

ISRAEL news for kids

The Magazine

#03



On Three Things

“The world stands on three things: on Torah,
on service [of God] and on acts of kindness.” (Ethics of the Fathers 1:2)

One of the most important
foundations of the Jewish
world is *chesed*, kindness.

To do something good for someone else.
Not because you must, or because you
want to get something out of it.

Just do it!

Simply because it's the right thing and
the good thing to do, and from a wish to
contribute to the world.

There are many ways to do acts of kindness
– you can give money to those in need, help
a friend, give your time for someone else,
and more.

Throughout history, the Jewish people have
been known for their great kindness.

Within many Jewish communities, people
organize themselves to help each other
(in Hebrew, these organizations are called
GemaCHim, which are the initials of Gemilut
Chasadim, acts of kindness).



These gemachim can provide charity and money, food for poor families, help for mothers after giving birth, and there are even special gemachim for immediate help if needed. For example, medicines, baby products, hiking equipment, and even accessories and decorations for small and large events.

There is a huge range of gemachim, and they are mostly run by one person or a family that wants to do something for the community they live in, or by the leaders of the community or shuls.

As well as these private or community projects, there are also many larger chesed organizations giving help and support in different areas. Hundreds and even thousands of volunteers – some in Israel and some around the world – give of their time and skills to these organizations.



I'm sure you've heard of Magen David Adom or Ichud Hatzala, who provide emergency first responder medical care.

In places like these, volunteers go through special training and actually become official first aid providers.



IMG WIKIPEDIA, efi elian, MDA Advance Life Support Ambulance.



IMG WIKIPEDIA, efi elian, A United Hatzalah ambucycle.

You can spot Ichud Hatzala volunteers by their special motorcycle, the ambucycle. This is a motorcycle fitted with advanced medical equipment, so the driver can get anywhere quickly, and save lives.

Other organizations and their volunteers help people suffering from mental health problems, old people, babies left alone in hospitals, people with serious illnesses, and chesed of all kinds.

The bigger the organization, the more money they can raise and the more volunteers they can have, so they can do more good for more people.

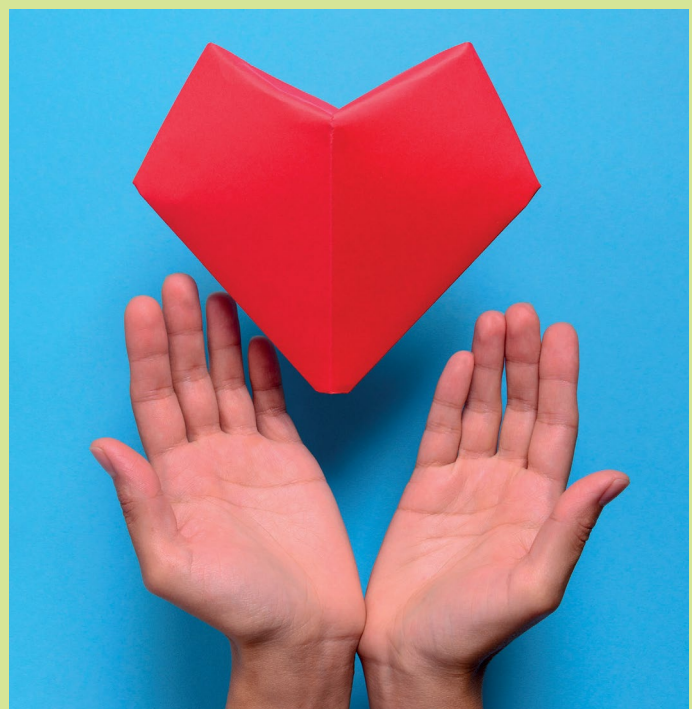
**Each one of us can do chesed.
You too.**

**You can help and give to others
in your school, your community,
and of course in your own family
at home.**

**You don't need lots of money
or special skills.**

**The only thing you need is the
wish to do good and a big heart!**

Go for it!



Unique Story

Yedidim (Friends)

IMG courtesy

It all began about 17 years ago, in a small local grocery store in Ramat Gan, Israel.

Everybody in the area knew that the owner of the store, Meir Weiner (of blessed memory), was a man of chesed.

Often, people would walk into his store looking for help because their car had broken down in the big city.

It became so common that Meir had a great idea!



“People need help on the roads all the time, and they have no one to turn to. Maybe I can set up a special group of volunteers who’ll always be ready to come and help!”



Meir called this group “Yedidim,” which means ‘friends’ in Hebrew.

Because just like your friends are always ready to help you, so too are Yedidim volunteers.

A few years later, Yisrael Almassi joined Meir. His car broke down in a parking lot and he couldn’t find anyone to help him.

Yisrael – who hadn’t heard of “Yedidim” – was very upset that no one came to help him, and he too thought about setting up a group of volunteers to help in such cases.

Yisrael met Meir and they decided to work as a team, with Yisrael becoming the Director of “Yedidim.”

Today, there are tens of thousands of Yedidim volunteers all over Israel. Jews, Arabs, religious and non-religious. And all of them give help to anyone who needs it. “First responders” but not for medical emergencies. For cars that break down, people who lock themselves out of their cars and homes, etc.



