

# How To Fulfill Your Needs

*By HaRav Ariel bar Tzadok  
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Shalom! May I have your undivided attention, for just a few minutes? I know how hard this is; I know how busy you are. However, there comes a time when you have to take a moment to pay attention to very important matters that you most likely are ignoring.

Life is not about your individual concerns, problems and pursuits. I know that these take up almost all your time and attention, but while you are paying attention to yourself and your own little world, a greater world with greater concerns is barreling down upon you and unless you pay attention now, something much bigger than yourself will come and topple you off your little perch in life. Whether or not you will be able to get up again depends on how much you pay attention to what I am about the share with you.

Let me start by telling you, I do not believe you have to worry about the end of the world. I do not believe nuclear war is imminent. I do not believe that terrorists are on the verge of destroying western culture or collapsing the international economy. If any of these things were to happen, we would need a whole lot more than an email to teach you how to prepare. So, let us stay grounded and talk about real things, the kind of things that affect you and your life every day.

The world is a very big place and no one person can change the whole thing. So, let us not try doing the impossible. Rather let us take a moment to focus on those parts of this big world that collide with our little lives messing them up and what we can do to survive and thrive.

I know, you are strong, you are independent; maybe you even have a significant amount of money. Now tell me, other than objects of desire, what can your money really buy you? True, you can afford to pay high tuition fees for yourself and children, acquiring fancy degrees that will get you even more money. Yet, regardless of your money, you still have to study and make the effort to earn those degrees to be worthy of the titles that they bestow. We all know that there are many doctors, lawyers, rabbis and "indian chiefs," who all have degrees, yet who are lousy at what they do. So what good was spending all that money for a degree that is not backed up by the expertise in knowledge and experience in practice? All the money in the world cannot make someone good at what they do. This requires something other than money.

Your money can buy you lots of things. Big houses, big cars, fancy clothing, the latest and best of everything can be bought. Yet, I truly feel pity for the fool who believes that the amount of things one owns brings one happiness. I know that owning much and having lots of money makes one feel superior over others who have less. Yet, this is certainly one of the most ridiculous illusions of all times. How often have we all seen the rich and famous act like complete fools and even criminals? All their money does not buy them happiness. All their money ends up being wasted on rehab clinics and legal bills to keep them out of jail. What a waste. Certainly, these so-called rich and famous are an embarrassment to themselves.

Even in religious circles, there are all kinds of group-related snobbery. One group looks down at another if they believe differently, dress differently or accept a different religious authority. This kind of foolishness in my opinion borders on mental illness. Arrogant minds want to stand out and be different, raising themselves above the crowd and at the same time stepping on the heads of everyone else, disrespecting them and even worse, degrading them. Yes, to me, this is a mental illness of the worst kind.

There is nothing wrong with being religious and there is nothing wrong with being wealthy. It all depends upon what you do with you religion and how you use your money. Truly strong individuals work hard to strengthen others. Truly moral and decent people help others and build them. Truly religious people live every aspect of life by the principles they hold dear and by doing so become even better individuals.

The greatest problem that we all face today is our self-centeredness. We all care a lot about our own interests and very little about that which we define as "not our own." This is a sad state of affairs. Have we not all heard the saying, "united we stand, divided we fall." When we stand only for ourselves and not for others who may need our support, then instead of strengthening ourselves, we are actually weakening ourselves.

We can protect our "front doors" all we want, but if our "back doors" are not equally protected, we leave ourselves open for attack. Most of us are unaware that we even have a "back door." In our over-emphasis on looking after our ourselves and our personal immediate interests we ignore that there are others with needs, that when fulfilled strengthen us and when ignored weaken us.

When you support others, you are supporting yourselves. There is no greater selfishness than giving! Is this not a funny thing? We believe that giving is selfless, but the opposite is true. When we give, we in turn receive! This type of selfishness is actually a good thing.

We forget that we are only a part of the natural world and that natural law applies to us, no matter how much we submerge ourselves into our civilized society. Try as we

will to forget the natural ways, they will still always rule over our world and us. We cannot alter the reality of human nature. It is better to understand it and to live in accordance to it. When we go with the flow, everything in life flows much more smoothly. It is only when we forget that we are only a part of a greater world and try to live life thinking that we are the center of the universe that we create for ourselves all kinds of trouble.

When we watch the back of others, others in turn watch our backs. This is a basic military commandment, fundamental to all troops serving in any kind of combat. We must realize that we are all soldiers and every day is a battlefield. Every day we face different types of conflicts and struggles. Those who are well prepared, trained and stocked with supplies stand the greatest chance of overcoming any adversity. When we provide for others, they in turn provide for us. They watch our backs while we watch theirs. This way we are all prepared and ready, front and back. United we stand, divided we fall.

