



LETTER FROM RAV SHAUL

Shalom Chaverim,

My grandfather had a custom that every year after Tisha B'Av, he would put the Kinot book in Gniza (shaymes), saying next year we will not need it as the Beit Hamikdash will be built. Our Rabbis teach us that every generation that the Beit Hamikdash isn't built, is as if it was destroyed in that generation. This powerful statement by Chazal is teaching us that we aren't just mourning about the past, we are looking at the present and trying to fix what needs to be fixed both personally and nationally in order that we can merit to have the Beit Hamikdash built.

Every year during our summer Machanot, we have the opportunity to run meaningful programs that will both educate us and connect us to the Beit Hamikdash. This year, with most of us at home it may be a bit more challenging. We hope that this booklet will help you connect and reflect on the significance of the Beit Hamikdash for us and the world.

May we all merit to see it back in its glory.

Wishing you a healthy and meaningful 9 days.

Rav Shaul Feldman

Executive Director of Bnei Akiva of the US & Canada



BRICKS TO REBUILDING THE BEIT HAMIKDASH

The second Beit Hamikdash was destroyed, according to our sages, by Sinat Chinam - baseless hatred between people. In a natural way, our teshuvah, our fix, would be to make sure that we are making sure we do our Mitzvot Bein Adam L'chaveiro properly, and thus rebuild the Beit Hamikdash brick by brick.

For each of the 9 days, we will be focusing on one mitzvah that brings people closer together, learning a bit about that mitzvah, thinking about how we can perform that mitzvah, even despite distancing during the coronavirus.

Fulfill each day's challenge to 'rebuild' the Beit Hamikdash on pages 12 & 13.



ROSH CHODESH AV: WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

We begin our rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash, and rectifying the sins of our predecessors with the basis of all Mitzvot Bein Adam Lechaveiro.

Limmud:

<u>ואהבת לרעך כמוך - ספר החינוך רמ״ג</u>

- שורש המצוה ידוע, כי כמו שיעשה הוא בחבירו כן יעשה חבירו בו, ובזה יהיה שלום בין הבריות
- ודיני מצוה זו כלולים הם בתוך המצוה, שכלל הכל הוא שיתנהג האדם עם חבירו כמו
 שיתנהגעם עצמו, לשמור ממונו ולהרחיק ממנו כל נזק, ואם יספר עליו דברים יספרם לשבח
 ונוהגת מצוה זו בכל מקום ובכל זמן

The essence of this mitzvah is known - as he does to his friend, his friend will do to him, and therefore there will be peace amongst them. The rules of the Mitzvah are included within the mitzvah itself, of which the main idea is that he shall relate to others as he would relate to himself, to be careful with his money and keep away any potential damage, and if he would talk about someone else, he would speak of praise.

This Mitzvah applies everywhere, at all times.

Questions to ponder:

- What is the overarching goal of Mitzvot Bein Adam LeChaveiro?
- How many opportunities do you think we have to do this mitzvah over the course of the day?
- What do you think the applications of this mitzvah would be, let's say around the breakfast table?

Challenge of the day:

Do 5 things throughout the day that reflect what you have learned about this mitzvah.



BET AV: THURSDAY, JULY 23

Tzedaka is one of the most basic and simple mitzvot that we can do - give of ourselves to someone else. We give our Tzedaka to the poor so they have what to eat, to building the shul so the community has where to Daven, and to the Beit Midrash so that Torah can be learned. So profound is this mitzvah, that it found its way into the most important elements of all three major religions - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Limmud:

<u>צדקה - רמב״ם, מורה נבוכים, חלק שלישי, פרק נ״ג</u>

ומלת יצדקהי היא נגזרת מיצדקי והוא היושר והיושר הוא - להגיע כל בעל חוק לחוקו ולתת לכל נמצא מן הנמצאות כפי הראוי לו. ולפי הענין הראשון לא יקראו בספרי הנבואה החוקים שאתה חייב בהם לזולתך כשתשלמם יצדקהי - כי כשתפרע לשכיר שכרו או תפרע חובך - לא יקרא זה יצדקהי. אבל החוקים הראויים עליך לזולתך מפני מעלת המדות כרפואת מחץ כל מחוץ יקרא ייצדקה