Yedidim’s dream is that there should be volunteers everywhere in Israel, and that no person should be stuck for more than a few minutes, thus making Israel a better place to live.

Isn’t that a wonderful idea?

Maybe you can also set up something like “Yedidim” in your school or community?

OF BLESSED MEMORY

– a phrase used to describe someone who has died.



Saying: “All Jews are guarantors for one another.”

This saying is from our wise Rabbis. It means that every Jew is responsible for every other Jew.

A guarantor is someone who promises to pay off another person's debt if that person cannot pay it himself.

The original meaning of the sentence was that every Jew had to pay off his or her friend's “debts” (sins). In other words, Jews took responsibility for making sure their fellow Jews kept the mitzvot and not act against the Torah.

Today, we understand this sentence in a much wider and more ethical context, in that every Jew is responsible for the wellbeing of his or her fellow Jew (and not necessarily whether or not they keep mitzvot).

The practical application of this saying is one of the things that makes the Jewish people special.

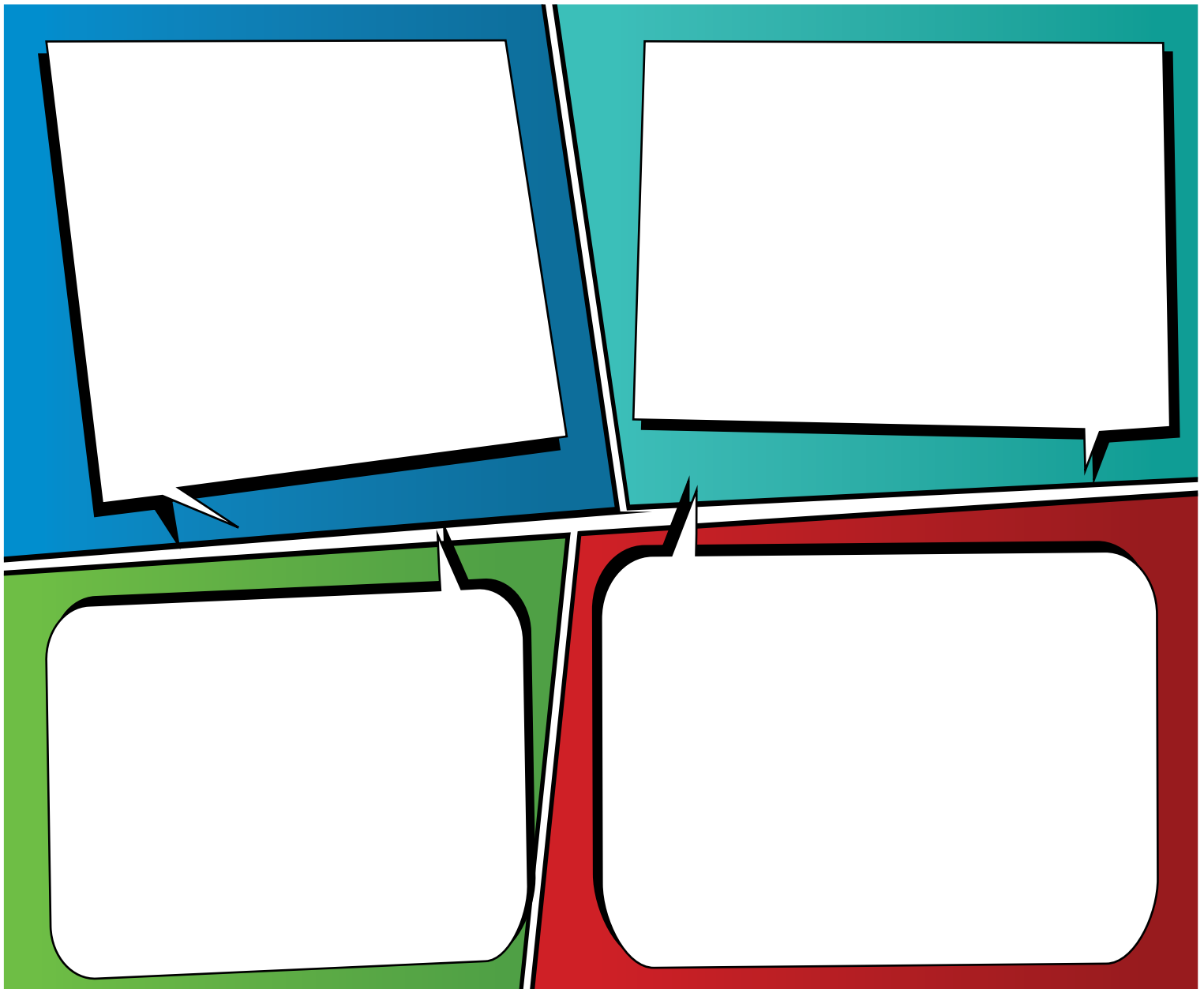
Whenever you meet another Jew, in whatever country, whether you knew them before or not, you'll always feel this mutual responsibility and help each other in whatever way is needed.

Because all Jews are responsible for one another!



Comics : Write a short and amusing story about mutual responsibility

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**Don't miss the new editions of
ISRAEL'S CHILDREN'S NEWS**



**Watch the
"Iron Swords" War edition**

