent
 upon him who visits the sick, and
 only in so far as he carries out this
 duty, is his visit considered a
 work pleasing to God². Therefore the
 visits to the sick should not be
 made either in the earliest or in
 the latest hours of the day, be-
 cause in the early morning the
 patient usually feels easier and one
 might look upon the sickness
 as too unimportant to implore
 God's favor for the mitigation of the
 ailment. At night, on the contrary, the
 fever usually increases and one might

1) Darke Mosche to the Taz You Dea 335, 2.

2) Nachwunder.

consider the illness too dangerous
and the worst results inevitable
and hence prayer useless.

25. The visitor to the sick should pre-
pare the patient to become reconciled to
the inevitable end of all existence
as well as to induce him to leave
proper provision for his family. This must
however be done with the greatest deli-
cacy and care. The visiting friends
should spare no efforts in explain-
ing to the patient that the making
of a will with proper provision for
his family does not signify that he
must die but that he may still
live many years. The will is but a
worded expression of his earn-
est wish in the care of the dear
ones at his side and can have no
effect on life or death in itself. (See *Tracts* 328)

This argument should be fully illustrated by similar examples, where sick people had made their wills and yet recovered completely and lived for many years after that.

So it happened with the pious king Shiskia, to whom the prophet Isaiah announced in the name of God that he should prepare his final arrangements for his house; but who upon immediate obedience to the command turned in fervent prayer to God. His petition was granted and the Heavenly Father added fifteen more years to his life!

In like manner should the visiting friends use great caution in preparing the patient for the **confession** of his sins. By reminding the patient of the ne-

1) Berachoth 10a.

creity for confessing his sins before parting from this earthly pilgrimage; they should at the same time impress him with the fact that his confession need not necessarily be final. Repentance in itself is harmless and yet soul inspiring. Many have uttered their last prayer of confession and were ready to close their eyes in eternal sleep, yet have recovered and have felt bitter for the very confession which they had made.

Chapter V

Who Should Visit the Sick.

P. Joseph, teacher of the academy of Pampadita considers this act of kindness a duty.

1) Spachmonides a. a. L.

in command. The reason for the great
 stress that he lays upon this act of
 love may be due to the fact that he
 himself was a sickly man and of-
 ten experienced the pleasure of such
 visits. The Scriptural injunction: "Ac-
 quaint yourselves with the way in
 which you should go" he held to include
 the duty of visiting the sick. Samuel
 the physician boasted that he could
 cure all but three diseases. He
 speaks of the act of visiting the sick
 in the following strain: "He who takes
 upon himself the divine duty of vis-
 iting the sick need not apprehend
 the flames of hell after death and even
 in life his reward will be great.
 God will keep him from pain; honour
 and riches will be his in the

1) Baba Metziab 30b. 2) Ibid 113b.

midst of his friends who will ever
 desire his prosperity and never will
 he be misled by faithless compan-
 ions who may cause his destruct-
 ion. No one should try to avoid this
 duty and it is obligatory alike on the
 great and small to show this act
 of kindness to his fellow men.² There
 are circumstances however in which
 the nature of the sickness is to be
 considered before visiting should be
 ventured. But in the case of violent
 sickness friends should not stand
 back as prompt and energetic assist-
 ants may serve to oppose the
 spread of the disease.³ When Rabba
 took sick he sought to conceal it
 from his friends in order not to

1) Tedaaim 40a. 2) Ibid 39b.

3) Yerushalmi Sea 3.9.

cause excitement to himself and worry to his friends. But when on the following day he grew worse he no longer sought to conceal his misfortune from his friends, saying: "Even if my enemies should be pleased to hear of my misfortune, my friends will pray to God for my recovery!" In this respect the Rabbis of the Talmud drew no distinction between the Israelite and the non-Israelite. All men must be paid prompt attention in case of a dangerous sickness, in order the better to maintain a proper union of fraternal feeling among confessors of the various religions.² There can be little question as to whether persons of unfriendly feeling should visit each other in case

1) *Sederim* 40 A. 2) *Sittin* 61 a.

of sickness; yet two circumstances must be taken into account before such visits should be attempted; first, whether the sight of an enemy will not arouse in the patient an intense feeling that may bring on high fever and second, whether the temperament and culture of the patient are of a sufficiently fine fibre to bring on reconciliation and mutual good feeling.