The term zedakah is derived from zedek, "righteousness"; it denotes the act of giving every one his due, and of showing kindness to every being according as it deserves. In Scripture, however, the expression zedakah is not used in the first sense, and does not apply to the payment of what we owe to others. When we therefore give the hired labourer his wages, or pay a debt, we do not perform an act of zedakah. But we do perform an act of zedakah when we fulfil those duties towards our fellow-men which our moral conscience imposes upon us; e.g., when we heal the wound of the sufferer.

Questions to ponder:

- Why do you think Tzedaka is so central?
- Is it better to give a lot to one Tzedaka cause, or a little to many?

• What do you think is the best form of Tzedaka to give to someone who is poor? Food? Money? A job?

Challenge of the day:

Research different Tzedaka organizations from your computer, each one that has a different goal or target audience. Decide together on an organization that you think would be important to donate to, and donate a symbolic amount, according to your ability.



GIMMEL AV: FRIDAY, JULY 24

The basic premise of this next Mitzvah is empathy. While this Halacha pertains specifically to physically helping someone else, we can easily apply it to reaching out to help someone else, even if their load isn't necessarily physical, but perhaps spiritual or emotional as well. Sometimes we don't realize the opportunities to perform this Mitzvah, but they're there. We just need to look for them.

Limmud:

<u>עזוב תעזוב עימו - משנה תורה, הלכות רוצח ושמירת נפש י״ג:ח׳</u>

מָצָא בֶּהֱמַת חֲבֵרוֹ רְבוּצָה אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵין הַבְּעָלִים עִמָּהּ מִצְוָה לִפְרֹק מֵעָלֶיהָ וְלִטְעֹן עָלֶיהָ שֶׁנֶאֱמַר (שמות כג ה) ״עָזֹב תַעֲזֹב״ (דברים כב ד) ״הָקֵם תָקִים״ מִכָּל מָקוֹם. אִם כֵּן לָמָה נֶאֱמַר עִמוֹ שֶׁאִם הָיָה בַּעַל הַבְּהֵמָה שָׁם וְהָלַךְ וְיָשַׁב לוֹ וְאָמַר לָזֶה שֶׁפָּגַע בּוֹ הוֹאִיל וְעָלֶיךָ מִצְוָה אִם רָצִיתָ לִפְרֹק לְבַדְּךָ פְרֹק הֲבִי זֶה פָּטוּר שֶׁנֶאֱמַר (שמות כג ה) ״עִמוֹ״. וְאִם הָיָה בַּעַל הַבְּהֵמָה זָקֵן אוֹ חוֹלֶה חַיָּב לְטְעֹן :וְלִפְרֹק לְבַדּוֹ

One sees his fellow's animal struggling under its load, even if the owner is not present, it is still a mitzvah to remove the load, and put it on again. So why does it say [with him]? If the owner of the animal went to sit on the side and told that who he met [that who came to help unload] that because the mitzvah is upon you, if you want to unload you may - then he is exempt as it says..... If the owner of the animal was old or sick, it would be obligated to unload by himself.

Questions to ponder:

- Is the purpose for this mitzvah to help the animal from its load, or to help the person? Why?
- If you saw the loaded donkey of a friend, and the loaded donkey of someone you don't like, which should you help first?
- To which other scenarios can we apply this concept?

Challenge of the day:

Aside from easing the burden of your parents by bringing in the Erev Shabbat groceries and helping with the Shabbat preparations, find either the opportunity to help someone unload (you can decide if it's a physical load or emotional-spiritual), OR, help out someone who is old or sick. Or you could do both and get bonus points.



