

# WALKING IN HASHEM'S WAYS PART 2

*by Rabbi Yehonasan Gefen*

In the previous essay we introduced the Mitzva to emulate HaShem's character traits. One of the most obvious ways in which we can do this is emulating HaShem's limitless kindness. HaShem constantly showers every individual with numerous gifts, indeed the basic gift of life is priceless. We do not necessarily recognize HaShem's kindness in this way because we get used to all the gifts that He bestows on us. However, anyone who is unfortunate enough to temporarily lose the use of one of their five senses, or of any limb, can communicate the great appreciation they felt in the moments after they recovered.

Therefore, when a person performs an act of kindness he is fulfilling the Mitzva of emulating HaShem. (It is very important to note that when performing any Mitzva a person should try to have intent that he is performing G-d's will, without such intent it may well not be considered as if he has fulfilled the Mitzva). This begs the question that there seems to be another Mitzva that also pertain very much to the idea of kindness; that is the Mitzva of 'love your neighbor as yourself'. As we discussed in the section on that Mitzva, one aspect of the Mitzva is to perform kindness. What then is the significance of the fact that there are two different Mitzvot for one action?

One answer to this question is that the purpose of the Mitzvot mean that there are times when one applies and the other does not. For example, the Mitzva of 'love your neighbor' only involves performing kindness to our fellow man, but not to other creatures such as animals. However, treating animals in a kind fashion does fulfill the Mitzva of emulating HaShem because it involves the character trait of kindness.

In the coming essay we will discuss further differences between the two Mitzvot.

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