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Taryag [Mitzvot](cmds613.html)

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# Introduction

As I was [teaching](teacher.html) a class on the Rambam’s *Sefer Yad ha-Hazaka* (ספר יד החזקה) “Book of the Strong [Hand](fourteen.html)”,[[1]](#footnote-1) I realized that I had never written about the important subject of the *Taryag* (תרי”ג‎)[*mitzvot*](cmds613.html),[[2]](#footnote-2) the 613 [commands](cmds613.html)[[3]](#footnote-3) (or connections) contained in the Torah. This paper is an attempt to correct that oversight.

It is well [known](daat.html) that there are [six](six.html) hundred and [thirteen](thirteen.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html) ([commandments](cmds613.html)), or connections to [HaShem](hashem.html), contained in the Torah. These 613 [mitzvot](cmds613.html) consist of [two](two.html) hundred and [forty](forty.html)-[eight](eight.html) (248) positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html), which are active [commands](cmds613.html) to perform specific deed. The other [three](three.html) hundred and sixty-[five](five.html) (365) are “negative [commandments](cmds613.html)”, [commands](cmds613.html) to abstain from certain actions.

These connections or [commandments](cmds613.html) are also referred to collectively as the “[Law](law.html) of Moses” (*Torat Moshe*, תורת משה), “Mosaic [Law](law.html)”, or simply “the [Law](law.html)“.

Although there have been many attempts to codify and enumerate the [commandments](cmds613.html) contained in the Torah, the traditional view is based on Maimonides’ enumeration. A complete list of these 613 [mitzvot](cmds613.html), according to Maimonides, can be found here: CMDS613.

According to Chazal,[[4]](#footnote-4) the 365 negative [mitzvot](cmds613.html) (“Thou shall not...”), represent 365 different tendons and veins in our [bodies](body.html). Therefore, practicing each [mitzva](cmds613.html), or in the case of “negative” [mitzvot](cmds613.html), negative [commandments](cmds613.html) which instruct us to abstain from certain acts, or help a specific part of our [body](body.html) to remain strong, [physically](physical.html) and [spiritually](physical.html). Over the years, our Hakhamim[[5]](#footnote-5) would recommend specific [mitzvot](cmds613.html) to people who sought healing for specific ailments affecting specific [organs](body.html).

[Three](three.html) types of negative [commandments](cmds613.html) fall under the precept that “[One](one.html) should let himself be killed rather than violate them”. These are *murder*, [*idolatry*](idolatry.html), and *forbidden sexual relations*.[[6]](#footnote-6) These apply to those situations where we are forced by another man to perform these acts. As we shall see, there are times and circumstances where [one](one.html) can voluntarily violate [one](one.html) of the above and still perform a [mitzva](cmds613.html).

The 613 [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are divided into [three](three.html) general categories. The [first](one.html) category of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are called *mishpatim*. These include [commandments](cmds613.html) that are logical and make sense, such as not killing or not stealing. The next category of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are called *Eidut*. These stand as testimonies in Judaism. For example, the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) testifies to the fact that [HaShem](hashem.html) created the [world](worlds.html) in [six](six.html) days and rested on the [seventh](seven.html) day and declared it holy. A [third](three.html) category of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are called *chukim* whose logic is not discerned by most people.

Given 248 positive and 365 negative [mitzvot](cmds613.html), an immediate question comes to mind: Which is more important, the positive or the negative [commands](cmds613.html)?

To answer this question it is necessary to understand that [HaShem](hashem.html) put us in the [world](worlds.html) to accomplish a task. Each of us has a general mission and a specific mission. The general mission is to perform what is [known](daat.html) as [*Tikkun*](tikkun.html) *Olam*, the correction of the [world](worlds.html). This mission is to restore the [world](worlds.html) that [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon crashed. The specific mission is bound up in our [name](name.html) and its meaning. Since we are here to do a job (general), we need a set of requirements that define this general mission. The positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) form these requirements.

The positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) contains some requirements that pertain only to women, some that pertain only to the Levites, some that pertain only to [priests](priests.html), some that pertain only to the [High Priest](priests.html). Thus, we understand that to any [one](one.html) individual, there are fewer than 613 [commandments](cmds613.html).