Your support, my support is vital to one another! I provide for you what you need. You provide for me what I need. I enable you to continue and thrive. You enable me to do the same. What great wisdom is there in this? Who cannot understand this most fundamental of lessons? We all have different kinds of needs, be they physical needs, emotional needs, intellectual needs, spiritual needs, financial needs or health needs. We all have so many.

No one can provide everything for oneself. When one wishes to become totally self-reliant in every way, we say of such a person, that he is a "jack of all trades, but a master of none." In other words, one can do a little of everything, but a lot of nothing. No individual is an island unto themselves. We all must work together to provide and support one another.

We each must excel in our areas of expertise and then provide for those others who lack our abilities what we have to offer them. They in turn offer back to us what they have in abundance and we severely lack. We all look after one another, support one another and protect one another. This is the definition of community!

You want to make for yourself a better life? Then start looking outside of yourself and start helping and supporting those who support your "back door." For each of us the definition of this is different. Yet, I do not believe we require that much wisdom and deep thinking to figure out who it is that needs our support; obviously it is those who support you, in whatever ways and means you need support, emotional, spiritual or otherwise.

Do not underestimate the value of giving. Do not overestimate the value of keeping for yourself. Do you really think you can buy security with all the stocks, bonds, and things that you own? Tell that to victims of natural disasters, those who lose

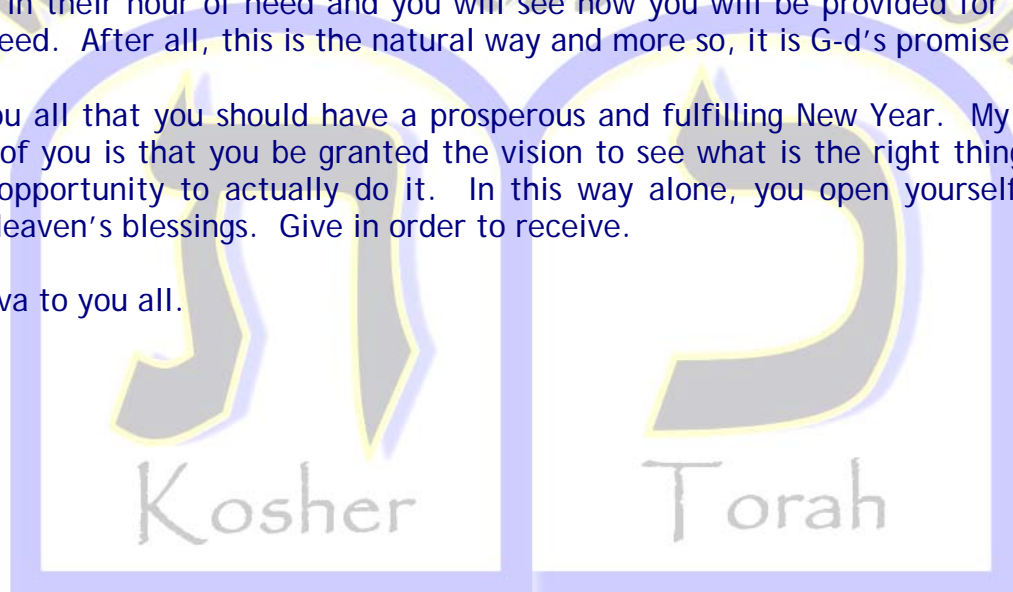
everything in a minute and have to rebuild everything from scratch. If not for the inner resolve and moral strength that they have acquired from somewhere, they would never have the wealth of character to rebuild. All wealth and strength is what comes from within. Supporting this should be your first and primary investment of capital!

As we approach a New Year and endeavor to create new beginnings, let us get our priorities correct and make the necessary efforts and investments in what is most important. You can and must support others even more than you are right now. You will see, after not too long, how this investment outside of yourself is actually the best investment you can make in yourself. Try not to think too hard about this, just do it! Sometimes we mess things up by thinking too much about it. Sometimes actions just need to be done, without wasting precious time.

When you are in need, you seek immediate relief. Well, so do others! You provide for them in their hour of need and you will see how you will be provided for in your hour of need. After all, this is the natural way and more so, it is G-d's promise.

I bless you all that you should have a prosperous and fulfilling New Year. My prayer for each of you is that you be granted the vision to see what is the right thing to do and the opportunity to actually do it. In this way alone, you open yourself up to receive Heaven's blessings. Give in order to receive.

Shana Tova to you all.



שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד