



GIVE
2012

Friendships & Relationships

A VERY IMPORTANT LESSON FROM RACHEL IMENU

- ❖ WHAT ADJECTIVES COME TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORDS BEIN ADAM LICHEIVARO?
 - ❖ WHAT DOES THIS CONCEPT INCLUDE?
 - ❖ WHAT DOES EMBARRASSMENT FEEL LIKE? CAN YOU GIVE SOME ADJECTIVES AND EXAMPLES?
-



OUR FIRST LESSON IN BEIN ADAM LICHEVORO IS ON NOT EMBARRASSING OTHERS THROUGH THE ACTIONS OF OUR GREAT MATRIARCH, RACHEL IMENU.

WHY DID WE START WITH RACHEL IMENU?

BEREISHIS PARSHAS VAYETZEI 28:22-27

כב וַיֵּאסֹף לָבוֹן אֶת כָּל אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֵּה:

כג וַיְהִי בְעָרֵב וַיִּקַּח אֶת לֵאָה בְּתוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֹתָהּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֵא אֵלָיָהּ:

כד וַיִּתֵּן לָבוֹן לָהּ אֶת זֶלְפָּה שְׁפָחָתוֹ לְלֵאָה בְּתוֹ שְׁפָחָהּ:

כה וַיְהִי בַבֶּקֶר וַהֲגִיהּ הוּא לֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵל לָבוֹן מַה זֹאת עָשִׂיתְּ לִי הֲלֹא בְרַחֵל עֲבַדְתִּי עִמָּךְ וְלָמָּה רָמִיתָנִי:



כו) וַיֹּאמֶר לָבֵן לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה כֵן
בְּמִקְוֵינִי לְתֵת הַצְּעִירָה לְפָנַי
הַבְּכִירָה:
רש"י

ויהי בבקר והנה היא לאה -
אבל בלילה לא היתה לאה,
לפי שמסר יעקב לרחל
סימנים, וכשראתה רחל
שמכניסין לו לאה אמרה
עכשי תכלם אחותי, עמדה
ומסרה לה אותן סימנים:

"And it was the morning,
and behold it was Leah.
But at night, Jacob

assumed that she was not Leah because Jacob had given signs to Rachel by which she could identify herself to him, but when she saw that they were taking Leah in to him, she said, now my sister will be humiliated. She therefore arose and gave her those signs.

*NOT EMBARRASSING SOMEONE IS EASY WHEN YOU ARE NOT AFFECTED
BY THE SITUATION. WHAT DID RACHEL DO THAT WAS SO REMARKABLE
THAT GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND JUST BEING NICE?*

HIGHEST FORM OF BEIN ADAM LICHAVEIRO

BEREISHIT 30:14

וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן בְּיָמֵי קְצִיר-חֲטִיִּים, וַיִּמְצָא דוֹדָאִים בַּשָּׂדֶה
וַיָּבֵא אֹתָם, אֵל-לְאָה אִמּוֹ; וַתֹּאמֶר רְחֵל, אֵל-לְאָה, תִּנֵּי-נָא
לִי, מִדּוֹדָאֵי בְנֵיךְ.
וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ, הֲמַעַט קָחְתְּךָ אֶת-אִישִׁי, וְלָקַחְתְּ, גַּם אֶת
דּוֹדָאֵי בְנֵי; וַתֹּאמֶר רְחֵל, לָבֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמָּךְ הַלַּיְלָה, תַּחַת
דּוֹדָאֵי בְנֵיךְ

And Reuven went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah: 'Give me, I pray, of your son's mandrakes.' And she said to her: 'Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? and would you take away my son's mandrakes also?' And Rachel said: 'Therefore he [Yaakov] shall lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes.'

RAV SHIMON SHWAB ASKS A POWERFUL QUESTION: HOW COULD LEAH ACCUSE RACHEL OF TAKING AWAY HER HUSBAND?

- ❖ Didn't she know that Rachel made the ultimate sacrifice for her? As we see in the pesukim quoted in the beginning of the session, Rachel sacrificed her happiness so that Leah would not be embarrassed. She handed over her special simanim, the ones that were meant for only her and Yaakov to her sister, so that her sister would not be embarrassed. How could Leah accuse Rachel of taking away Yaakov? This specific pasuk can make one angry at Leah's actions.

BUT RAV SHIMON SHWAB SAYS THAT THERE IS MORE TO THE STORY THAN WE THINK. RACHEL NOT ONLY SACRIFICED HER HAPPINESS FOR HER SISTER, SHE NEVER TOLD LEAH THAT SHE WAS CHOSEN FIRST. SHE JUST CALLED LEAH OVER BEFORE THE WEDDING AND SAID, "HEY, I HAVE A MESSAGE FROM YAAKOV." LEAH NEVER KNEW THAT SHE WAS THE SECOND PICK. SHE WAS SO CAREFUL IN THE MITZVAH OF NOT EMBARRASSING SOMEONE, SHE WENT SO FAR ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY. WE STAND IN AWE OF RACHEL AND HER ACTIONS AND SHOULD TRY AND EMULATE HER WAYS.

