

Is Giving Anonymously Always Best?

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Case: Reuven is a successful businessman who donates generously to many worthy causes, including the yeshiva he learned by as a bochur. The yeshiva's fundraiser meets with Reuven one day and urges him to dedicate the yeshiva's new Aron Kodesh in memory of his father. Reuven, however, is reluctant to do so, as he prefers to give *tzedakah* quietly and avoid publicity.

Question: Is remaining anonymous the right thing to do?

Answer: Chazal strongly encourage people to donate *tzedakah* anonymously and there definitely is a benefit to that.

On the other hand, there is a *teshuvah* of the Rashba that says, donating anonymously is a worthy thing to do and boasting about one's donations is incorrect, however he says that there also is a benefit to publicizing one's donations as this will inspire and encourage others to emulate his actions and donate to *tzedakah* as well.

We therefore see that both ways of donating - anonymously and publicly - have their benefits. There is no clear right or wrong, so each individual has to make his own decision as to which one is preferable for him. In any case, either way of giving is commendable.