The performance of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html), that apply to us, have general principles that guide us in the performance of these [mitzvot](cmds613.html). Lets begin by examining these principles and then look at some examples to help us understand the principles.

# I. Do The Positive [Mitzvot](cmds613.html)

In general, [*Tikkun*](tikkun.html) *Olam* (תיקוןעולם) demands that we ‘do’ something to rebuild or correct the [world](worlds.html). These are the 248 positive [commandments](cmds613.html). It is the performing of these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that will correct the [world](worlds.html) and restore it to the state it was in, before the [sin](sin.html) of [Adam](adam.html). The negative [commandments](cmds613.html) have the effect of causing a blemish in the [world](worlds.html). However, our mission is *not* to ‘not blemish’ the [world](worlds.html). We are *not* here to preserve the status quo. We are here for a purpose! We have a job to do! We were *not* put here to sit back and do nothing. We are supposed to ‘do’ something. It is our job to repair the [world](worlds.html).

An amazing thing happens when we perform the positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html), besides the repair of the [world](worlds.html). When we perform these positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) we learn to love [HaShem](hashem.html) and to draw near to Him. It is the performance of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) which allow us to bask in His presence and light. Thus, we understand that there is more to the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) then performing religious obligations by rote. There is something marvelous and mystical about these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) which change us into human beings who can have a relationship with [HaShem](hashem.html). When we repair the [world](worlds.html), we repair ourselves. It is no wonder that Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that man is a microcosm of the [world](worlds.html)!

There can be no greater [insight](insights.html) than to perceive the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) as highly treasured items whose value far exceeds gold.

To seek out the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) and run to perform them is the right of every [Jew](gen-jew.html). We can now understand why [HaShem](hashem.html) gave us so many [mitzvot](cmds613.html): [HaShem](hashem.html) seeks to give us as much reward as we are willing to [gather](gather.html) in. Instead of just giving us a few different kinds of valuables, He gave us a great [number](nchart.html), as numerous as the [seeds](flower.html) in the pomegranate. [HaShem](hashem.html) *greatly* [desires](needs.html) that we find reward in every [mitzvot](cmds613.html) we do in order that we can obtain the fantastic reward that He has planned.

Because there is great reward for the [mitzvot](cmds613.html), it behooves us to understand ‘how’ and ‘when’ to perform them. The Written Torah and the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html) were put together so that we could discern ‘how’ and ‘when’ to perform these [mitzvot](cmds613.html). Never the less, because we have so many [mitzvot](cmds613.html) with varying degrees of reward, we have some general principles to guide us in our performance of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

This leads us to the [first](one.html) principle that we need to learn and take to [heart](body.html):

*The performance of the positive* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *is primary, avoiding the negative* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *is secondary.*

In general, we need to repair the [world](worlds.html) with our deeds.

Simply doing nothing, in order to avoid sinning, is unacceptable!

Do we concern ourselves with the removal of tons of [rock](rock.html) in our [desire](needs.html) to extract diamonds from the earth? No! In the same vein, when we keep our [eyes](body.html) on the prize set before us, then we will understand the value of diligently pursuing these fantastic [mitzvot](cmds613.html)!

***I Corinthians 9:24***[*Know*](daat.html) *ye not that they which run in a race run all, but* [*one*](one.html) *receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*

Therefore, when we have a [mitzva](cmds613.html) in front of us and a minor negative [mitzva](cmds613.html) hindering us, then we should perform the positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) and ignore the minor negative [mitzva](cmds613.html). (Please be aware that there is no substitute for Torah [study](study.html) to help us discern what is a minor transgression.)

To reinforce this idea, let’s take a look at a few examples.

