

From the assembly of Bnei Yisrael, he shall take two he-goats for a sin-offering. (16:5)

Actually, only one of the he-goats was used as a sin-offering. The other one was sent into the wilderness to Azazel. Why does the Torah refer to them both as a *chata*? *Horav Zev Weinberger, zl (Shemen HaTov)*, explains that both he-goats were selected (almost) simultaneously, with a requirement that their appearances resemble one another. At first, they were both potentially a sin-offering. Ultimately, only one “makes it,” because the other one was selected to be a *Korban l’Azazel*. A powerful lesson to be derived herein. We see that it is not one’s direct personal achievements that carry weight, but even something or someone whom he inspired, whose life’s trajectory was altered due to his influence: the organization that was forever changed due to his involvement and impact – this, too, is viewed as his achievement, even though he had not personally directly established it.

This idea is especially relevant to those who are *mezakei ha’rabim*, bring merit to the multitude, catalyze the spiritual growth of others through overt *kiruv*, outreach, or just by serving as an exemplar of how Torah changes a person’s life. They might think that by addressing the spiritual (and often physical/material) needs of others, they are reducing their own growth potential, but they would be wrong on two counts: First, one benefits greatly from his students. The *rebbe* gives, but he also receives. This give and take catalyze his own spiritual growth. Second, one receives a unique *shefa*, overflow, of *hatzlachah*, success, as a result of his dedication to the growth of others.

As an aside, another (lesser known) benefit exists relative to *zikui ha’rabim* (which should be publicized). *Horav Yaakov, zl, m’Lisa (Rav Yaakov Lorberbaum)*, the author of the *Nesivos HaMishpat* (quoted in the biography of *Horav Mendel Kaplan, zl*), was considered the *gadol hador*, leading Torah luminary of his generation. (His was a generation that included extraordinary brilliant and erudite Torah leaders.) He devoted his life faithfully and tirelessly to the betterment of his coreligionists of all stripes. As great as he was, both in Torah and *chesed*, acts of lovingkindness, these were overshadowed by his exceptional humility. Towards the end of his life, having authored a number of outstanding treatises on the vast corpus of Jewish law, he decided to publish a *Siddur*. He feared that errors might have somehow crept into his *sefarim* and, as a result, he would not be granted “admission” into *Olam Habba*, the World-to-Come. Therefore, he authored the *Siddur Derech Chaim* purely as an act of *chesed*, kindness, to the Jewish people. He hoped that this act of kindness would gain him access to *Olam Habba*.

The *Rosh Yeshivah (Rav Mendel Kaplan)* taught, “In order to do big *mitzvos* (to have great far-reaching achievements), one must have great merits (small people do not create big things). One does not just wake up one morning and say, ‘Now I am ready’ and expect to perform a great *mitzvah*. One requires sufficient merit (either ancestral merits or the merits accrued from the previous performance of many *mitzvos*) in order to be able to achieve great things.

“A case in point would be the *Bais Yosef* (*Horav Yosef Karo, zl*, author of the *Shulchan Aruch*, among other *sefarim*), who had accumulated great merit which led to the *siyata diShmaya*, Divine assistance, which he had to perform extraordinary *mitzvos*. Greater scholars than the *Bais Yosef* existed, yet he authored the *Shulchan Aruch* which is the leading accepted Code of Jewish Law. Why did he merit to write the *Shulchan Aruch*, while others did not? Divine assistance. [Indeed, *Horav Yehonasan Eibeshutz, zl* (*Urim v’Tumim* 48b), writes that the *Bais Yosef* was unable to figure out all of the intricate *Talmudic* calculations of the scholars that preceded him. Yet, they did not write the *Shulchan Aruch*; he did!] He was granted special *siyata diShmaya* to be *mechaber*, write, only correct *halachah*.” All of this was due to the merits that he earned. When one helps others, he not only has his merits – he accumulates merit for their achievements. It is a most wonderful investment of time and energy. The returns are incredible!