

MATITYAHU 6A

Tzedakah

"Three things annul the severe decree and these are they: prayer, charity and repentance."

Rabbi Eleazar

"He who gives *tzadakah* is greater than Moses." Talmud Baba Bathra 9b

v1

Tzedakah - (lit. righteousness) acts of charity.

Are we commanded to make *tzadakah*?

See D'varim (Deuteronomy) 15:11; Luke 14.12-14

'in order to be seen' Obviously, the motive is in question.

v2

'trumpets' There is no historical evidence to indicate this was practiced.

Possible explanation: Trumpet or horn (*shofar*) referred to the collection boxes for the poor placed in the Temple grounds. They were small at the top and curved out to a large base, reminiscent of a trumpet.

Second explanation: Since 'trumpet', in this case, could mean the '*tzadakah* box', it could also refer to the passing of a collection plate, which is considered ostentatious in Jewish thinking.

"For they who give, hoping to receive a requital such as praise or honor and seeking for a return of the favor which they are conferring under the specious name of a gift are really making a bargain" Philo On Cherubim 34

v3

Keep your acts of charity secret.

v4

"God will bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing whether it be good or whether it be evil" Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 12:14

From haLachah 10

Tz'dakah (Charity)

lit. righteousness

Genesis 18:19 Avram known for Tzdakah

Proverbs 21:3 Righteousness and justice preferable to sacrifice

Isaiah 1:27 "Zion will be redeemed in justice and her returnees with tzedakah"

Deuteronomy 15:7-11 Leviticus 25:35 applies to Gentile as well as Jew

Even the poor are required to give Tzedakah. Widow's mite Luke 21.1-4.

It is a mitzvah to lend money to the poor Exodus 22:21-25

It is forbidden to press for the return of a loan if one knows the borrower does not yet have the means to repay it. Exodus 22:23

The poor of one's own family take precedence to others.

It is forbidden to turn the poor away empty handed, even if he is given a small amount

To support a sage or scholar merits inheritance in the world to come.

To inspire others to give tzdakah is a great virtue. Daniel 12:1-3

A joyful heart is required. IICorinthians 9:7

Acts 6:1-3 The believers had an active Tzadakah

Eight Degress of Charity

- 8th (lowest) giving grudgingly
- 7th gives less than what one should, but cheerfully
- 6th gives directly to the poor when asked (must be prodded)
- 5th gives directly to the poor without being asked
- 4th indirect giving: the recipient knows the giver, but the giver does not know the recipient
- 3rd indirect giving: the recipient does not know the giver, but the giver knows the recipient
- 2nd community charity: neither giver nor recipient know each other – ‘deeds before men’
- 1st (highest) help sustain a person *before* he becomes impoverished

Upon the recipient:

One should strive to not become a public charge. 2 Thes 3.7-12

One should not hesitate to accept Tzdakah if one truly needs it.

It is forbidden to delay repayment of a loan when one has the means to do so.

Do not delay paying your obligations. Leviticus 19:13