

The Song of the Beasts of the Field



חיות השדה אומרים:
ברוך הטוב והמטיב.

The beasts of the field say: **Blessed is He who is good and does good.**

Domesticated animals, such as cows, goats, and sheep, serve a variety of functions that benefit humanity. The farmer feeds his livestock as an investment — not necessarily out of kindness. Man and cattle are locked in a cycle of reciprocity.

The beasts of the field, such as deer, gazelles, and zebras, which offer no direct benefit to Man, are not fed by human hand. Yet, their Creator does not forsake them. His abounding goodness nourishes them daily without expectation of reward. Their very survival is a song of humble gratitude to the Divine Giver.

Countless creatures roam the earth, each with its own nutritional needs. Yet, miraculously, Hashem opens His hand and satisfies their souls. This kindness exceeds that of man since it is altruistic. They cannot reciprocate to the One who lacks nothing; nor will they thank Him each time their hunger is satiated. Yet the flow of kindness from above is never abated.

Thus, the beasts of the field sing, "ברוך הטוב והמטיב", blessed is He who is intrinsically "good"¹ and "does good" constantly to the myriads of beings that are dependent upon Him alone and have nothing to give Him in return.²

Living with Song

To Live with Song we must be willing to open our scope of kindness beyond that which gives us a good feeling and good returns. Only then will our careers of kindness truly begin.

Learn to swallow at times the bitterness of an unreturned favor or greeting. Do favors even for those who have wronged you, just as Hashem does not withhold kindness from the unworthy. Seek out opportunities to bestow "True Kindness" to the deceased who tell no

¹ "טוב" can also imply that He is perfect in goodness and lacking nothing and needing nothing from others.

² The Malbim also explains this song this way, briefly.

tales and do no favors.³ Only when your kindnesses are indiscriminate and unconditional, can you truly emulate the kindnesses of your Creator.

Ungrateful and undeserving personalities are common components of society. Do not let difficult people frustrate you. Rather, join the choir of the beasts of the field who sing the song of Hashem's selfless, unconditional kindness.

³ The blessing הטוב והמטיב, the source of this song, was formulated at the time that the tens of thousands of corpses from the Beitar massacre were found not to be rotten after much time had passed, and were then honorably buried. This kindness to the dead that do not reciprocate was the ultimate unconditional kindness.