

*Halachos of*  
BEIN ADAM L'CHAVEIRO



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Please note that the material presented is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to the halachos of Bein Adam L'Chaveiro. In any case of question or doubt a Rabbi should be consulted.

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# Introduction

The mitzvos that govern interpersonal interactions are many and wide-ranging. This month we will discuss some common *halachos* pertaining to the following mitzvos:

1) Loving a fellow Jew (2) (ואהבת לרעך כמוך) Loving a convert 3) Hosting guests (הכנסת) 4) (ביקור חולים) Visiting the sick (5) (ניחום אבלים) Comforting a mourner (6) Honoring a *talmid chacham* and elderly person 7) Judging another favorably.

Righteous conduct with others is a hallmark of the Jewish people. Indeed, Chazal tell us that the traits of kindness and compassion are embedded in the spiritual genome of the Jewish being.



# Day 1

The Torah commands us **ואהבת לרעך כמוך** (ויקרא י"ט י"ח), *you should love your friend like yourself*. This mitzvah is multi-faceted, and its fulfillment has many parts:

- a) possessing a feeling of love towards other Jews
- b) wanting another's success and happiness
- c) speaking positively about another Jew
- d) being careful with the money and possessions of another Jew (i.e. taking care not to cause damage to their property)
- e) not acting toward another in a way you would not want others to act towards you (to be continued).

רמב"ם הלכות דעות פ"ו ה"ג,  
רמב"ן על התורה ויקרא פי"ט פי"ח, סמ"ג עשין ט'



## Day 2

It was previously mentioned that included in the mitzvah of **ואהבת לרעך כמוך** is not to do to others what one would not want done to himself. The Torah demands that a Jew must be a thinking person, one who is sensitive to the needs of others and does not violate the great mandate of **ואהבת לרעך כמוך**. The following are a few practical examples:

- a) People who are trying to fall asleep in a dormitory etc. do not want those in the hall to make noise late into the night. Therefore, one who does make noise violates the mitzvah of **ואהבת וגו'**
- b) Someone waiting on line for something does not want others to cut ahead of them. Therefore, someone who does cut the line violates **ואהבת וגו'**
- c) When preparing shaloch manos, one should select food items that they themselves would appreciate receiving.



## Day 3

Providing for the emotional needs of another Jew is a fulfillment of the mitzvah of **וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ**. Making someone happy, calming another down, relieving someone's anxiety etc. are all a fulfillment of this mitzvah. One fulfills the mitzvah by acting in this manner to any other Jew - whether it is a spouse, child, family member, friend, or someone they do not even know.

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"א ס"ב עפ"ד הרמב"ן



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## Day 4

One who wishes to enhance their love of a fellow Jew should do things that help other people. Such actions serve to engender the love of a fellow Jew in one's heart. Included in this is davening on behalf of another (even without that person's knowledge).

מס' דרך ארץ זוטא פ"ב, קובץ אגרות חזו"א ח"א ס' קכג



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## Day 5

In addition to the mitzvah of **ואהבת לרעך** כמוך, there is a special mitzvah to love a convert, as it is written **ואהבתם את הגר** ((דברים י' י"ט), *and you shall love the convert*. Therefore, it is doubly incumbent on a Jew to assist and provide for the needs of a convert.

רמב"ם הלכות דעות פ"ו ה"ד



## Day 6

The mitzvah of הכנסת אורחים, *taking care of guests*, is included in the mitzvah of ואהבת לרעך כמוך. The mitzvah of הכנסת אורחים applies whether the guest is young or old, family or otherwise. If the guest is a poor person, besides for the mitzvah of הכנסת אורחים, one fulfills the mitzvah of *tzedakah* as well. If the guest is wealthy, one fulfills the mitzvah of הכנסת אורחים by greeting them happily and providing for their needs in accordance with their stature (as one does with every guest). It is a special fulfillment of הכנסת אורחים to host a *talmid chacham* in one's home.

