

If your brother becomes impoverished and his means falter in your proximity, you shall strengthen him (25:35)

Rashi says, do not wait until he has fallen and must be picked up. It is difficult to raise up someone who is down -- completely. Rather, one should support him, trying to catch him when he is faltering. Give him sustenance; lend him a helping hand, give him the courage to continue. **Horav E. M. Shach, Shlita**, comments that *chesed*, kindness, begins with understanding and forethought. We should look around and study the plight of those around us, and with an intelligent eye try to see what it is our friend needs and how we can be of assistance. First we look, then think, and afterwards act. Our acts of *chesed* should be the result of "seeing" and "thinking", not simply acting. One who thinks before he acts has a more clear appreciation of his act of kindness.

Horav Schach explains that this is the reason we find the word "vayaar", and he saw; regarding Avraham *Avinu's* noticing the three "wayfarers", repeated twice. First Avraham saw three men, then he saw once again and ran to greet them. Avraham did not act hastily - he saw, it registered in his mind, and he acted. His act of *chesed* was not a spontaneous or impulsive act. It was well thought out and planned.

This is the meaning of Chazals' dictum, "He who closes his eyes from charity". One who does not see does not give. The reason/excuse he has for not helping is that because he did not see, he did not know about it, etc. Obviously, if one wears blinders or shelters himself from exposure to other people's *tzaros*, problems, he will be unaware.

How many of us can say that we do not look away when we see a poor, dirty man in need, or a child that is physically or mentally challenged. We think that if we do not look it will go away. Unfortunately, the only thing that will go away is our opportunity to perform a deed of kindness, to help another person in need.