## Filling the Earth vs. Incest

After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot’s daughters believed that they were the last people on earth. They resolved to perform a [mitzva](cmds613.html) that would allow them to repopulate the [world](worlds.html), as we can see from the Torah.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 19:30-31*** *And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his* [*two*](two.html) *daughters with him; for he feared to* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his* [*two*](two.html) *daughters. 31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:*

It is well [known](daat.html) that most women would find it repulsive to [sleep](mashal.html) with their [fathers](fathers.html). How much more so those who were of [Avraham](avraham.html)’s [household](househld.html)! Did the daughters derive pleasure from [sleeping](mashal.html) with their father? G-d forbid! So, why did they [sleep](mashal.html) with him? They slept with their father only in order to “multiply and fill the earth”.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) us that there is significant reward for those who run to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

***Nazir 23b*** *R. Hiyya b. Abin said: R. Joshua b. Korha said: A man should always be as alert as possible to perform a precept, for as reward for anticipating the younger by* [*one*](one.html) *night, the elder daughter [of Lot] was privileged to appear in the genealogical record of the royal house of Israel,* [*four*](four.html)[*generations*](toldot.html) *earlier.*

Thus even though they found it disgusting, never the less they performed the [mitzva](cmds613.html) even though it meant committing the [sin](sin.html) of incest. Our Sages [teach](teacher.html) that this was a [*sin*](sin.html) *for the sake of* [*heaven*](heaven.html). This [*sin*](sin.html) *for the sake of* [*Heaven*](heaven.html) can only be carried out by a woman because they are the only ones who could do it without any personal benefit.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Jael made love [seven](seven.html) times to Sisera in order to weaken, exhaust, kill him. This [sin](sin.html) for the sake of [heaven](heaven.html) had a great reward. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) us that a [sin](sin.html) for the sake of [heaven](heaven.html) can cause [one](one.html)’s [name](name.html) to be written in the Tanach[[8]](#footnote-8) as being greater than the Matriarchs.

***Horayoth 10b*** *R. Nachman b.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: A transgression with good intent is more meritorious than the performance of a* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *with no intent; for it is said, Blessed above women Jael be,[[9]](#footnote-9) the wife of Heber the Kenite, above women in the tent shall she be blessed.[[10]](#footnote-10)*

The results of the sexual [intercourse](marriageact.html), between Lot’s daughters and Lot, were [two](two.html) boys: Amman and [Moab](stages.html). From these [two](two.html) would descend the peoples who would be [known](daat.html) as the Ammonites and the Moabites. From these [two](two.html) people would descend [two](two.html) women who would become a part of the messianic line. From the Moabites we would find [*Ruth*](ruth.html), and from the Ammonites we would find *Naamah*. The Tanach [teaches](teacher.html) about these [two](two.html) good doves:

[Ruth](ruth.html) would beget Obed by Boaz. Obed would beget Jesse, and Jesse would beget King David. [Ruth](ruth.html) was the great grandmother of King David who was a significant part of the messianic line.

[***Ruth***](ruth.html) ***4:21-22*** *And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, 22 And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.*

Naamah the Ammonitess was the wife of Solomon and the mother of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was also a part of the messianic line.

***I Melachim (Kings) 14:21*** *And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was* [*forty*](forty.html) *and* [*one*](one.html) *years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, the* [*city*](city.html) *which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *did choose out of all the* [*tribes*](tribes.html) *of Israel, to put his* [*name*](name.html) *there. And his mother’s* [*name*](name.html) *was Naamah an Ammonitess.*

Thus these [two](two.html) doves[[11]](#footnote-11) who were ‘found’ in Sodom would become great in Israel and would become so great that they would become a part of the Tanach and of the line that would produce the [Mashiach](mashiach.html)! This was the result of that ‘[sin](sin.html) for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html)’ that took place after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis XLI:4*** *HAD FLOCKS, AND HERDS, AND TENTS. R. Tobiah b. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: He had* [*two*](two.html) *tents, viz.* [*Ruth*](ruth.html) *the Moabitess and Naamah the Ammonitess. Similarly it is written, Arise, take thy wife, and thy* [*two*](two.html) *daughters that are found (Gen. XIX, 15): R. Tobiah said: That means* [*two*](two.html) *‘finds’, viz.* [*Ruth*](ruth.html) *and Naamah. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *commented: I have found David My servant (Ps. LXXXIX, 21): where did I find him? In Sodom.*

If [one](one.html) were to look carefully throughout the Tanach, he would never find a condemnation of Lot’s daughters. From this result we can understand that performance of a positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) can have positive [consequences](conseq.html) in the [world](worlds.html) despite have a minor negative consequence. Thus we understand that when we have the opportunity to perform a positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) at the expense of a negative [mitzva](cmds613.html), we should *do* the positive [mitzva](cmds613.html).