Chapter VI Conditions to be observed toward the Sick.

It is an ancient teaching of our Rabbis that the ^{אֱלֹהִים} the divine presence mani-
 — 1) Youdica 335.

feet itself at the bed of the sick. This
 they held is evident from the fact that
 in the case of a patient burning
 with high fever although he abstains
 from food in some cases for many
 days, yet his life is not quenched.
 Hence they said that a feeling of solemn
 earnestness together with calm quiet
 should forever reign in the sick room.
 All who enter the sick chamber must
 feel permeated with a sense of the
 deepest humility. If the sick lies
 upon the floor, as is customary with
 the Orientals, the visitor shall not
 seat himself on the sofa or on the
 chair, but he shall sit down with
 veiled head, - a sign of earnest ven-
 eration with the Orientals, - in an at-
 titude of ~~lowly~~ ^{lowly} veneration feeling as if the
 divine majesty stood at the head of

the sick. Visits to the sick should not be of long duration. The visitor on entering the room should sit down beside the sick bed, pray to God for the recovery of the sick and then leave.² If the condition of the patient is favorable and one can allow himself a longer stay ^{and} even a conversation with the sick he must avoid everything that may make a disagreeable impression upon the patient, nor should he ever advise him of the death of a friend, nor should he lament over the dead in his presence. If one wishes to advise the patient concerning his last will or confession of sins he should avoid the presence of tender hearted women and young children who are likely to break forth in tears

1) Shaboth 12 b.

2) Hippocrades.

and lamentation, thus setting the patient in an undesirable state of mind.

The Duties of the Sick. - Although the Israelite should place his trust in God under all circumstances and in all the relations of life, yet it is his duty to use natural remedies in case of sickness, and every neglect of the same is a culpable offense, and to be regarded as an indirect murder. One must at times ask the help of a physician and comply strictly and promptly with his orders, since the intelligent physician and his remedies are regarded as instruments of divine providence, through which the desired restoration shall be accomplished. Nor shall the physician ever avoid his call of duty, but he

1) Jon Dea 337-338.

should rather give a share of his time to every one who asks for his help.¹

A child is guilty of the death of his parent if he intentionally inflicts a wound.² But if the son is a surgeon he is allowed to perform an operation for his parent in case of necessity. It is even his duty to do it if there is no other skillful physician at hand.³

Children are bound by duty to the strictest obedience to their parents, yet they must not allow the parents to enjoy what the physician has forbidden, or anything else which may prove harmful to him, even though the patient may positively demand it.⁴ Much less may any other dare to give

1) Baba Nama 55 a.

2) Ex. 21, 15.

3) Maimon. Hilchoth Mammrim 5, 6.

4) Ibid. 10.

to the patient certain articles of food or drink without the consent of the doctor, which articles may increase the evil!

Religious prohibitions, if they tend to hinder the recovery, have no binding power upon the patient, as it says in the *Thora* "And you shall keep my statutes and my ordinances, which if a man do, he shall live in them," - not however, the Rabbis add, to incur death.² When life is in danger one need pay no attention to the prohibitions of the divine law, which relate to the strictness of the Sabbath, the Day of Atonement, the Passover Feast, if they should prove the occasion of increasing the pain or if they should hinder the use of the medicines, &c. &c. The expression "danger of life" is not to be taken as though death must ensue.

1) *Baba Kama* 85 a.

2) *Goma* 85 b.

even the slightest addition to the illness which may take on the dimensions of 'danger of life'. It is commanded from the standpoint of religion which says, "You shall guard your life" to observe the decisions of the physician and not the strict law. Should the patient, through fear of transgressing a religious command not comply with the orders of the physician, he shall be compelled by force to take the medicine for such a scrupulousness cannot be called piety.

