



Dvar Torah for Parshat Masei/The Three Weeks

"Aharon passed away...in the fifth month, on the first day" (Numbers 33:38).

Based on Likutey Moharan I, Lesson #17:5

"The fifth month, the first day," the new moon of the month of Av, is this Shabbat.

Rebbe Nachman teaches that by giving charity one creates a tranquil atmosphere. The more charity one gives, the larger the tranquil area becomes.

Charity takes many forms, not only giving money to someone in need. Making peace, directly helping to foster and promote a tranquil atmosphere, is certainly a form of charity. Thousands of Aharons, a human "atmosphere of tranquility," walked behind the bier of Aharon the high priest (Avot d'Rebbe Natan 12:4). How did there come to be so many? Because Aharon made peace between many husbands and wives. In gratitude for his time and effort, many named a son born as a result of their reconciliation after him.

Your skills as a conflict negotiator may not be the best, and even if they are, there's no guarantee that people will name a child for you because you helped out. You might not have enough money to make all the contributions you would like. Nonetheless, there is a giving that you can do that is invaluable. Our Sages teach:

When you greet someone with a genuine smile, even if you give him nothing else, the Torah counts it as if you have given him the best presents in the world (Avot d'Rebbe Natan 13:4).