רמב"ם הלכות אבל פי"ד ה"א, אהבת חסד ח"ג פ"א



# Day 7

One who personally prepares and attends to the needs of a guest is superior to one who has someone else prepare and care for a guest on their behalf. Thus, one who prepares the linen for a guest themselves is superior to one whose cleaning help does it for them.

אהבת חסד ח"ג פ"א בהגהה,  
הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"ח סי"ג



## Day 8

One should take care to provide for a guest in such a manner that the guest does not feel like they are a burden on the host. Certainly the host should not relate how much effort they went to or money they spent on behalf of the guest. At the same time, it is the responsibility of a good guest to be mindful not to burden their host.

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"ח סי"ד-ט"ו, כ"ח



# Day 9

A primary feature of the mitzvah of הכנסת לוויה, *accompanying the guest on their way out*. By escorting a guest out, the host demonstrates his respect for the guest. Nowadays, the prevalent *minhag* is to escort a guest four *amos* (approximately six feet) beyond the entrance of the house. An integral component of the mitzvah of לוויה is ensuring that the guest knows how to reach their destination. Chazal tell us that when the host fulfills לוויה it is a *segulah* for the guest to safely reach their destination.

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"ח סמ"ד, אהבת חסד ח"ג פ"ב



# Day 10

One is not permitted to give or receive a gift on Shabbos. Therefore, guests who bring a gift for their host should give it to them prior to Shabbos. Items that will be used on Shabbos (i.e. a candy platter or a bottle of wine) are permitted to be given and received on Shabbos.

מ"ב ס' שו סקל"ג



# Day 11

The mitzvah of ביקור חולים, *visiting the sick*, is included in the mitzvah of ואהבת לרעך כמוך. The primary fulfillment of ביקור חולים is to take care of the sick person's needs, improve their mood, and uplift their spirit (to be continued).

הליכות בן אדם לחבירו פכ"ו ס"ד



## Day 12

An integral component of ביקור חולים is to daven on behalf of the sick person. One who visits a sick person but does not daven on their behalf has not fulfilled the mitzvah of ביקור חולים in the proper manner. Minimally, wishing the sick person that they should have a רפואה שלמה constitutes davening on their behalf (to be continued).

רמ"א יו"ד ס' שלה ס"ד, הליכות שלמה פ"ח הערה 63



## Day 13

Typically, when one davens on behalf of the sick, they recite the name of the ill person (i.e. Reuven ben Sarah or Sarah bas Rivkah etc). However, when one davens in the presence of the sick person, one need not recite their name. Someone visiting a sick individual must be sensitive that davening in front of the sick person may cause them distress. In such a situation one should wait to daven until they have left the bedside of the sick person.

מ"ב ס' קטז סק"ג, הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פכ"ו סכ"ט,  
הליכות שלמה פ"ח הערה 63



# Day 14

One should not inform a sick person of sad news. Regarding informing the sick person of their precise prognosis, a Rov should be consulted.

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פכ"ו סכ"ו



# Day 15

Generally speaking, it is appropriate that visitation to a sick person should be brief so as not to unnecessarily burden the sick person.

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פכ"ו סט"ו



## Day 16

One fulfills the mitzvah of ביקור חולים even if the sick individual was asleep when they came and did not interact with them at all. This is because the mere knowledge that someone came to visit them serves to both strengthen the sick person and cause the hospital staff to take better care of them.

הלכיות בין אדם לחבירו פכ"ו ס"ה



# Day 17

It is permitted to perform ביקור חולים on Shabbos. Nonetheless, one who has sufficient time to visit during the week should not specifically visit on Shabbos. On Shabbos one says to the sick person שבת היא שבת, מלזעוק ורפואה קרובה לבוא, *on Shabbos one does not cry out, and restoration of good health is quick to come.*

שו"ע או"ח ס' רפז ומ"ב סק"א



# Day 18

Visiting the sick in person is greatly superior to merely calling them on the phone. Nonetheless, in the event that one cannot visit the sick in person and a phone call would be appreciated, it is a mitzvah to call the sick person.