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

"Humiliating someone is regarded as an offense against G-d as well as against the person shamed, for when you humiliate someone, you mock G-d in whose image that person was created." -(Bereishit Rabah 24:7)

FROM JUDAISM'S PERSPECTIVE, HUMILIATING SOMEONE IS

*AMONG THE MOST SELF-DESTRUCTIVE ACTS IN WHICH A
PERSON CAN ENGAGE.*

(TALMUD YERUSHALMI CHAGIGA 2:1)

PUTTING OURSELVES IN RACHEL IMENU'S SHOES:

*THINK OF REAL LIFE SITUATIONS THAT WE DEAL WITH ON A DAILY BASIS WITH OUR FAMILY AND
FRIENDS, OR IN SCHOOL.*

- ❖ *HOW RACHEL WOULD REACT IN THOSE SITUATIONS? DISCUSS.*

TZEDAKAH

- ❖ THE RAMBAM ASKS: IF YOU HAD 1000 DOLLARS, SHOULD YOU GIVE ONE PERSON 1000 DOLLARS OR 1000 PEOPLE ONE DOLLAR?
- ❖ WHAT DO YOU THINK IS BETTER?
- ❖ WHY DO YOU THINK THE MITZVAH OF TZEDKAH IS SO IMPORTANT??
- ❖ DO YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD BE OBLIGATED TO GIVE TZEDAKAH?
- ❖ IS THERE A "RIGHT" WAY TO GIVE TZEDAKAH?

הלכה א

חייבין אנו להזהר במצות צדקה יותר מכל מצות עשה, שהצדקה סומן לצדיק זרע אברהם אבינו שנאמר כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו לעשות צדקה, ואינכסא ישראל מתכונן ודת האמת עומדת אלא בצדקה שנאמר בצדקה תכונני, ואיך ישראל נגאלין אלא בצדקה שנאמר ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה.



RAMBAM: HILCHOT MATANOT ANIIM: PEREK ASIRI: "WE ARE TO BE MORE PARTICULAR ABOUT THE COMMANDMENT OF CHARITY THAN ABOUT ANY OTHER POSITIVE COMMANDMENT."

- ❖ Why are we supposed to be so particular about this commandment?
- ❖ What do you need in order to fulfill your obligation?
- ❖ Is it just about money?

RAMBAM'S EIGHT LEVELS OF TZEDAKAH

הלכה ז

שמנה מעלות יש בצדקה זו למעלה מזו, מעלה גדולה שאין למעלה ממנה זה המחזיק ביד ישראל שמך ונותן לו מתנה או הלואה או עושהעמו שותפות או ממציא לו מלאכה כדי לחזק את ידו עד שלא יצטרך לבריות לשאול, ועל זה נאמר והחזקת בו גר ותושב וחי עמך כלומר החזק בו עד שלא יפול ויצטרך.

הלכה ח

פחות מזה הנותן צדקה לעניים ולא ידע למי נתן ולא ידע העני ממי לקח, ש



הרי זו מצוה לשמה כגון לשכת
חשאים שהיתה במקדש, שהיו הצדיקים נותנין בה בחשאי והעניים בני טובים מתפרנסין ממנה בחשאי וקרוב
לזה הנותן לתוך קופה של צדקה, ולא יתן אדם לתוך קופה של צדקה אלא אם כן יודע
שהממונה נאמן וחכם ויודע להנהיג כשורה כר' חנניה בן תרדיון.

הלכה ט

פחות מזה שידע הנותן למי יתן ולא ידע העני ממי לקח, כגון גדולי החכמים שהיו הולכין בסתר ומשליכין המ
עות בפתחי העניים וכזה ראוי לעשות ומעלה טובה היא אם אין הממונן בצדקה נוהגין כשורה.

הלכה י פחות מזה שידע העני ממי נטל ולא ידע הנותן, כגון גדולי החכמים שהיו צוררים המעות בסדיניהן ומפ
שילין לאחוריהן ובאין העניים ונוטלין כדי שלא יהיה להן בושה.

הלכה יא

פחות מזה שיתן לו בידו קודם שישאל.

הלכה יב

פחות מזה שיתן לו אחר שישאל.

הלכה יג

פחות מזה שיתן לו פחות מן הראוי בסבר פנים יפות.

הלכה יד

פחות מזה שיתן בעצב.

RAMBAM HILCHOS MATNOT ANIYIM CHAPTER 10:7-14

8. When donations are given grudgingly.
7. When one gives less than he should, but does so cheerfully.
6. When one gives directly to the poor upon being asked.
5. When one gives directly to the poor without being asked.
4. When the recipient is aware of the donor's identity, but the donor does not know the identity of the recipient.
3. When the donor is aware of the recipient's identity, but the recipient is unaware of the source.
2. When the donor and recipient are unknown to each other.

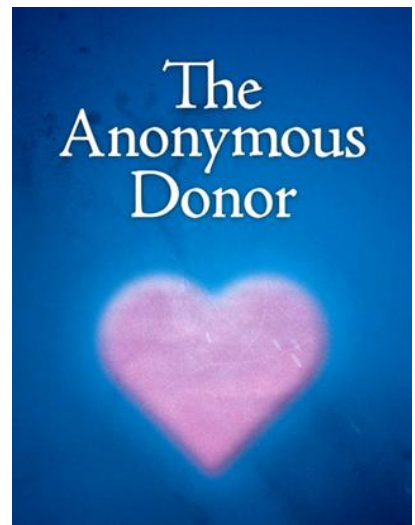
#1 THE HIGHEST FORM OF CHARITY IS TO HELP SUSTAIN A PERSON BEFORE THEY BECOME IMPOVERISHED BY OFFERING A SUBSTANTIAL GIFT IN A DIGNIFIED MANNER, OR BY EXTENDING A SUITABLE LOAN, OR BY HELPING THEM FIND EMPLOYMENT OR ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN BUSINESS SO AS TO MAKE IT UNNECESSARY FOR THEM TO BECOME DEPENDENT ON OTHERS.