DALED AV: SHABBAT, JULY 25

Today we will be learning about another very important mitzvah, something that many of us probably fail to fully keep, as it is quite difficult. We talk to our friends, our family and aquintainces all the time. Our relationships with others is predominantly based on conversation. Hashem created the world using speech. He said there should be light, and then there was light. But Lashon Hara can destroy the world as well. Today let's try to focus on speech.

Limmud:

<u>שמירת הלשון - רמב״ם הלכות דעות פרק זי</u>

- לא תֵלֵךְ רָכִיל בְּעַמֶיךָ... (ויקרא י״ט: ט״ז)
- הלכה ב אי זהו רכיל זה שטוען דברים והולך מזה לזה ואומר כך אמר פלוני כך וכך שמעתי על פלוני אע״פ שהוא אמת הרי זה מחריב את העולם, יש עון גדול מזה עד מאד והוא בכלל לאו זה והוא לשון הרע, והוא המספר בגנות חבירו אע״פ א שאומר אמת

Who is a gossiper? One who claims things, and goes from one person to another and says, "he said this and that," and "I heard this from him/her." Even if he speaks the truth, this is something that will destroy the world. There is a very big transgression in doing so, and it is a מצוות לא תעשה, and part of it is Lashon Hara. And that is someone who speaks lowly of someone else, even if it is true.

Questions to ponder:

- In the era of social media Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, etc. how does this Halacha apply? Could it be possible that I can't share or repost what someone else says?
- How does Lashon Hara destroy the world?
- Would there be an appropriate time to say Lashon Hara?

Challenge of the day:

Create a small word bank of common words that are routinely used in day to day scenarios. See who can go the longest time without saying those words. The goal of the challenge is to experience the difficulty of guarding one's speech from saying certain things.



HEY AV: SUNDAY, JULY 26

Chesed is one of our core values, as it says, there are 3 things that the world stands upon - Torah, worship, and Gemilut Chasadim. We may be used to thinking of Chesed as volunteering (volunteering is definitely chesed), but it is in reality so much more. Chesed, above all represents our commitment to each other, and expresses our love for each other, and willingness to give, even more than necessary.

Limmud:

<u>חסד - רמב״ם, מורה נבוכים, חלק שלישי, פרק נ״ג</u>

וכבר בארנו בפרוש [מסכת] ״אבות״ שחסד עניינו - הפלגה באיזה דבר שמפליגים בו. ושמשו בו בהפלגת גמילות הטוב יותר. וידוע שגמילות הטוב כולל שני עניינים האחד מהם - לגמול טוב מי שאין חוק עליך כלל והשני - להיטיב למי שראוי לטובה יותר ממה שהוא ראוי. ורוב שימוש ספרי הנבואה במילת חסד הוא בהטבה למי שאין לו חוק עליך כלל. ומפני זה כל טובה שתגיע מאיתו יתברך תקרא חסד

In our Commentary on the Sayings of the Fathers (chap. 5:7) we have explained the expression hesed as denoting an excess [in some moral quality]. It is especially used of extraordinary kindness. Loving-kindness is practised in two ways: first, we show kindness to those who have no claim whatever upon us; secondly, we are kind to those to whom it is due, in a greater measure than is due to them. In the inspired writings the term hesed occurs mostly in the sense of showing kindness to those who have no claim to it whatever. For this reason the term hesed is employed to express every good bestowed upon us by God.

Questions to ponder:

• What are some of the Chasadim that Hashem has done with you that you appreciate most?

- When was the last time you did a chesed for someone else, based on the Rambam's principles? What was it?
- What is a chesed that you can do now, during the Coronavirus mayhem?

Challenge of the day:

Think of a chesed that you can do today: 1) in your home, 2) on your street, and 3) in your community. And then get to work. Behatzlacha! :)



VAV AV: MONDAY, JULY 27

How many times has our suspicion been aroused by someone's action? Whatever he did, it doesn't look good, and we assume that he had malicious intention. Or the opposite - something that we did that was perfectly fine and well intentioned, except it didn't necessarily look that way and we noticed that someone else was questioning if what we were doing was right or wrong. The Torah teaches us about giving benefit of the doubt to our fellow. By doing so, we eliminate the destructive force of doubt and suspicion, and focus on the constructive force of trust.

