

Blessings of a good eye.

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Based on a lesson on Proverb 22:9 at [www.tora.us.fm](http://www.tora.us.fm)

Giving charity with your eyes, not only with your hands

22:9 He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gave of his bread to the poor

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A person with a good eye gives generously to the poor. He will be blessed by

G-d, since he has given of his bread to the weak. If his assets further increase he will give even more; his heart will not turn bad when he is given more.

### Moral Instruction

Only the good eye, one that looks with a good and joyful gaze at people that derive enjoyment from his property, is awarded with the blessings of the poor when he shares his bread with the poor and weak.

### Practical Advice

When helping others, it is not only the deed that counts but also the look of eyes, the manner and intent.

A generous eye = A person that has a good look in the eyes, a look of joy when he sees that others deriving enjoyment from his property.

Will be blessed = the poor person will bless him, when he sees that he gives him with joy and a good look in his eyes.

He will be blessed = the word "He" is used to emphasize, that it is he that will be rewarded with

blessings but a person with a bad eye will not receive these blessing. His bad look will cause poor man grief and shame. Although the poor man is saved from hunger, his dignity was damaged and therefore he cannot bless the giver wholeheartedly.

Every person should try to have a good eye, but what should a person do if he has not yet reached this level? Must he refrain from giving until then? In the author's opinion the answer is no: a man with a bad eye can give without expecting an additional blessing. He can give for the sake of the mitzvah of charity only (without the additional blessing).

### Parallels in Torah

**(a)** The eyes and blessings are mentioned together in Jacob's blessings to Joseph:

Genesis 49:22-25

22 A charming son is Joseph, a son charming to the **eye**; [of the] women, [each one] strode along to see him.

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23 They heaped bitterness upon him and became quarrelsome; yea, archers despised him.

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24 But his bow was strongly established, and his arms were gilded from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob; from there he sustained the rock of Israel,

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25 from the God of your father, and He will help you, and with the Almighty, and He will bless you [with] the blessings of the heavens above, the **blessings** of the deep, lying below, the blessings of father and mother.

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Joseph gave of his bread to the poor- provided for his family and all of Egypt during

(heaven forbid) famine - and was blessed with a good eye.

**(b)** A good eye brings blessing, and the evil eye brings want.

Proverbs 28:2:

22 He who hastens to [acquire] wealth is a man with an evil eye, and he does not know that want will come upon him.

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**(c)** Some people have to give simpler and cheaper dishes in order for them to give with a good eye.

Proverbs 15:17:

17 Better a repast of herbs where there is love, than a fattened ox where there is hatred.

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**(d)** More on help to the needy.

Proverbs 28:27:

27 He who gives to a poor man will suffer no want, but he who hides his eyes will have many curses.

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## Subtleties

Verse structure

**(a)** According to most commentators, the verse should be divided into two equal parts:

22:9 ? He who has a generous eye will be blessed, ? for he gave of his bread to the poor.

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Since he has a good eye, he gave, and since he gave he received blessings.

Giving is the main cause of blessing. This verse teaches us to have a good eye, to look at others with good and loving eyes, in this way we will be able to identify people who need our help, and give them of our bread. As a result we will be blessed.

Since the giving stems from a good eye, it would have been better to write in the future tense, "a good eye shall give to the poor and be blessed"; The use of the past tense gave highlights the fact that he already gave. The blessing came after the giving. The giving was a result of his good eye.

He has a generous eye and since he used it to give he will be blessed.

**(b)** In the author's opinion the verse should be divided into two unequal parts:

22:9 ? He who has a generous eye ? will be blessed, when he gives of his bread to the poor.

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He has a generous eye - when he uses it to give - he will be blessed.

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Only a good eye merits blessings when he gives of his bread to the poor. The good eye is main cause of the blessings.

**(c)** Some interpreted this verse as a continuation of the previous two verses (verses 7-8), that talk about the rich and the poor:

22:7 A rich man will rule over the poor, and a borrower is a slave to a lender.

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Verse 7 explains the natural situation in which the rich have power to rule over the poor.

22:8 He who sows injustice will reap violence, and the rod of his wrath will fail.

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Verse 8 describes the situation in which the rich use their riches for the bad.

22:9 He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gave of his bread to the poor

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Verse 9 describes the situation where rich people use their riches for the good.

**(d)** One can be interpret the physical giving as an allegory to spiritual giving of wisdom and Torah. There are people who get angry when they see others copying their words of wisdom, on the other hand there are people who view it all with a good eye, happy that others benefit from their words of wisdom;

These people will receive the blessing of God. Chazal has said, the first man that accustomed to give a good eye to words of Torah was Moses Rabbeinu, the Lawgiver. "Torah was given but to Moses and his descendants, as it is written (Exodus 34)

"The Lord said to Moses: " Inscribe these words for yourself, for according to these words I have formed a covenant with you and with Israel."

"... Moses behaved towards it good of an eye and gave it to Israel about his it is written - a good eye will be blessed "(Rabbi Yossi ben Hanina, Nedarim 28 Babylonian Talmud).

**(e)** There are those that interpreted the verse with grace after meals: Sotah 28:

R. Joshua b. Levi also said: We give the cup of blessing **12** for the recital of the Grace after meals only to one who is of a generous disposition, **13** as it is said: He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor **14** — read not Yeborak ['shall be blessed'] but Yebarek [shall say the Benediction]. R. Joshua b. Levi also said: Whence is it that even the birds recognize those who have a niggardly spirit? **15** As it is said: For in vain is the net spread in the eyes of any bird.**16**

**12.** A cup of wine is used in the recital of Grace.

**13.** Lit., 'good of eye' the opposite of bad of eye, i.e., envious

**14.** Proverbs. XXII, 9.

**15.** Lit., 'narrow of eye'. Birds avoid such as these.

**16.** Proverbs. I, 17. verse 19 continues, So are the ways of everyone that is greedy of gain.

In other words, a good eye is one who invites many poor people to his feast, so that he could make the blessing in a minyan or at least by a summoning (according to the Gaon of Vilna).

**(f)** Of his bread

"As our Sages have interpreted in the Zohar, "Of his bread" means: of the bread he has earned lawfully and justly, and not through robbing and stealing ... a mitzvah performed through sinful means hampers blessings" (R Moshe David Valle).

My Comments

If and when you stop looking at immodest images (Guard Your Eyes) ->

You will stop chasing endless, senseless and destructive physical desires ->

You will be able to develop a good eye for others, see the good in others ->

Since you have a good eye, you will be blessed at described above.

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