- ❖ IF THE RAMBAM HADN'T SET UP THESE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES, DO YOU THINK THAT WE WOULD BE GIVING TZEDAKAH IN THE APPROPRIATE MANNER?
 - ❖ WHY WAS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR THE RAMBAM TO SPELL THE LEVELS OUT FOR US?
-

YOSSELE: HIDDEN GREATNESS

The richest Jew in Kraków in the 17th century was Yossele the Miser. He was known by this title because in the community he was reviled for his stinginess and refusal to contribute to *tzedakah* (charity) despite his great wealth. When the Miser died, the townspeople who long despised him refused to bury his body for several days. Out of scorn, they eventually buried him in the back of the cemetery, an area normally reserved for paupers and other societal outcasts.

Within a week of the Miser's death, strange occurrences began to unfold in the town. All the poor began beseeching the local rabbi for money because the weekly allowances they had regularly been receiving from an anonymous benefactor had ceased arriving. Eventually, the rabbi realized that Yossele was the source of these charitable donations and in fact, the notorious miser was a great Tzadik.



Immediately, the rabbi commanded the entire town to converge on Yossele's grave and beg for forgiveness. And on the tombstone which read "Yossele the Miser," the rabbi added the word *HaTzadik*—the Righteous One. According to the story, the rabbi involved was the famed sage Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller, who requested to be

buried next to the Holy Miser. This is understood as the reason why the grave of the venerated Rabbi Yom-Tov is found at the back of the Remuh Cemetery next to Yossele today.

The tale underlines one of the highest forms of *tzedakah* according to the pre-eminent Jewish philosopher Maimonides — giving anonymously.

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- ❖ WHAT IS SO HARD ABOUT GIVING ANONYMOUSLY?

 - ❖ GIVE A REAL LIFE SITUATION WHEN YOU DID A KIND ACT IN SECRET AND RECEIVED NO PUBLIC CREDIT FOR IT.

 - ❖ WAS IT HARD NOT TO GET CREDIT?
-

SO SHOULD I GIVE 1000 DOLLARS TO ONE PERSON
OR
1000 PEOPLE 1 DOLLAR
THE RAMBAM GIVES US AN ANSWER:

THE RAMBAM SAYS THAT WE SHOULD GIVE 1 DOLLAR TO EACH PERSON SO THAT WE LEARN HOW TO BE GIVING PEOPLE. THE MORE WE GIVE, THE MORE WE WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE.

WHAT WE SEE FROM THIS ANSWER IS THAT THE COMMANDMENT OF CHARITY IS NOT JUST ABOUT HELPING THOSE I NEED. THERE IS ANOTHER PERSON THAT THE COMMANDMENT OF CHARITY SERVES: **OURSELVES**

THE ART OF LISTENING

- ❖ WHAT MAKES SOMEONE A GOOD LISTENER?
- ❖ IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU FIT THIS DESCRIPTION?
- ❖ IN WHAT OTHER WAYS COULD YOU USE SOME IMPROVEMENT? BE HONEST!

THE MASTER LISTENER: REB SHLOMO FREIFELD



REB SHLOMO WAS VISITING ERETZ YISRAEL AND WENT TO DAVEN MINCHA AT THE KOTEL ACCOMPANIED BY HIS BELOVED TALMID, R' MOSHE DOV STEIN. R' MOSHE DOV SPENT A LONG TIME DAVENING, AND WHEN HE WAS FINISHED HE COULDN'T FIND HIS REBBE. SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, R' MOSHE DOV NOTICED A LARGE CLUSTER OF SECULAR ISRAELI TEENAGERS GROUPED TOGETHER AT A BENCH AT THE FAR END OF THE KOTEL PLAZA. HE LOOKED CLOSER AND SAW HIS REBBE SITTING THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CROWD, LISTENING TO THEM, TALKING TO THEM, CONDUCTING IMPROMPTU QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

He didn't just see when others were blind, he heard when others were deaf. When his Talmidim, or any Jew spoke, Reb Shlomo listened. In fact, he was such a good listener that people felt themselves saying things to him that they had never admitted to themselves. In his speeches he would freely quote things that he learned from his Talmidim. He had Talmidim who were doctors, outdoorsmen, historians, and from each he learned things. As one recalls, he would always ask me about my field of expertise, and of course, I felt great, but he was never patronizing. I always felt like he was genuinely interested."

PLEASE JUST LISTEN

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving me advice, you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem. Listen! All I ask is that you listen. Don't talk or do - just hear me.

Advice is cheap - 20 cents will get you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the same newspaper. And I can do for myself; I am not helpless, maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.



When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and inadequacy. But when you accept as a simple fact that I feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can stop trying to convince you and get about this business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling. And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice. Irrational feelings make sense

when we understand what's behind them

So please listen, and just hear me. And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and I will listen to you.

So please listen, and just hear me. And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and I will listen to you
-author unknown

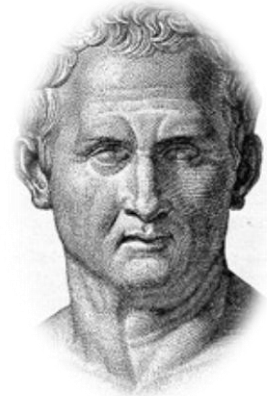
- ❖ Can you describe a time in your life when you wanted someone to listen to you and they did a wonderful job?
- ❖ How has it helped you improve your skills as a listener?

HAKARAT HATOV: APPRECIATING OTHERS

- ❖ How do you show your appreciation for those who help you succeed?

GRATITUDE IS NOT ONLY THE GREATEST OF VIRTUES BUT IT IS THE PARENTS OF ALL THE OTHERS.

-CICERO



WE HELP PEOPLE WHEN WE EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THEM

Study: Peterson and Stewart 1996: Expressing gratitude makes it more likely that: the benefactor will continue to act benevolently. The recipient will be generous to others.

(Bar-tal-1997: reciprocity behavior in the relationship between donor and recipient 40:293-298)

BEING GRATEFUL FOR EVERYDAY THINGS

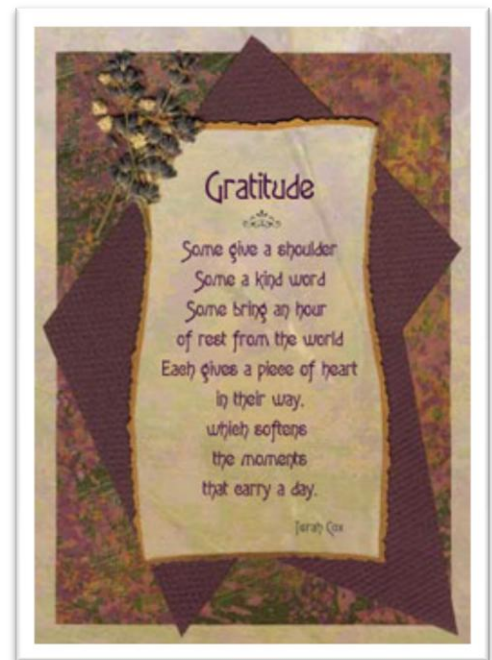
Research shows that people tend to be more grateful for the unexpected they experience less gratitude for benefits rendered by someone who is close to them.

- ❖ How do we fix this in our everyday life?
- ❖ What are ways that we can work on it?

EXPRESSING OURSELVES

Exercise: Emmons R. McCullough: Counting Blessings:
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 94: 377

As a group, write about 5 things you are grateful



for during the past week on GIVE. They can be people, places or things. Anything really. Your advisors will give you some time to gather your thoughts and then you will have a chance to share it with the group.

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

Rabbi Sacks on gratitude:

Don't just thank G-d; thank people. There is almost nothing you can do to bring warmth into someone else's life than simple, honest recognition for something they have done, especially if it's the kind of thing most people take for granted. Do it for your parents, your teachers, your friends, your coaches, the person at the checkout counter, anyone who does the kind of work we often call "thankless."



HOW CAN WE SHOW OUR APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED YOU SUCCEED?

SHARE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF WAYS YOU HAVE APPRECIATED OTHERS OR HAVE BEEN APPRECIATED BY OTHERS THAT HAS STAYED WITH YOU BECAUSE IT WAS SO IMPACTFUL.

FRIENDS: OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET

- ❖ What does it mean to have a friendship?
- ❖ What does it require?
- ❖ Do you think you are a good friend?
- ❖ Is friendship important?
- ❖ Do we “need” friends?

THE VALUE OF A FRIENDSHIP



Warren Buffet, one of the worlds wealthiest individuals, in his Essay “ My Philanthropic Pledge,” in which he promised to donate 99% of his wealth:

*Some material things make my life more enjoyable; many, however, would not. I like having an expensive private plane, but owning a half-dozen homes would be a burden. Too often, a vast collection of possessions ends up possessing its owner. **The asset I most value, aside from health, is interesting, diverse, and long-standing friends.***

ACQUIRE FOR YOURSELF A FRIEND: MISHNA AVOT: 6

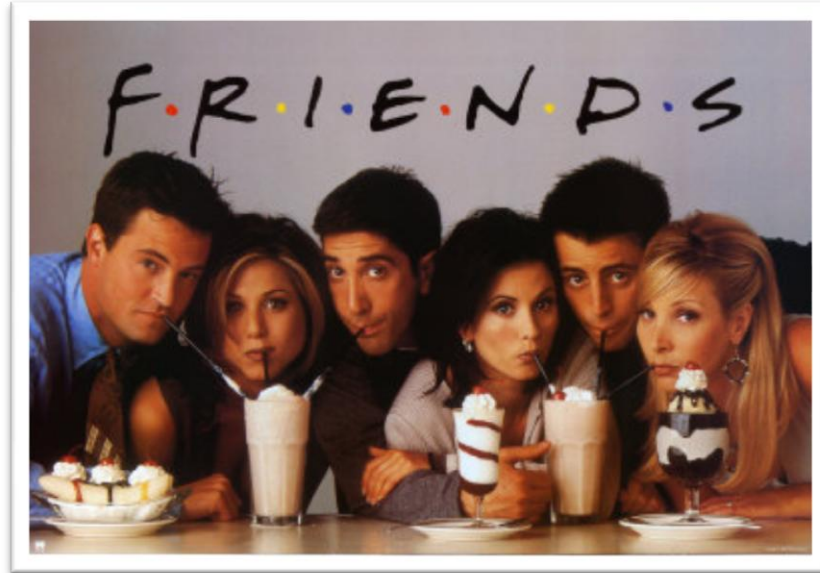
יהושע בן פרחיה ונתאי הארבלי קבלו מהם יהושע בן פרחיה אומר עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר והוי דן את כל האדם לכף זכות:

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Perachya says, "Make for yourself a teacher and acquire for yourself a friend, and judge each person favorably."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ACQUIRE A FRIEND?

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

RESEARCHERS SAY IT TAKES FROM 7 TO 15 SECONDS FOR FIRST IMPRESSIONS TO BE MADE.



- ❖ When people meet you for the first time, what do you want them to think of you?
- ❖ As they walk away, do you think this is what they are thinking or is it something different? If it's not the impression you want them to take away, what could you change?

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

J.K. ROWLING COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

I have one last hope for you, which is something that I already had at 21. The friends with whom I sat on graduation day have been my friends for life. They are my children's godparents, the people to whom I've been able to turn in times of trouble, people who have been kind enough not to sue me when I took their names for Death Eaters. At our graduation we were bound by enormous affection,



by our shared experience of a time that could never come again, and, of course, by the knowledge that we held certain photographic evidence that would be exceptionally valuable if any of us ran for Prime Minister.

So today, I wish you nothing better than similar friendships.

And tomorrow, I hope that even if you remember not a single word of mine, you remember those of Seneca, another of those old Romans I met when I fled down the Classics corridor, in retreat from career ladders, in search of ancient wisdom.

-
- ❖ HOW DO YOU CULTIVATE GOOD FRIENDSHIPS?
 - ❖ HOW DO WE MAKE FRIENDSHIPS LAST LIKE J.K ROWLING DID?
 - ❖ GIVE AN EXAMPLE FROM YOUR OWN LIFE.
-

THE POWER OF WORDS: SHEMIRAT HALASHON

- ❖ Do you feel that what you say matters?
- ❖ Why is it so important to be careful with the words that we say?



CUTTING OUT LASHON HARA FROM OUR LIVES

Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter: The Imrei Emes

Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter (1866-1948), known as the Imrei Emes (after the title of his sefer), was head of the chassidic dynasty of Ger (Poland) and an influential leader of Polish Jewry. In 1924, during a very turbulent period in history, he paid a visit to Eretz Yisrael. From Jerusalem, he sent a letter of instruction to his chassidim in the diaspora.

TO THE BELOVED, PRECIOUS MEMBERS OF OUR GROUP IN POLAND,
MAY YOU BE WELL!

I WISH TO REQUEST OF YOU THE FOLLOWING: AT A TIME OF GREAT
CRISIS-BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY-WE TRUST IN OUR
SAGES' WORDS THAT OUR EXILE IS DUE TO THE GRAVE SINS OF
LASHON HARA (GOSSIP AND SLANDER) AND SINAS CHINAM
(BASELESS HATRED). I THEREFORE IMPLORE YOU TO STRENGTHEN
YOURSELVES REGARDING THESE SEVERE TRANSGRESSIONS.

MY ADVICE TO YOU IS TO STUDY THE SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM AND
SHMIRAS HALASHON ATLEAST ON TWO DAYS PER WEEK.

HEAVEN AND EARTH MAY ATTEST TO THE FACT THAT AFTER I
CONCLUDED STUDYING THESE WORKS I FELT A POSITIVE RESULT IN
MYSELF.

I AM SURE THAT EVEN SOMEONE WITH PERFECT CHARACTER
TRAITS WILL STAND TO GAIN FROM THESE BOOKS...

YOUR DEVOTED ONE, WHO SEEKS YOUR PEACE AND WELL-BEING,

THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF OUR WORDS

“Or, words can effect miracles. Words of encouragement can dispel despair, or even for someone in a terribly difficult situation. Words have the power to take what is ordinary and make It holy. They turn a glass of wine into Kiddush, a loaf of bread into an offering, a man and woman into a couple united through the sanctity of Jewish marriage.”

-Shmirat Halashon-Chofetz Chaim

- ❖ Have you ever used the power of your words to help someone in need?
- ❖ What was the situation?
- ❖ What words did you use?



JEALOUSY

- ❖ HOW COULD G-D COMMAND US NOT TO BE JEALOUS?
 - ❖ IS IT POSSIBLE TO CUT OUT JEALOUSY FROM OUR LIVES?
-

NOT BEING JEALOUS OF OTHERS

Envy is a destructive quality which can cause a person endless anguish in this world, and can eventually remove him from the World to Come. Most people are afflicted with this malady to some extent. There are those who cannot enjoy their own blessings because they are envious of the success of others. Others are inwardly envious although they mouth happiness at the success of a peer. The only cure for this malady is to realize that every blessing and success in the world comes from Hashem, and no one gains or loses because of someone else's successes. When a person can integrate this truth into his personality-that neither his gain or loss is dependant on another's success or failure-only then can he be cured of the malady of envy. (Rabbi Avraham Ehrman)



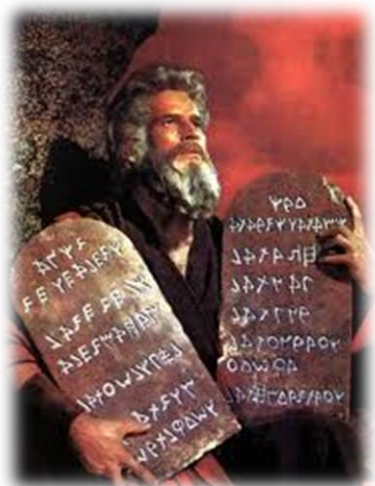
MAKING SURE PEOPLE ARE NOT ENVIOUS OF YOU

It is forbidden to do anything to arouse the envy of others and one should therefore take care not to show off his possessions or success. It is particularly forbidden and unwise as well to provoke the envy of other nations against Israel.

- ❖ Analyze the picture above closely.
- ❖ What are the main features of this picture?
- ❖ Does the girl look sad or happy?
- ❖ What is making her feel the way she feels?

RAV ROSENSWEIG ON JEALOSY

The centerpiece of Parshat Yitro is the Asseres Hadibros. The special significance of these ten themes, the content of the direct divine revelation, is axiomatic...At first glance, however, the fact that this crucial series of mitzvot concludes with the prohibition of Lo Tachmod is puzzling. One would anticipate that a list of this magnitude would begin with a mitzvah that would set the tone for the entire unit, and would culminate with a theme that powerfully conveys the spiritually ambitious agenda of Torah life. The inaugural mitzvah fits this expectation, as it focuses on belief in Hashem, the “foundation of foundations, yesod hayesodot” (Rambam, Hilchot Yesodei Ha-Torah 1:1)



...The conclusion of the aseres hadibros, Lo Tachmod, on the other hand, does not seem to conform with the anticipated pattern. The prohibition against coveting one's neighbors belongings, focusing also on homes, slaves, various animals, and finally,

לא תחמד בית רעהו • לא תחמד אִשֶׁת רעהו וְעַבְדוֹ וְאִמָּתוֹ וְשׂוֹרוֹ וְחִמְרוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֵךְ: פ

“kol asher le-reiechah” hardly seems inspirational or climactic..

However, upon further examination, we can perhaps appreciate more fully the Torah choice, and the symmetry between the beginning and end of this transcendent list of mitzvot. Both the first and concluding mitzvot of the Aseret ha-Dibrot engender significant discussion among commentators inasmuch as each is inherently an attitudinal demand, constituting legislation in the realm of emotions/belief. Herein precisely lies the unique ambition of the Torah insists that man's perspective can and must be shaped by the spiritual-halachic values that give life its purpose. This is true not only with respect to belief in Hashem, without which life would cease to have meaning, but is also true with regard to the equally indispensable value of a proper approach to material goods.

IBN EZRA ON JEALOUSY

לא תחמוד אנשים רבים יתמהו על זאת המצוה, איך יהיה אדם שלא יחמוד דבר יפה בלבו כל מה שהוא נחמד למראה עיניו. ועתה אתן לך משל. דע, כי אישכפרי שיש לו דעת נכונה, והוא ראה בת מלך שהיא יפה, לא יחמוד אותה בלבו שישכוב עמה, כי ידע כי זה לא יתכן. ואל תחשוב זה הכפרי שהוא כאחד מן המשוגעים, שיתאוה שיהיה לו כנפים לעוף השמים, ולא יתכן להיות, כאשר אין אדם מתאוה לשכב עם אמו, אעפ"י שהיא יפה, כי הרגילוהו מנעוריו לדעת שהיא אסורה לו. ככהכל משכיל צריך שידע, כי אשה יפה או ממון לא ימצאנו אדם בעבור חכמתו ודעתו, רק כאשר חלק לו ה'. ואמר קהלת) לאשר (ולאדם שלא עמל בו יתננו חלקו) מה לתב, כא. (ואמרו חכמים, בני חיי ומזוני לאו בזכותא תליא מילתא אלא במזלא. ובעבור זה המשכיל לא יתאוה ולא יחמוד. ואחר שידע שאשת רעהו אסרה השם לו, יותר היא נשגבה בעיניו מבת מלך בלב הכפרי, על כן הוא ישמח בחלקו ואל ישים אל לבו לחמוד ולהתאוות דבר שאינו שלו, כי ידע שהשם לא רצה לתת לו, לא יוכללקחתו בכחו ובמחשבותיו ותחבלותיו, ע"כ יבטח בבוראו שיכלנו ויעשה הטוב בעיניו.

R. Yonah and Ibn Ezra in their Torah commentaries, explain that this prohibition seeks to inculcate the halachic approach to the material world by projecting the ideal of “sameach bichelko”

satisfaction with one's material lot in life, thereby also guaranteeing mutual respect and limiting friction between individuals.

Ibn Ezra (Shemot 20:13) explains that one can condition his thoughts and desires in accordance with halachik principles and ideals as long as one perceives halachik norms as absolute values. He argues that one who is truly committed to Torah observance cannot conceive of violating its principles any more than a simple commoner can realistically dream of marrying into the royal family. Just as a sane individual does not seriously entertain the possibility that he will sprout wings and ascend to heaven, a committed halachik observer is incapable of becoming seriously obsessed with the inappropriate attainment of his fellow's belongings. Thus, Lo Tachmod constitutes an extraordinarily ambitious agenda that is rooted in a pervasive commitment to the notion of a "halachik reality."



ERADICATING JEALOUSY: KNOWING OUR VALUE

הנפש החושפת היטב את התוכן הפנימי שלה

“Hanefesh Hachofeshet heitav et hatochen hapinimi shelah.”

“The free soul is a person who knows her own value.”

Rav Kook: Kitionet Or

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- ❖ HOW DO WE LEARN TO TRULY APPRECIATE OUR OWN VALUE?
 - ❖ CAN UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATING OUR OWN VALUE HELP US NOT LET JEALOUSY AFFECT OUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS?
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JEALOUSY CAUSES US TO LOSE TOUCH WITH OURSELVES

MISHLEI 11:2

בָּא זָדוֹן וַיִּבֹא קִלְוֹן וְאֵת צְנוּעִים חֲכָמָה :

A brazen person ends up disgraced but with modest people comes wisdom.

- ❖ How is brazenness linked with jealousy?
- ❖ What are attributes of a modest person?