## [Tzitzit](tzitzith.html) vs. Shatnez

Chazal[[12]](#footnote-12) also [teach](teacher.html) that the positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) take precedence over the minor negative [mitzvot](cmds613.html) in some ways that are not easily discerned at [first](one.html) blush. For these difficult cases Chazal have attempted to clarify the issues so that we can collect the reward for these [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

Consider the case of a man who can fulfill the [mitzva](cmds613.html) to wear [tzitzit](tzitzith.html), but only if he wears a garment of wool and linen, which is forbidden. In this case we are faced with the choice of fulfilling a positive [mitzva](cmds613.html), but only at the expense of transgressing a negative [mitzva](cmds613.html).

The Torah [teaches](teacher.html) us that a man should *not* wear a garment of mixed wool and linen (Shatnez). This is a negative [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 22:11*** *Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together.*

We are also commanded to wear [tzitzit](tzitzith.html). This is a positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 15:38-40***[*Speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them* [*fringes*](tzitzith.html)(tzitzit) *in the borders of their garments throughout their* [*generations*](toldot.html)*, and that they put upon the fringe* (tzitzit) *of the borders a ribband of blue: 39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe* (tzitzit)*, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the* [*commandments*](cmds613.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own* [*heart*](body.html) *and your own* [*eyes*](body.html)*, after which ye use to go a whoring: 40 That ye may remember, and do all my* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, and be holy unto your G-d.*

In addition, the Torah puts these [two](two.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html) together in the Torah. They are put together so that we can use a hermeneutical rule[[13]](#footnote-13) which will bring clarity to these [mitzvot](cmds613.html). hermeneutical rules were given to us to allow us to use them as tools to mine the fantastic rewards which are bound up in the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). Consider them to be like the pick, the shovel, and dynamite that a miner uses to extract the gold from a mine.

The [two](two.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html), [tzitzit](tzitzith.html) and Shatnez, which the Torah puts together are found in Debarim.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 22:11-12*** *Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together. 12 Thou shalt make thee* [*fringes*](tzitzith.html)(tzitzit) *upon the* [*four*](four.html) *quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.*

Rashi, on Debarim 22:11-12, quoting from the [Gemara](orallaw.html) in Yevamot 4a, says that the positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) of [tzitzit](tzitzith.html) supersedes the negative [mitzva](cmds613.html) of Shatnez.[[14]](#footnote-14) Therefore, in the case of a linen garment, the [mitzva](cmds613.html) to put [tzitzit](tzitzith.html), with the Techelet (Blue String of wool), overrides the prohibition of Shatnez.

Thus we understand that if we are faced with a circumstance where we can wear [tzitzit](tzitzith.html) only by wearing them on a garment of Shatnez, then we should *do* the positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) and wear the [tzitzit](tzitzith.html) even though we are transgressing the negative [mitzva](cmds613.html) of Shatnez.

## Prevarication vs. Shalom Bayit

Some positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) are so important that even [HaShem](hashem.html) will transgress a negative [mitzva](cmds613.html) in order to perform [one](one.html) of these special positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

[Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition [teaches](teacher.html) that being nice to other people is extremely important. In [Hebrew](hebrew.html), this value is [known](daat.html) as *shalom bayit* - שלום בית, which means “peace in the home.” *Shalom bayit* means that we should always work hard to create shalom (peace) in our *bayit* (home). Parents should be loving to each other and to children, children should be loving to each other, to parents, and friends.

The value of *shalom bayit* is so important that sometimes, in very difficult situations, we should break other rules in order to keep peace between people. In the Torah (Genesis 18), there is a story about [Avraham](avraham.html) and Sarah when they were quite old, old enough to be grandparents. An [angel](angels.html) comes to tell them that soon they are going to have a baby! Sarah was very surprised. She laughed, and whispered to herself, “Could it really happen that I will have a child, when [Avraham](avraham.html) is so old?” Later, [HaShem](hashem.html) told [Avraham](avraham.html) what Sarah said, except that [HaShem](hashem.html) changed her words around. [HaShem](hashem.html) told [Avraham](avraham.html), “Why did Sarah [laugh](mashal.html), saying ‘Could it really happen that I will have a child when I am so old?’”