אגרו"מ יו"ד ח"א ס' רכג



# Day 19

The mitzvah of ניחום אבלים is included in the mitzvah of ואהבת לרעך כמוך. Performing ניחום אבלים is a kindness to both the mourner and to the departed. The primary fulfillment of the mitzvah is to comfort and provide encouragement to the mourner.

רמב"ם הלכות אבל פי"ד ה"א, ה"ז



## Day 20

One does not greet a mourner by saying "Shalom Aleichem" or "Hello". Additionally, one should not initiate the conversation with the mourner; rather the mourner should begin the conversation. If it is clear that it is difficult for the mourner to talk, the visitor should initiate the conversation.

שו"ע יו"ד ס' שעו, הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פכ"ז הערה ל"ג



# Day 21

It is a mitzvah to accord honor to a *talmid chacham*, regardless of his age. This includes rising when he comes within one's four *amos* (approximately six feet) and speaking to him with deference and in a manner that befits his stature.

שו"ע יו"ד ס' רמד, ספר חפץ חיים עשין ח'



# Day 22

One is obligated to honor the wife of a *talmid chacham* even if she herself is thoroughly unlearned.

ערוך השלחן ס' רמו ס"ז



## Day 23

It is a mitzvah to rise for a זקן, *an elderly person*. This refers to one who is above seventy years old. One who has merited to live for so long, has learned to recognize the ways of Hashem in the world and is thus deserving of honor (to be continued).

שו"ע יו"ד ס' רמד



## Day 24

It was previously mentioned that one is obligated to rise for an individual who is above seventy years old. If one is unsure of the precise age of the person in question, he is obligated to rise (don't ask!).

הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"ד ס"ה



# Day 25

One is not obligated to rise for an elderly non-Jew. However, one is required to treat elderly non-Jews with extra courtesy and provide them with physical assistance if needed.

שו"ע ס' רמד ס"ז



## Day 26

A sick person or a mourner is not obligated to rise for a *talmid chacham* or an elderly person. Nonetheless, it is appropriate that they make a gesture indicating their desire to stand, and they should raise themselves slightly.

רמ"א יו"ד ס' שעו, הליכות בין אדם לחבירו פ"ג סט"ז



## Day 27

It is a mitzvah to judge another Jew favorably, as it is written (ויקרא י"ט ט"ו) *with righteousness you shall judge your people.* The parameters of this mitzvah depend on two factors: a) the level of mitzvah-observance of the individual under scrutiny and b) the appearance of the action that is under question. The details of these factors and the application of this mitzvah will be delineated below.

ספר חפץ חיים פתיחה עשין ג'



## Day 28

Regarding judging an individual who is generally careful with mitzvah observance, but is at times somewhat negligent regarding their observance: If he did an action that can be interpreted in a positive or negative light, one is obligated to give him the benefit of the doubt. If, however, it looks probable that the action was negative, one is not strictly obligated to give the benefit of the doubt, but it is a pious practice to do so (to be continued).

ספר חפץ חיים פתיחה עשין ג'



## Day 29

Regarding judging an individual who is a **ירא שמים**, a *G-d fearing person*, one is required to always grant them the benefit of the doubt, even when the act in question appears to be negative. Conversely, if the individual is someone whom the majority of his actions is not in accordance with the Torah, one should not extend to them the benefit of the doubt (to be continued).

ספר חפץ חיים פתיחה עשין ג'



## Day 30

It was previously discussed that the parameters of the mitzvah of judging another favorably are dependent on the status of the individual in question. If one is unaware of the status of that person, it is a pious practice to extend to them the benefit of the doubt.

'ספר חפץ חיים פתיחה עשין ג



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Mazel Tov  
on completing a month  
of Halacha Yomi!