MODEST PEOPLE ARE LESS JEALOUS



The **Maharal** says that a brazen person is always jealous because she is always looking at what other people are doing. All of her actions are based on what other people are doing, the latest trend, and not what is good for herself. Jealousy causes a person to lose touch with themselves. They forget who they really were and becomes a person who runs after things, and trends that aren't meaningful. On the other hand, one who is modest about herself knows who they really are. They don't have to run after anyone or be jealous of other people because she knows who she is. She understands that the world is a very deep place and there is a lot of hidden truths and that most "real" things we do not see on the surface.

Therefore modesty helps us not be jealous. The

modest person sees her own beauty and does not get discouraged when she reads a magazine because she understands who she is and her unique beauty, specialness, and power.

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- ❖ **HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH YOUR JEALOUSY OF OTHERS WHEN THEY'VE ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING YOU WISH YOU HAD DONE?**
 - ❖ **IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE PUBLICLY PROUD OF YOUR FRIENDS EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE JEALOUS INSIDE OR IS THIS HYPOCRITICAL?**
-

When a person is asked for advice, he is required to weigh all the relevant considerations and give the best possible advice, exactly as if his own interests were involved. However, if his own interests lead him to suggest anything less than the best possible solution even if that advice is essentially sound but not the best course of action, he violates the commandment not to place a stumbling block before a blind person, as well as the imprecation.

DEVARIM 27:18

אָרוּר מְשַׁגֵּה עוֹר בְּדַרְךְ וְאָמַר כָּל הָעַם אָמֵן:

“Accursed is the one causes a blind person to go astray on the road (Devarim 27:18).

וכן כל המכשיל עור בדבר והשיאו עצה שאינה הוגנת אושחזק ידי עוברי עבירה שהוא עור ואינו רואה דרך ה אמת מפני תאות לבו הרי זה עובר בלא תעשה שנ' ולפני עור לא תתן מכשול. הבא ליטול ממך עצה תן לו עצה ההוגנת לו.

“You shall fear your G-d, to teach us that a person can claim that his intentions are good, but Hashem knows our true intentions and judges us accordingly, (Rabbi Ehrman: Toras Kohanim on Vayikra 19:14; Rambam, Hilchot Rotzeach 12:14)

BUT I WAS ONLY JOKING! ONAAT DIVARIM

- ❖ When do jokes become insults?
- ❖ Can you tease someone without hurting their feelings?
- ❖ Do you care when someone teases you?

ONAAT DEVARIM: DEFINED

TALMUD BAVA METZIAH 58B

אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בן יוחאי: גדול אונאת דברים מאונאת ממון, שזה נאמר בו+ ויקרא כה+ויראת מאלהיך וזה לא נאמר בו ויראת מאלהיך. ורבי אלעזר אומר: זה בגופו וזה בממונו. רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר: זה - ניתן להישבון, וזה - לא ניתן להישבון.

Onaat Devarim is a more serious offense than *onaas mammon*, since money taken wrongfully can be repaid, while pain cannot be undone once it is inflicted. In addition, verbally causing distress affects the victim directly rather than through his money or property.

Concerning this commandment the Torah writes, You shall fear Hashem, to teach us that even though the offender may claim that he intended no harm, Hashem knows a person's true intentions and judges him accordingly. (Rav Avraham Ehrman)

- ❖ Is it ok to tease someone if it is "in good fun?"
- ❖ What if I tease a person in a social setting and everyone laughs even the person who was teased?

SOCIAL INSULTS: THE REAL DEAL

It is common for friends in social settings to insult or provoke one another and to take pleasure in the discomfort they cause. This is forbidden as *onaat devarim* and often violates other prohibitions as well. Such behavior is



prohibited even on Purim. Anyone who has taken part in such talk is required to apologize to the wronged party and ask for forgiveness. "Boy did we get him," implies that the prohibition of *onaat devarim* has been violated. (Rabbi Avraham Ehrman)

It is obviously impossible to list every action which violates this mitzvah, so each person must be on constant alert in all his interactions with others. For example, it is forbidden to belittle a person's opinions or Torah thoughts, or even any question he poses. (Gemara)

"Only a fool would ask such a question!"

Similarly, it is prohibited to remind someone of any misguided or foolish behavior in his past, since it might distress or embarrass him.

"I remember when you..."

Even a gesture or facial expression can cause pain and thereby violates this prohibition. The basic principle is that any word or deed that causes anyone any stress or anguish of any kind is forbidden as *onaat devarim*.



GLOATING OVER PEOPLE'S MISFORTUNES

HEBREW: One should not tell someone who has suffered adversity that he is being punished for his sins. (Choshen Hamishpat 228:4)

BELITTLING NICKNAMES

הלכה יד

כל אחד ואחד מעשרים וארבעה אנשים אלו שמנינו אע"פ שהן מישראל אין להם חלק לעוה"ב, ויש עבירות קלות מאלו ואעפ"כ אמרו חכמים שהרגיל בהן אין להם חלק לעוה"ב וכדי/ וכדאי /הן להתרחק מהן ולהזהר בהן, ואלו הן: המכנה שם לחבירו והקורא לחבירו בכינויו והמלבין פני חבירו ברבים

It is *onaat devarim* to call anyone by a belittling nickname with the intention of causing him discomfort, even if he is so used to the name that it no longer embarrasses him. (Rambam hilchot Teshuva 3:24)

Examples: Old Man, Baby Face, Crazy Head

Is this a reality in your own life?

It is a Torah transgression to make insulting remarks.

Examples: You idiot! You crazy person! What's wrong with you?

