חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

CHERNOBYL · ME'OR EINAYIM, CHAYEI SARA

How giving tithes removes blockages to blessing

Me'or Einayim

Tithing (ma'aser) possesses the special power to sweeten dinim (judgments) and remove the blockages in the conduits of shefa (abundance/influence) that separate a person from Divine blessing, because acting below with the midah (attribute) of compassion—embodied in tzedakah (charity)—arouses that same compassion above, through the principle of middah k'neged middah (measure for measure). Avraham, having drawn himself close to all the supernal midot and attained the level of "old in days" where no din remains, merited through his ma'aser that Hashem Himself and His court unanimously agreed to bless him with everything, without any restraining judgment. AI SUMMARY

And "the Lord blessed Avraham with everything" — and it is stated in the midrash: in the merit of what? And it answers: in the merit of ma'aser (tithing). For it is known that concerning the mitzvah (commandment) of ma'aser it is said, "And test Me now in this, etc.: if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you blessing until there is not enough [room to contain it]."

The matter is this: there are several conduits of shefa (abundance/influence) through which the flow passes from cause to effect until it reaches the person below. But because of the person's corruption below, he causes the conduits to become blocked—namely, through his corruption he comes to the place of dinim (judgments), and the dinim stand and accuse, and they do not allow the life-force of the shefa to pass to this person. This is called "the blockage of the conduits." The special power of ma'aser (tithing) is to remove the dinim and to sweeten the dinim until the dinim agree to the flow of blessing below, through their having been sweetened.

To understand why this is so: it is known that "with the measure that a person measures, so is he measured" (middah k'neged middah)—for just as he conducts himself below with a certain midah (attribute/measure), so is aroused above. And if he arouses himself with the midah of compassion, that same quality is aroused above as well, and through this the sweetening of the din (judgment) is accomplished. And if, Heaven forbid, the opposite —then the opposite. Therefore, through ma'aser, which is tzedakah (charity), compassion is also aroused above, through the arousal below of the midah of compassion. And so it is with all the midot: a person must draw himself close to the good and liken himself to his Creator, as our Rabbis of blessed memory said, "Just as He is compassionate, so too..."

Now, regarding Avraham it is written, "And Avraham was old, advanced in days"—which appears to be a redundancy. But it is known that the supernal midot are called the thirteen tikkunei dikna (rectifications of the beard), and this is the meaning of the term "zaken" (old/beard)—for he came into all the tikkunei dikna, called "old in days" in the supernal sense, having drawn himself close with all the midot and days to the supernal good, the place where there is no din at all.

And this is "through the merit"—what merit? The term zechut also connotes victory, as in "and I did not merit (zachiti)..." for "there is no righteous

person on earth..." Yet here it is written, "And Hashem Himself and His court"—implying that they agreed to bless him. But how could it be that there would be no din at all holding back the descent of shefa? And it answers: through the merit of ma'aser, as it is written, "and he gave him a tithe of all," as stated above—that he sweetened the dinim until "He Himself and His court," all of them together, agreed to a complete blessing, as above.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5)