Limmud:

<u>דן לכף זכות - פניני הלכה ליקוטים בי</u>

מבין מצוות התורה העוסקות ביחסים שבין אדם לחבירו, ישנה מצווה מרכזית: ״ִּבְּצֶדֶק תִּשְׁפֹּט עֲמִיתֶךָ״ (ויקרא יט, טו). ופרשו חכמים שהכוונה לדון את החבר לכף זכות (שבועות ל, א). וכפי שאמרו במשנה במסכת אבות (א, ו): ״הוי דן את כל האדם לכף זכות״. והכוונה שהרואה את חבירו עושה דבר שניתן לפרשו באופן חיובי וניתן לפרשו באופן שלילי, מצווה לפרשו באופן חיובי. וכן השומע על חבירו סיפור שאפשר לפרשו לחיוב או לשלילה ⁻ מצווה לפרשו באופן חיובי

Amongst the Mitzvot of Bein Adam Lechaveiro, is included the very important mitzvah of "Judge your fellow fairly." Our sages have explained that this means to give our fellow the benefit of the doubt, as it says in Masechet Avot, "Always judge every man favorably." The intention is that one sees his fellow do something that can be interpreted as good or as bad, it is a mitzvah to see it as good. Additionally, someone who hears something about someone else, and it can be understood as good or bad, it is a mitzvah to understand it positively.

Questions to ponder:

- Would there be a time when it's not appropriate to give benefit of the doubt? When?
- Sometimes there isn't an equal chance between good and bad. Should we still judge favorably if it seems like 99% he did the wrong thing? 90%?

• Should one judge favorably even if the person who did the action is known as someone who has done bad things; for example, a former convicted felon, or someone who is known for getting into trouble

Challenge of the day:

Think about a TV show or movie that somebody made the mistake of not giving the benefit of the doubt. Watch it again and observe how that character had felt.



ZAYIN AV: TUESDAY, JULY 28

Everyone knows the feeling of losing something important - a favorite toy, a wallet, their award winning milk cow, etc. The feeling of despair after searching the whole house but to no avail is quite discouraging. But don't worry. So many people are on your team helping you find it. Returning one's lost object is a not only great way to make others happy, but also an expression of הלה לזה - that we all look after one another.

Limmud:

<u>השבת אבידה - משנה תורה, הלכות גזילה ואבידה י״א:א׳</u>

- הֲשָׁבַת אֲבָדָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה שֶׁנֶאֱמַר (דברים כב א) ״הָשֵׁב תְשִׁיבִם״. וְהָרוֹאֶה אֲבַדַת יִשִׂרָאֵל וִנִתְעַלֵם מִמֵנָה וֵהֵנִיחָהּ עוֹבֵר בִּלֹא תַעַשֵׂה...
- יייד וְכֵן אִם מָצָא בְּהֵמָה וְהִכִּישָׁהּ נִתְחַיֵּב לְהִטַּפֵּל בָּהּ וּלְהַחֲזִירָהּ אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁאֵינָהּ לְפִי כְּבוֹדוֹ שֶׁהֲרֵי הִתְחִיל בַּמִצְוָה. הֶחֲזִירָהּ וּבָרְחָה אֲפִלּוּ מֵאָה פְּעָמִים חַיָּב לְהַחְזִיר שֶׁנֶאֱמַר (דברים כב א) ״הָשֵׁב תְשִׁיבֵם״ הָשֵׁב אֲפִלּוּ מֵאָה פְעַמִים מַשְׁמָעוֹ
 - **בבא מציעא כ״ח;ב**יַ תנו רבנן: בראשונה, כל מי שמצא אבידה ⁻ היה מכריז עליה שלשה רגלים, ואחר רגל אחרון שבעת ימים...
 - Returning a lost object to a Jew is a Mitzvat Asei. And whoever sees a lost object transgresses and Mitzvat Lo Taaseh

If one found his fellow's animal, he is required to take care of it and return it, even if it is not in his honor to do so, as he has already started the mitzvah.