If the disease assumes such a form that there is no hope of recovery, but rather the final end is soon expected, it is the duty of every co-religionist to see to it, that the dying person, at the hour of parting

1) Orach Chajim 324 68.

should receive religious consolation ^{and}
 aid in a proper manner, that he
 do not feel himself alone and de-
 serted, but surrounded by his co-
 religionists, in order that he him-
 self acknowledge the confession of
 an Israelite or that he may hear
 it from the mouths of those a-
 bout him. The confession may offer
 to the stricken one the greatest
 comfort and peace. There are ex-
 amples innumerable where Israelites
 who had forsaken the faith of
 their fathers at the last hour re-
 kindled with struggling vigor
 their adopted belief and with the
 words of belief impressed upon them
 in their childhood. "Hear, O Israel" &c.
 upon their lips breathed forth their last
 earthly sigh.

The Talmud narrates that when father Jacob beheld his twelve sons surrounding his death bed, he asked them with trembling voice whether they really bore in their heart the One Only God and whether none of them entertained a false belief. Thereupon the twelve sons, the heads of the tribes of our divinely chosen nation cried out, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Eternal is One!" The old dying father, contented and at peace with himself, in a whispering tone answered, "Praised be the name of the glory of His kingdom forever ^{and ever}."

1) Pirachim 56a.

These words embracing the fundamental
 truth of the sacred law revealed on Mt.
 Sinai, should be heard at the death
 bed of every Israelite; they should form
 the final greeting which the remain-
 ing co. religionists should direct with
 intense fervor of heart to the soul de-
 parting from their midst and as-
 cending to the Father of all. These are
 the words with which the parting
 brother, entering into the kingdom of
 the Blessed should be equipped to form
 for him the consecrated bond of firm-
 in. there in heaven as they united
 him to the holy band of Israel's ex-

man here on earth.

Chapter VII Sepulture.

מקום קבורה apart from its literal meaning, the accompanying of the dead to his final resting place may be taken in a broader sense to mean attending to burial in general. In this sense it is understood in the Beraita which is incorporated in the daily prayers of the old prayer books. Scriptures command indulgent attention even to the body of a criminal.

1) E. N. 2, 23.

The Rabbis of the Talmud maintain that the non obedience to this command is a direct insult to God. The greatness ^{and} wisdom of the Creator is most wonderfully manifested in the anatomical construction of the human body; hence the ignominious treatment of it, even when dead would be an offence to the Deity! From this command they further conclude the affirmative. Since it is commanded, they maintain, to honour the dead body of a criminal, how much more ought proper attention and treatment to be given to the re-

1) Sanhedrin 46b.

name of a man who has led a
worthy life.

Every action relative to burial, our tra-
ditions called a meritorious work, a true
service of love. Because in such an act
there can be no personal interest, ^{time}
there can be no hope of thankful re-
cognition and compensation from the
dead. Hence arose the custom in Israel
that men of piety and integrity and
who possessed the love and esteem of
their fellow men buried themselves with the
interment of the dead.

בטח יום ה' יצאנו מן המצרים
"Better is the day of

1) Mid. Rab. 1. 10. 97.

death than the day of birth 'the Mid-rach explains: When one enters upon life who can determine his worth; but when he dies and leaves a good name, all his brethren hasten to take part in his interment to show him the last honors, to proclaim him by his praiseworthy deeds.

When the body of R. Jehuda I was borne to its last resting place, the Rabbis publicly proclaimed that even the priests, the right descendants of Aaron, who are not to defile their purity by contact with the dead may out of reverence for

1) Tanchuma 2 M

the celebrated teacher and prince in Israel,
 busy themselves with his burial. The same
 distinction was conferred upon his uncle
 R. Yehuda^{II} who was equally worthy ^{and}
~~from~~ whose funeral the priests were
 with difficulty withheld from attending.

Bathing ^{and} Clothing the Dead.— In older
 times reverence for the dead was carried
 so far that a corpse was clothed in
 the most costly garments. This entailed
 upon the relatives of the deceased a
 burden so heavy that very often people
 of the middle and poorer class
 left the dead body of their relative^s

1) Yerushalmi Berachoth.

public care and expense. To prevent this
exorbitant practice the wealthy Rabbon Sam-
uel who stood in high esteem among
his people gave an order in his last
will that his body be covered with
plain white linen. This example found
immediate imitation on all hands so
that at a later period the necessary mat-
erial for the clothing of the dead did
not amount to more than a she.