We find this amazing [event](feasts.html) in the earliest book of the Torah.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 18:1-13*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; 2 And he lift up his* [*eyes*](body.html) *and looked, and, lo,* [*three*](three.html) *men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, 3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *thee, from thy servant: 4 Let a little water, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *you, be fetched, and wash your* [*feet*](heel.html)*, and rest yourselves under the tree: 5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. 6 And* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly* [*three*](three.html) *measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. 7 And* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. 8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did* [*eat*](eating.html)*. 9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the* [*time*](time.html) *of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. 11 Now* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13 And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, Wherefore did Sarah* [*laugh*](mashal.html)*, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which [Sarah] am old?*

Note that Sarah laughed because she told [HaShem](hashem.html) that [Avraham](avraham.html) was old. Yet, when [HaShem](hashem.html) retold the [event](feasts.html), He said she laughed because *she* was old. For the sake of peace (shalom Bayit) between Sarah and [Avraham](avraham.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) changed her words.

Shalom bayit is considered so fundamental to [Jewish](gen-jew.html) life that even [HaShem](hashem.html) Himself told a lie to make sure that [Avraham](avraham.html) and Sarah would have shalom bayit. After being told by [angels](angels.html) that they will conceive a child in their old age, Sarah laughs, not believing that it can be true. She says, “After I am old shall I have pleasure, my husband being old also?” When [HaShem](hashem.html) speaks to [Avraham](avraham.html), He says, “Why did Sarah [laugh](mashal.html) and say, ‘Will I have a child, now that I am old?”.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Our Hakhamim comment, in the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html), that [HaShem](hashem.html) omitted Sarah’s mention of [Avraham](avraham.html)’s advanced age out of concern for their shalom bayit.[[16]](#footnote-16)

***Yevamot 65b*** *R. Ile’a further stated in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Eleazar son of R. Simeon:* [*One*](one.html) *may modify a statement in the interests of peace; for it is said in Scripture[[17]](#footnote-17), Thy father did* [*command*](cmds613.html) *etc. so shall ye say unto* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*:* [*Forgive*](forgive.html)*, I* [*pray*](prayer.html) *thee now, etc.[[18]](#footnote-18) R. Nathan said: It[[19]](#footnote-19) is a* [*commandment*](cmds613.html)*; for it is stated in Scripture, And Samuel said: ‘How can I go? If Saul hear it, he will kill me’, etc.[[20]](#footnote-20)*

*At the School of R. Ishmael, it was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: Great is the cause of peace. Seeing that for its sake even the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, modified a statement; for at* [*first*](one.html) *it is written, My lord being old,[[21]](#footnote-21) while afterwards it is written, And I am old.[[22]](#footnote-22)*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Leviticus IX:9*** *Bar Kappara said* [*three*](three.html) *things: Bar Kappara said: Great is peace, for the Scriptures reported in the Torah a prevarication which was used in order to maintain peace between* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *and Sarah. This is proved by what is written, And Sarah laughed within herself, saying:... and my master is old (Bereshit 18:12); but [when He repeated this] to* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, He said: [Sarah said]: And I am old (ib. 13).[[23]](#footnote-23) Bar Kappara said another thing: Great is peace, for in the Prophets, too, did Scripture report a prevarication which was used for the purpose of maintaining peace between husband and wife, as it is said, And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her: Behold now, thou art barren, and hast not borne; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son (Judges 13:3). When he* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to Manoah, the* [*angel*](angels.html) *did not say thus, but: Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware (ib. 13)[[24]](#footnote-24) For all that,[[25]](#footnote-25) she* [*needs*](needs.html) *medicinal drugs.[[26]](#footnote-26) Bar Kappara said yet another thing: Great is peace. If* [*celestial*](celestal.html) *beings among who there is neither jealousy, nor hatred, nor rivalry, nor strife, nor lawsuits, nor dissension, nor the evil eye, have need, nevertheless, of peace, as it is written, He maketh peace in His high places,[[27]](#footnote-27) how much more so then do earthly beings, among whom all those dispositions exist, [have need of peace].*

Why did [HaShem](hashem.html) change Sarah’s words? Our Hakhamim [teach](teacher.html) us that [HaShem](hashem.html) did not want to hurt [Avraham](avraham.html)’s feelings and cause [Avraham](avraham.html) and Sarah to fight, so [HaShem](hashem.html) told a small lie. This story [teaches](teacher.html) that *shalom bayit,* peace among families, is so important that sometimes it is better to tell a small lie than to say something that will cause a big fight.