- If he returned it and it escaped again and he found it, even if it happens 100 times, he is still obligated to return it.
- Our Rabbis taught in a Braita: At first, any one who finds a lost object would announce it over three "Regalim" [Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot]. And then 7 additional days...

Questions to ponder:

• What is the smallest amount of value for which you would be required to do hashavat aveida?

- Is there a situation in which you wouldn't be required to do hashavat aveida?
- To what extent do you need to search for the owners? Lets say you found a \$100 bill on the floor at a hockey game. How would you be able to find the owner?

Challenge of the day:

Call up your friends and hear their stories about when they lost something and somebody returned it. Person who finds the most interesting story wins.



CHET AV: WEDNESDAY, JULY 29

What could be greater than basking in the presence of Hashem? Hachnasat Orchim, apparently. Avraham Avinu taught us a huge lesson when he brought in 3 passersby walking through the desert. While we all enjoy having friends over for shabbat meals, and that, too, is a mitzvah, the true essence of this mitzvah goes back to Avraham Avinu's actions - give food and shelter to those who need.

Limmud:

הכנסת אורחים - פניני הלכה ליקוטים בי: ״הכנסת אורחים״

- שבת קכ״ז:ב׳ אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: גְדוֹלֶה הַכְנָסַת אוֹרְחִין מֵהַקְבָּלַת פְנֵי שְׁכִינָהשאלה: האם
- אפשר כיום לקיים מצוות הכנסת אורחים? שהרי ברוך ה׳ כמעט שלא נותרו אנשים רעבים, כי כמעט
 כל אדם בארצנו יכול להשיג לעצמו מזון לצורך קיומו

תשובה: אמת, נכון שהיום כמעט שאין אנשים רעבים ללחם, וכמעט שאין אנשים שאין להם היכן לישון. אך בכל זאת, ישנם כיום אנשים רבים שזקוקים לסעד ועידוד. המצווה נשארה, אך הדגש השתנה. עובדה היא שבדורנו אין פחות אנשים מדוכאים, אין פחות התאבדויות...ואין כמו מצוות הכנסת אורחים בכדי להפיג את ייסורי נפשם.

כללו של דבר, בזמנינו העוני הקשה ביותר הוא העוני הנפשי, הרוחני. אירוח טוב, אוהד, חם, יכול לחזור ולנטוע בקרבם את האמונה, שיש ערך לחייהם, שאנשים מעריכים אותם, שמחים לשהות במחיצתם ומעונינים לעזור להם.... ואשרי אדם שיודע לראות, מי מחבריו זקוק לעידוד.

• Rabbi Yehuda says in the name of Rav: Hachnasat Orchim is greater than receiving the Divine Presence. (Shabbat 127b)

• Question: Is it possible to fulfill the mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim nowadays, as Baruch Hashem almost nobody is starving, because anybody [in Israel] could get food for sustenance? [Hachnasat Orchim is, in its essence, providing food and shelter to those who don't have.]

• Answer: True, there is almost nobody today starving in the streets, and very few who don't have a place to sleep. However, there are still people who need help and support. The Mitzvah remains, but its focus has shifted. In our generations, despite that relative wealth that is available, there are still those who are depressed, and feeling down. There is nothing like the Mitzvah of Hachnasat Orchim to help calm one's soul pains.

In general, the poverty more prevalent today is the spiritual and emotional poverty. A good hospitality could lift their spirits, strengthen their Emuna, feel appreciated, and help them realize that they are cared for, and people are willing to help them. Praiseworthy is the one who is able to see who amongst his peers that needs helps.



Questions to ponder:

- Who do you think is most needing some form of hachnasat orchim during these times?
- How do you think children elementary school aged can help do this mitzvah?
- What examples of hachnasat orchim can you think of that we could practice in our respective communities?