HEBREW: This is particularly common among children, and parents and other adults have a responsibility to correct them and to set a good example. (Orach Chaim 343)

EXAMPLES

- ❖ In Social settings, people sometimes call each other by embarrassing names or remind them events in their past of which they are ashamed.
- ❖ People may react to foolish remarks made unthinkingly with ridicule or derisive looks, causing the speaker intense chagrin.

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

“It is actually a simple principle. If one removes negativity, gossip, slander, and divisiveness from one’s vocabulary, one automatically and dramatically improves one’s own life and the lives of everyone in one’s environment. Right here in this world, in everyday life, rewards of Shemirat Halashon shine brightly enough for anyone to see. When King David wrote, “Who is the man who desires life?” He was speaking of the beauty and peace Shmirat Halashon imprints upon life in this world. To understand why the Torah focuses so intently on speech one need take only a cursory look at how words act upon the world. One person can enter a room; speak a few angry words, and quickly set everyone around him on edge. A few careless words between friends can be all that’s needed to forever alter the tenor of their relationship. One derogatory word, which labels another person as slow, sloppy or spoiled, can make that perception true in the minds of all who hear it.” (Chofetz Chaim)



- ❖ How can we train ourselves to remove negative conversation from our repertoire?
- ❖ Is it possible?
- ❖ What are some small steps we could take to improve this?
- ❖ Come up with 10 steps as a group and make sure everyone has a copy to bring home with them at the end of the summer.

APOLOGIZING: ONE OF THE HARDEST ACTS

APOLOGIZING: BY RABBI SACKS:

Apologize to those you've wronged, and forgive those who have wronged you. Emotional energy is too precious to waste it on guilt on the one hand, resentment on the other.

We find it hard to apologize because we are our own best counsel for the defense. We rationalize, justify, make excuses, and are generally willing to blame anyone but ourselves. It wasn't me, or, if it was, I couldn't help it or I didn't mean it. Yet although we think we can persuade the jury, deep down we know we can't convince ourselves. Self-deception always carries too high a price.



One of the odd things about the Hebrew Bible is its devastating honesty. The Israelites blame no one but themselves. We sinned, they said. We drifted, worshipped strange gods, we were ungrateful, disloyal, we dishonoured God. The prophets never blamed other nations, other people or God. They were the polar opposite of the culture of victimhood that has become so popular in recent years. They absorbed all the guilt and turned it into the positive energy of repentance and renewal.

They were able to be honest because they knew that God forgives. In a wholly secular culture, forgiveness is either absent or at best some vague indifference to morality altogether. Forgiveness is not indifference. Apologising is not making excuses. The power of simply being able to say: "I was wrong, I hurt you, I am truly sorry, forgive me" is that it allows honesty to purge our lives of self-righteousness, the most toxic of all emotions.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. WHAT QUALITY DO YOU MOST ADMIRE IN OTHER PEOPLE? IS THIS A QUALITY YOU BELIEVE YOU POSSESS AS WELL? IF NOT, WHAT QUALITY DO YOU POSSESS THAT YOU THINK OTHERS WILL ADMIRE IN YOU?
2. WOULD YOU PREFER TO WORK WITH SOMEONE WHO ALWAYS AGREES WITH WHAT YOU SAY OR SOMEONE WILLING TO DIFFER? WHY?

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3. WHEN SELECTING NEW MEMBERS FOR A TEAM, SHOULD THE LEADER BE ABLE TO EXCLUDE OTHERS BECAUSE SHE OR HE DOESN'T LIKE THEM?
 4. REPUTATION: IS YOUR REPUTATION IMPORTANT TO YOU?
 5. PERSONAL SUCCESS: DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A SUCCESS ACHIEVER OR A FAILURE AVOIDER? EXPLAIN YOURSELF.
 6. WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO TAKE CREDIT FOR THINGS ACCOMPLISHED BY SOMEONE ELSE?
 7. PICK A THEME SONG-REAL OR MADE UP THAT REPRESENTS YOU. SHARE THE TITLE AND SOME OF THE LYRICS.
 8. WHAT IS EASIER TO DO-BE KIND OR BE MEAN? EXPLAIN YOUR RESPONSE, AND IF YOU'RE WILLING, SHARE EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU'VE BEEN BOTH.
 9. LOYALTY: WHAT DOES LOYALTY MEAN TO YOU? WHAT DO YOU DO TO INSPIRE LOYALTY? HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU THAT SOMEONE BE LOYAL OR THAT YOU SHOW LOYALTY?
 10. IN WHAT PROFESSION DO YOU THINK THE BEST LEADERS ARE FOUND? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?
 11. DO YOU PREFER LEADING OR FOLLOWING? WHY? EXPLAIN IF YOUR PREFERENCE CHANGES DEPENDING UPON THE SITUATION YOU'RE IN, AND WHAT IT IS ABOUT DIFFERENT SITUATIONS THAT MAKE IT CHANGE.
 12. IF YOU HAVE A ROLE MODEL, WHAT IS IT ABOUT THAT PERSON THAT MAKES HIM OR HER YOUR ROLE MODEL? IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU CONSIDERED A ROLE MODEL? HAVE YOU OR YOUR ROLE MODEL EVER NOT LIVED UP TO EXPECTATIONS? IF SO, WHAT HAPPENED
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ACTIVITY

**Priorities Game. You are given a certain amount of money and can only give to 7 out of the 10 institutions. What do you keep?
What do you cut?**

**Once they have chosen: tell them there has been budget cuts.
And they have to cut 3 more organizations.**

What would you cut?