AMIDA (berakha 13) Take care of those who take care of us

[illegible]

In this blessing we ask haShem to protect and help the righteous and pious. Those who are committed to pursuing kindness, justice, the knowledge of God and the obedience of His commandments.

We ask for the righteous in this particular section, the section which deals with “National” requests. Because the Tsadiqim are our national heroes, our role model and inspiration.

This berakha begins by mentioning two types of good people: Righteous (*tsadiqim*) and pious (*hasidim*). Righteous are those who strictly follow God’s commandments. Hasidim -pious -is a level above righteousness. Hasidim are righteous people who outdo their religious duties in one particular category of Mitsvot: Hesed. Hesed means kindness. And it includes the performance of the good deeds we do for other people: visiting the sick, comforting the mourners and helping those in need. While excess in certain ritual areas might be counterproductive, objectionable or a symptom of arrogance, in the area of Hesed doing more than what we are required is unquestionable and noble.

In this berakha we ask HaShem to protect and reward the righteous and all those who put their trust in God. It is important to notice that anyone might belong to the category of *righteous* or *pious*. Depending exclusively on one’s actions and intentions. Thus, we ask HaShem to inspire us to follow the footsteps of the righteous, so we could also be counted as such: “Place our lot among them, and let us never be shamed for in You we have trusted.”

It seems that the Tsadiqim and the Hasidim deserve a special protection. Why? Because the real righteous and pious people live according to standards of altruism which are very different from the rest of us. The Tsadiqim behave as if they have come to this world to give, not to take; to defend others, not themselves; and to care of other people, not of their own needs. And while usually people who benefit from the kindness of the Tsadiqim appreciate their unselfishness, many times the noblest Tsadiqim are vulnerable and exposed to ingratitude and even abuse. We pray to HaShem for an ideal situation in which, while the Tsadiqim take care of other people, HaShem will take special care of the Tsadiqim.