Challenge of the day:

Try to find a new family in your community that might have kids in your class. Arrange them a nice and modest corona-friendly gift basket, and welcome them.

OR

Perhaps you know of someone who might need some spiritual or emotional help - a grandparent, a friend, etc. Give them a call, or play an online game with them.



TISHA B'AV: THURSDAY, JULY 30

Feeling sick is awful. Feeling while being alone is even worse. There are two kinds of medicine that will help us recover: one that calms the symptoms or fight the disease (or pain from surgery) and one that fills our hearts with love and puts a smile on our face. Science suggests that happier patients get better faster, and that happiness aides our immune systems. If that's the case, this Gemara is no surprise...

Limmud:

<u>ביקור חולים - תלמוד בבלי נדרים מ׳: אי</u>

מעשה בתלמיד אחד מתלמידי ר׳ עקיבא שחלה לא נכנסו חכמים לבקרו ונכנס ר׳ עקיבא לבקרו ובשביל שכיבדו וריבצו לפניו חיה א״ל רבי החייתני יצא ר׳ עקיבא ודרש כל מי שאין מבקר חולים כאילו שופך דמים כי אתא רב דימי אמר כל המבקר את החולה גורם לו שיחיה וכל שאינו מבקר את החולה גורם לו שימות

Rav Helbo fell ill. There was no one who came to visit him. Rav Kahana said to the Sages: Didn't the incident involving one of the students of Rabbi Akiva who became sick transpire in that manner? In that case, the Sages did not enter to visit him, and Rabbi Akiva entered to visit him and instructed his students to care for him. And since they swept and sprinkled water on the dirt floor before the sick student, he recovered. The student said to Rabbi Akiva: My teacher, you revived me. Rabbi Akiva went out and taught: With regard to anyone who does not visit the ill, it is as though he is spilling blood, as it could be that the sick person has no one to care for him. If there are no visitors, no one will know his situation and therefore no one will come to his aid. When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia he said: Anyone who visits the ill causes that he will live, and anyone who does not visit the ill causes that he will die.

Questions to ponder:

• Does this mitzvah have the same weight for sick people that we know vs. dont know? If no, then which one would be greater?

- Can you fulfill this mitzvah over the phone or zoom?
- Would it be a mitzvah to visit a sick person who is unresponsive?

Challenge of the day:

Go visit/call/zoom someone who is sick or not feeling well, and say Tehillim with them. Bonus: watch this movie clip to illustrate the message of bikur cholim. Parent supervision is recommended to turn off afterwards as there is no knowing what youtube will lead to next! Clip is clean and appropriate. https://youtu.be/Pr9ruvxA3K4



"REBUILD THE BEIT HAMIKDASH"

Instructions: cut out the rectangle bricks and each day after completing the challenge, stick on a brick to help build the foundation of the third Beit Hamikdash.



PRIZE:

After the 9 days - email a photo to office@bneiakiva.org or share your photo with us on social media @bneiakivausc and we will send you a small token of our appreciation for helping rebuild the next Beit Hamikdash!





TISHA B'AV: A DIFFERENT NIGHT

As we enter into Tisha B'Av, use the following as a springboard for discussion before or after the Seudah HaMafseket.

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?

- שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלים ביחד כמשפחה. הלילה הזה לבד
- שכבל הלילות אנו אוכלים מיני מאכלים. הלילה הזה תבשיל אחד
- שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלים מיושבים בשולחן. הלילה הזה על הרצפה
 - שבכל הלילות אנו אוכלים שמחים ובתקווה. הלילה הזה באבלות

Why is this night different from all other nights?

- On all other nights we eat together as a family. Tonight we eat alone.
- On all other nights we eat from various dishes. Tonight we only eat one.
- On all other nights we eat sitting around the table. To night we sit on the floor.
- On all other nights we eat joyously and hopeful. Tonight we mourn.

