#### Jews and Disaster Relief

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# 1. UN Group Recognizes IDF Field Hospital as World's Best https://www.idfblog.com/2016/11/13/un-group-recognizes-idf-field-hospital-worlds-best/

Recognized worldwide as a leader in field medicine and disaster relief, the IDF field hospital just solidified its position by achieving the World Health Organization's first-ever Type 3 rating, the highest score the United Nations medical arm can give.

The IDF field hospital is run by Medical Corps doctors, soldiers, and reservists, and has provided immediate, high quality medical care to thousands of patients in Nepal, Haiti, the Syrian border, the Philippines, and numerous other countries following disasters both natural and man-made. [Col. (Res) Ofer Merin, commander of the IDF Medical Corps field hospital] "When we were given recognition, the president of the WHO said, 'The world should learn from Israel how to operate in disaster areas with the right ethics. For me, representing the Medical Corps, it was a great privilege to hear them saying that other countries should learn from Israel how to operate within the right ethical values...This is a great pride, a great honor for Israel, the IDF, and the Medical Corps"

2. http://www.timesofisrael.com/masters-of-disaster-idf-field-hospital-may-be-recognized-as-worlds-best/ Helping other countries in need is "the most effective kind of diplomacy," then-foreign minister Avigdor Liberman said in 2015, after Israel sent a team to Nepal. "In crafting a country's image, nothing is more effective than providing aid." However, diplomats insist the drive is mostly altruistic. "If we're sending aid to Haiti, the Philippines and Nepal, we're obviously not looking to reap great diplomatic benefits from these countries, which I might be allowed to describe as not superpowers," said a former senior diplomat in 2015, responding to a question about Liberman's comment.

## 3. Talmud Gittin 61a

We don't protest [when] non-Jewish poor people [take] *leket, shechicha*, and *peah* [agricultural charity], because of the ways of peace. The Rabbis taught, we support the non-Jewish poor with the Jewish poor, and visit the non-Jewish sick with Jewish sick, and bury the non-Jewish dead with the Jewish dead, because of the ways of peace.

#### 4. Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 151:12

It is permitted to support their poor, visit their sick, bury their dead, eulogize them, and comfort their mourners, because of the ways of peace.

## 5. Rambam, Laws of Kings 10:12

And it seems to me that we act with a *ger toshav* with respect and kindness like a Jew because we are commanded to keep him alive, as it says "to the *ger* in your gates you shall give it to eat"... and even an idolater, the sages commanded us to visit their sick, bury their dead with the Jewish dead, support their poor among the Jewish poor, for the ways of peace, as it says "God is good to all and his mercy is on all his handiwork," and it says "Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all Its paths are peace."

#### 6. Rambam Laws of Slaves 9:4

It is permissible to have a Canaanite slave perform excruciating labor. Although this is the law, the attribute of piety and the way of wisdom is for a person to be merciful and to pursue justice, not to make his slaves carry a

heavy yoke, nor cause them distress. He should allow them to partake of all the food and drink he serves. This was the practice of the Sages of the first generations who would give their slaves from every dish of which they themselves would partake. And they would provide food for their animals and slaves before partaking of their own meals. And so, it is written <a href="Psalms 123:2">Psalms 123:2</a>: "As the eyes of slaves to their master's hand, and like the eyes of a maid-servant to her mistress' hand, so are our eyes to God." Similarly, we should not embarrass a slave by our deeds or with words, for the Torah prescribed that they perform service, not that they be humiliated. Nor should one shout or vent anger upon them extensively. Instead, one should speak to them gently, and listen to their claims.... Cruelty and arrogance are found only among idol-worshipping gentiles. By contrast, the descendants of Abraham our patriarch, i.e., the Jews whom the Holy One, blessed be He, granted the goodness of the Torah and commanded to observe righteous statutes and judgments, are merciful to all. And similarly, with regard to the attributes of the Holy One, blessed be He, which He commanded us to emulate, it is written <a href="Psalms 145:9">Psalms 145:9</a>: "His mercies are upon all of His works." And whoever shows mercy to others will have mercy shown to him, as implied by <a href="Deuteronomy 13:18">Deuteronomy 13:18</a>: "He will show you mercy, and be merciful upon you and multiply you."

## 7. Rabbi Shimon b. Aderet, Gittin 61a

Rashi interpreted "if we find them killed with Jews." It seems from his comments that he interpreted that this is specifically **with Jews**, meaning while we are still involved with other Jewish dead, because then there would be hatred if we were involved with these and left these. However, if we find them by themselves – no... But this is not clear – as "with the Jewish dead" means "just like", and so to by supporting the non-Jewish poor with the Jewish poor, and so too all of them. And this is explicit in Yerushalmi ... and the Tosefta doesn't mention Jews at all, rather "we eulogize the non-Jewish dead because of the ways of peace and comfort the non-Jewish mourners because of the ways of peace.

### 8. Mahari Kurkos, Laws of the Gifts to the Poor 7:7

It seems that it all depends on "the ways of peace". If it seems that there will be hatred, we support and bury them. If there won't be hate, and we can avoid it, then we don't support or bury them.

# 9. Rabbi Shabbtai Rappaport, Shach to YD 151:12

This implies even without Jewish poor, and so wrote the Bach, that this is the custom.

#### 10. Rabbi Moshe Sofer Gittin 61a

[Summarizes dispute above as to whether this only applies when there are Jews being supported then as well] However, this all applies to charity, because what he gives to the non-Jew will be withheld from a Jew. Therefore, there they were not [is certain circumstances] concerned with ways of peace if a Jewish poor person is not there. However, regarding visiting the sick and burial, whether there is no lack for the Jew because of this, they did concern themselves with the ways of peace, even when [the non-Jew] is by himself...

#### 11. Talmud Bava Metzia 71 (Regarding charity as well)

When you lend to my nation and the poor with you: my nation and a non-Jew, my nation comes first. A poor and rich person, the poor person comes first. Your poor and the poor of your city, your poor come first. The poor of the city and the poor of another city, the poor of your city come first.

## 12. Vayikra 19:16

...do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor, I am G-d.

## 13. Rabbi Aryeh Klapper, Is there a Mitzvah to Prevent Genocide?

My suggestion is that there is generally a communal analogue to the moral principles that generate halakhic obligations for individuals,. Individuals must keep honest weights and measures – communities must establish fair marketplaces. Similarly, the individual obligation to save a nirdaf from being killed is paralleled by a communal obligation to ensure that everyone can live safely without fear of being killed. Furthermore, the communal obligation to create a safe society exists on both a local and global scale. In other words, communities have obligations both to their own individual citizens, and toward other communities. The communal obligation to save a nirdaf extends to preventing the deaths of entire other communities.