(Don’t get carried away here. A minor changing of words is permitted, not the cover-up of [wicked](wicked.html) or evil deeds.)

# II. Give precedence to closer [Mitzvot](cmds613.html)

The second principle is found delineated in our [prayers](prayer.html) as described in the siddur[[28]](#footnote-28) and machzor.[[29]](#footnote-29) In the [prayer](prayer.html) book we find that whenever there is mention of the [festivals](festivals.html) and the [sabbath](sabbath.html), we always mention the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) before we mention the particular [festival](festival.html).

When the Torah wishes to [speak](mashal.html) about the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) and the [festivals](festivals.html), it begins with the [Sabbath](sabbath.html). Consider the following Torah portion.

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:1*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *spake unto Moses, saying, 2* [*Speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. 3* [*Six*](six.html) *days shall work be done: but the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day is the* [*sabbath*](sabbath.html) *of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the* [*sabbath*](sabbath.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in all your dwellings. 4 ¶ These are the feasts of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the* [*fourteenth*](fourteen.html) *day of the* [*first*](one.html) *month at even is* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s* [*Passover*](passover.html)*.*

Vayikra chapter 23 then treats each of the [festivals](festivals.html) in the order in which they occur, starting with [Passover](passover.html). Vayikra Chapter 24 proceeds to treat the Rabbinic [festivals](festivals.html)[[30]](#footnote-30) by allusion.

From this we learn that the [Sabbath](sabbath.html), which comes more often than the [festival](festival.html), takes precedence over the [festival](festival.html). The second principle is:

*That which occurs more often is more important!*

This is not always so easy to do. We often have conflicting issues that impinge on this second principle. Consider, for example, that we sometimes have things which are invested with greater sanctity which come less often then [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of lesser sanctity. Which takes precedence? The answer is, despite our tendency to the contrary, is to give priority to that which comes more frequently. The second principle remains our guide. We will look at a few examples later on, that will help to clarify this important principle.

The second principle also has an important corollary: When you give charity, give [first](one.html) to those who you encounter more often. For example, we give [first](one.html) to our immediate family, then to our extended family, then to those in our [Esnoga](synagog.html), then to those in the local [community](community.html), then to those in the extended [community](community.html) throughout the [world](worlds.html), finally we give to the [nations](nations.html).

Let me restate and emphasize the corollary:

*Give priority to the* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *that present themselves more often or are closer to you from a people perspective.*

Many [mitzvot](cmds613.html) force us to choose to do [one](one.html) before another. The order in which we perform these conflicting [mitzvot](cmds613.html) is very important. In our [prayers](prayer.html) and offerings we have very little discretion as the Torah lays down the precedence in a fixed way. As we shall see, tzedaka, charity, allows an individual much greater [freedom](freedom.html) than an organization. Never the less, there is an order of priorities that are logical and straightforward. In order to properly perform these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) we must [study](study.html) the Written [Law](law.html) and the Oral [Law](law.html) to perform these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) in the proper sequence.

To reinforce this principle and its corollary, let’s take a look at a few examples.

## [Shabbat](sabbath.html) vs. The [Festivals](festivals.html)

Consider that those days which come more often take priority over those which come less frequently. Even though the [festivals](festivals.html) are endowed with greater sanctity than the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) or [New](new.html) [Moon](chodesh.html), never the less [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to give priority to those days which come more often.

