



# DEFINING MIVTZA AHAVAS YISROEL

*On Chai Elul 5736, the Rebbe launched the last of the Ten Mivtzoim - Mivtza Ahavas Yisroel. At a farbrengen a week later, the Rebbe responded to questions asked about the nature of the mivtza and precisely what action it requires:*

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When many of the mivtzoim were launched, it was understood that they were more than just a reminder to do the mitzvos as they were being done until then. These specific campaigns were not only meant to add an extra emphasis in these areas, but more importantly to focus on the **practical** steps to be taken to achieve these goals. For example:

**Mivtza Torah:** We should learn more Torah, and learn it better.

**Mivtza Tefillin:** There is a double-mission: To be extra careful in our own tefillin and make sure to have *kavanah* when putting them on. Additionally, we should ensure that every Yid within our sphere of influence should put tefillin on properly.

**Mivtza Mezuzah:** Make sure every Jewish home has a kosher mezuzah and that it is installed in the correct place.

**Mivtza Tzedakah:** A *pushka* should be installed in every house. This is so that even on Shabbos and Yom Tov (when we cannot give *tzedakah*) it will serve as a reminder that we, and our homes, have all the extra *zechusim* that giving *tzedakah* achieve.

**Mivtza Bayis Malei Sefarim:** There should be *sefarim* in every Jewish home. This accomplishes two things: Firstly, as with *tzedakah*, just having *sifrei kodesh* in the house serves as a reminder of the zechus of Torah. Secondly, there's a strong likelihood that if the books are already there, someone in the family will pick one up and learn from them. Once they start learning, and see how great Torah is, they'll be inspired to learn more and more.

**Mivtza Neiros Shabbos Kodesh:** We must see to it that the "flame of mitzvos and light of Torah" shines in every Jewish home. Sarah Imeinu's



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לזכות הת' שמואל אלחנן שיחי'  
דרימער  
לרגל הכנסו לעול מצוות כ"ה אייר  
ה'תשע"ז  
נדפס ע"י זקניו  
הרה"ת ר' שלמה וזוגתו מרת חי' שי'  
דרימער



candles remained (physically) lit from one Friday to the next. Although ours do not remain lit physically, their spiritual effect in illuminating the home lingers on until the next Friday afternoon comes around and it is time to light again.

**Mivtza Kashrus:** Make sure that there is Kosher food and drink readily available for all. The food we eat becomes the blood keeping us alive, and as we know from Chassidus, the type of food we eat affects us.

**Mivtza Chinuch:** We must make sure that every Jewish child receives an education as Torah sees fit. We must teach the child and prepare him so that, "Even in his old age, he will not turn away from it."

However, when *mivtza ahavas Yisrael* was launched, people were asking what sort of practical steps they were meant to take. The reason there were no specific

instructions was because of how all-encompassing this mitzva is.

*Ahavas Yisrael* can be expressed with *sefiras hachochmah*, by learning Torah with another person. It can be expressed through *middos*, by acting friendly with other people. It can of course also be expressed in action by helping someone out physically.

"Love your fellow as yourself" cannot be broken down to a particular set of rules. In all areas of life, you must treat the other person's needs equally as your own. Every one of your actions can be used for helping others.

For those who nevertheless need one explicit definition to hold on to, there is the following:

In every shul, there should be an *ahavas Yisrael* campaign, by establishing a "foundation," whether for giving out loans or other types of tzedakah. Everyone should be a member of one of these foundations.

Obviously one must be a member of the foundation in his own shul, but if he wants to add and join in with another group, or with several other foundations, that is even better (תבוא עליו ברכה).

It is said that on Simchas Torah the Arizal would hold *hakafo*s in his own shul, and then join with other shuls in their celebrations. The fact that this was repeated in future generations, and even printed in the *siddur*, means that there is a practical lesson to be learned, which applies to everyone. The lesson being that, as mentioned above, one should not feel limited and can and should join in with several shuls in their tzedakah organizations.

This is in addition to the main point of *ahavas Yisrael*, which is that in every way that one expresses love for himself, he should do the same for his fellow Yid. **T**

(Based on sichas 29 Elul 5736)