The bathing and dressing of the
dead is already found in Talmud
Jerushalmi, but the combing of the
hair appears to be of a later origin
of the time of the Gaonim. Simplic

the dress, was also the coffin of the dead and it is to the praise of the Israelites that they always lived in this respect the utmost simplicity, and the rich enjoyed no preference over the poor.

Funerals.—Here also all ostentation is to be avoided and especially ought it to be guarded against that the poor should not be put to shame by the rich. No one is allowed to absent himself from a funeral when the procession is passing by him and even the study of the law may be interrupted for that purpose. (Megillah 27, a.)

But if the student does not see the funeral procession he may continue his studies and need not concern himself with the funeral.

R. Abahu sent his son Chanania to Tiberias to pursue learning. The son, however, instead of continuing his studies spent much time in attending to funerals. When the father heard of this he wrote to his sons: "Hav I sent you from Gama to Tiberias because of a lack of funerals?" Already in Lydin was it decided that the theoretical study of the law shall precede the practical execution thereof.

Yerushalmi Chagiga 1:7.

Under no circumstances, however, shall the instruction of the school children be disturbed and the school master must ever continue in the fulfilment of his duty, since the instruction of the children must never be disturbed, even though the construction of the holy Temple is thereby hindered.¹ The fall-bearers, however, since they are occupied in a holy work need not attend to the daily prayers.²

At every funeral those present ought to conduct themselves in a respectful and attentive manner. Even

1) Yore Dea 36¹.

2) Berachoth 3.¹

those who do not follow the cortege should rise from their seats when it passes ~~and~~ if it be not out of reverence for the dead, it should be done out of respect to the living who are at the same time engaged in the work of humanity!

The pall bearers must observe proper order in the discharge of their duty. When the patriarch Jacob lay on his death bed, after he had blessed his sons who stood around him ^{and} after he had admonished them to lead a God fearing life, he summoned his pall bearers and said to them: 'If you bear

1) You Dea 26'

my body, you must conduct yourself
 with respect and you must observe
 the following order around the coffin;
 Yehuda, ^{and} Reuben towards the
 East, Reuben, ^{and} Simon & Gad towards the
 South, Ephraim, Menasseh ^{and} Benjamin
 towards the West, ^{and} Dan, Asher and
 Naphtali towards the North. Joseph shall
 not act as full bearer; he is of
 kingly rank and his dignity deserves
 special consideration. No shall Levi bear
 upon his shoulders the bier, since
 he shall one day be a servant of
the Lord.

1) Raba 4.16.2.

Solemnities for the Dead - Proper celebrations in honor to the dead were already in vogue in Israel from the most ancient Biblical times, as the Bible records concerning the death of the sons of Aaron the high-priest. "Shall your brethren the whole house of Israel weep for the burning which the Lord has kindled."

When Achaz the king of Israel died, the Talmud narrates, there went before his bier an army of thirty six thousand men all of whom by signs of mourning upon their shoulders

1) 3K 10, 6.

presented an imposing expression of
their sorrow. As regards to the honors
shown to the pious king Chiskia,
two Rabbis differ. R. Nathan is of the
opinion that holy meetings were
held and that since the pious king
had earned for himself great merit
by promulgating the word of God, it
was a deserved mark of respect
that the youths who studied the
Torah should during that time sit
at the grave day and night and
inquire into the word of God contin-
ually. R. Nechemiah on the other hand,
believed that the solemnities for king

Chiskia consisted of a scroll of the law placed upon the bier and those who followed it exclaimed: 'He who now lies upon this bier truly and righteously held what is written in the holy books of the law that lies next to him!'

Other celebrations in honor of the dead who while living pursued the study of the law were the well known ^{וְדָוָה}. The body of the deceased teacher was carried to the place where he used to proclaim the word of God. There the Bishop be-

1) Baba Kama 17, a.

gan and continued until the graveyard was reached. To be present and to take part in the burial of an honorable and respected person is considered a meritorious act of love from which one ought never to withdraw except when engaged in some important occupation.

All these celebrations in honor of the dead, could however not take place if the deceased had, strictly forbidden them while still alive, since every one ought certainly to be granted the privilege of giving orders pleasing to himself con-

ceiving his own funeral ^{and} no one
can deny that the first sign of
respect that should be shown to the
dead is to regard his last will
with profound respect ^{and} to execute
the same in strict obedience.

Finis