This means that [Shabbat](sabbath.html) takes precedence over [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html), which takes precedence over any [festival](festival.html). This precedence is reflected in our [prayers](prayer.html), in the [Temple](temple.html) offerings, and in our blessings.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) gives us a few examples:

***Zevachim 91a***[*GEMARA*](orallaw.html)*. It was asked: That which is more constant and that which is more sacred,[[31]](#footnote-31) which takes precedence? Does that which is more constant take precedence, because it is more constant; or does that which is more sacred take precedence, because it is more sacred? — Come and hear: The continual [burnt-]offerings precede the additional offerings. [Now this is so] notwithstanding that the additional offerings are more sacred![[32]](#footnote-32) — [No:] does then the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *affect the additional offerings and not affect the continual-offerings?[[33]](#footnote-33)*

*Come and hear: The additional-offerings of the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *precede the additional-offerings of* [*New*](new.html)[*Moon*](chodesh.html)*! — Does then* [*New*](new.html)[*Moon*](chodesh.html) *affect its own additional offerings and not affect the additional offerings of the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html)*?*

*Come and hear: The additional offerings of* [*New*](new.html)[*Moon*](chodesh.html) *precede the additional offerings of* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year, although* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year is holier! — Does then* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year affect its own additional offerings and not affect the additional offerings of* [*New*](new.html)[*Moon*](chodesh.html)*?*

From this [Gemara](orallaw.html) we learn that just because a day is invested with greater sanctity that does not give it priority over those days which occur more frequently.

By examining the priority given to [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html) we can discern that these [festivals](festivals.html) are exceedingly important and bring us a greater reward than the other [festivals](festivals.html). For this reason we should concentrate our studies on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html) in order to serve [HaShem](hashem.html) in the best possible way. While there is GREAT reward in performing the [mitzvot](cmds613.html), never the less, it is better to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) because of our love of [HaShem](hashem.html) and our [desire](needs.html) to do His will. Serving for the reward is not the desired goal. Serving [HaShem](hashem.html) and doing His will is the desired goal.

It is worth noting, at this point, that when [one](one.html) examines the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) in the Torah, [one](one.html) will never see a reward for the performance of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). Occasionally the Torah will make a promise in regards to a [mitzva](cmds613.html), but this is *NOT* the reward, this is the ‘expense account’ which allows us more opportunity to fulfill a particular [mitzva](cmds613.html). This begs a very interesting question:

Why are we *not* told about the reward for the [mitzvot](cmds613.html)?

The answer is quite profound. If we were told about the reward, then we would be *obligated* to perform the [mitzva](cmds613.html) *for the reward*. This is not what [HaShem](hashem.html) [desires](needs.html). [HaShem](hashem.html) [desires](needs.html) that we love Him and perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) because of our love for Him.

We *do not* do the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) for the reward!

We *do* the [Mitzvot](cmds613.html) because of our love of [HaShem](hashem.html)!

Notice also that when it comes to the positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) we often do not skip conflicting [mitzvot](cmds613.html), but rather we prioritize them and perform them in a particular order. There are, however, times when we will skip a positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) because we have passed the [time](time.html) for its performance. We will look at this idea in an example later on.

In addition to our offerings, we will also see that we give priority to those days which occur more frequently in our [prayers](prayer.html).

## In Our [Prayers](prayer.html)

Since the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html) we have been unable to perform *many* of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that could only be performed in the [Temple](temple.html). There are some [Temple](temple.html) based [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that we can still perform. These [mitzvot](cmds613.html) also follow the second principle, as we shall see.

We have several positive [mitzvot](cmds613.html) to bring offerings to the [Temple](temple.html). The Tamid[[34]](#footnote-34) [offering](korbanot) is a lamb in the morning and a second lamb in the evening. However, without a [Temple](temple.html) we can bring neither the Tamid [offering](korbanot) nor any of the other offerings. How do we fulfill [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that depend on the [Temple](temple.html) for their completion?

For the offerings, Hoshea’s prophecy [teaches](teacher.html) us that there is a proper substitute. If we do the sacrifices [HaShem](hashem.html)’s way, then we can still fulfill these [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

Since the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html) our [prayers](prayer.html) have been a substitute for the offerings in the [Temple](temple.html). This is in line with what the Prophet [spoke](mashal.html).

***Hoshea 14:3*** *Take with you words, and return unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; say unto Him: ‘*[*Forgive*](forgive.html) *all iniquity, and accept that which is good; so will we render for bullocks the* [*offering*](korbanot) *of our lips.*

Our [prayers](prayer.html), as a substitute for the bulls, rams, goats and lambs, are efficacious in helping us to draw near to [HaShem](hashem.html). Because they are a substitute for the actual sacrifices, they must be offered at the correct [time](time.html). However, once [time](time.html) becomes involved, we have the potential for prioritizing. When we must prioritize, then we give priority to the [one](one.html) whose [time](time.html) has just arrived. Afterwards we make up the [one](one.html) whose [time](time.html) has past.

When we have the [prayers](prayer.html) of the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and the [prayers](prayer.html) of a [Festival](festival.html), then the [prayers](prayer.html) of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) take precedence because [Shabbat](sabbath.html) comes more often. This principle is carried out throughout the siddur. When our [prayers](prayer.html) speaks about the Musaf[[35]](#footnote-35) offerings, for example, we say the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) [offering](korbanot) followed by the [Festival](festival.html) [offering](korbanot).

The [law](law.html) is that, although the Musaf [prayers](prayer.html)[[36]](#footnote-36) can be said in the morning, if someone arrives to [pray](prayer.html) the mincha[[37]](#footnote-37) [prayers](prayer.html) and hasn’t said the Musaf yet, he must start with mincha, the more frequent, and only then do the Musaf [prayers](prayer.html), the more sacred. The response of the [Gemara](orallaw.html) mirrors the previous ones: The sanctity of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) covers both Musaf and the mincha said that day, meaning that neither outweighs the other for sanctity.

***Zevachim 91a*** *Come and hear, for R. Johanan said: The halacha is that* [*one*](one.html) *must recite the mincha [afternoon] service and then recite the additional service![[38]](#footnote-38) — Here too, since the* [*time*](time.html) *for the mincha service has come, it is as though they were both slaughtered.*

From the priority of our [prayers](prayer.html) we learn the priority of the services in the [Temple](temple.html). The services in the [Temple](temple.html) reflect the Torah’s [commands](cmds613.html). These ‘[Temple](temple.html)’ [mitzvot](cmds613.html) follow the principle that we laid out in the beginning of this paper:

*That which occurs more often is more important!*

I encourage everyone to pay attention to the [prayers](prayer.html) in the siddur and notice the priorities. If we follow the priorities, the siddur will put us in the right place, at the right [time](time.html), *doing* the right things. Not a bad idea, if you ask me.

## Tzedaka

We have a positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) to give Tzedaka, charity. Within this [mitzva](cmds613.html) we often have conflicting requests and [needs](needs.html). For example, if I have [two](two.html) people to receive tzedaka, in front of me, who should get tzedaka [first](one.html)?

If I have [ten](ten.html) requests for tzedaka and [HaShem](hashem.html) has only given me the means to meet the [needs](needs.html) of [five](five.html) of them; how do I prioritize my giving?

The Shulchan Aruch[[39]](#footnote-39) has mapped out detailed systems of priorities for recipients of tzedaka. These priority systems run along a variety of issues including:

1. Closeness to the [giver](giver.html) (relatives ahead of non-relatives, etc.),
2. Intensity and kind of need (priority to life-threatening [needs](needs.html), priority for those requiring [food](food.html) over those requiring clothing, etc.),
3. Level of education (Torah scholars take precedence over non-scholars),
4. [Sex](marriageact.html) (women take precedence over men) and
5. Lineage (a [priest](priests.html) has precedence over a Levi who has precedence over a Yisrael; an ordinary [Jew](gen-jew.html) takes precedence over a mamzer, etc.).

All other things being equal, we give charity [first](one.html) to our family, then to our [Esnoga](synagog.html), then to the [community](community.html), then to distant [Jews](gen-jew.html), and finally to the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html).

Thus we see that this positive [mitzva](cmds613.html) also has a level of priority and precedence which must be applied in order to properly fulfill the [mitzva](cmds613.html). We can also see that the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of tzedaka follows the corollary that we laid out earlier:

*Give priority to the* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html) *that present themselves more often or are closer to you from a people perspective.*

The priority of the taryag [mitzvot](cmds613.html) is not so easy. In fact, it is easy to get caught up in what we want and thereby forget what we should be doing. To help us get this important issue correct, [HaShem](hashem.html) sent His [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) to clarify these issues.

## [Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s Primary Mission To The [Jews](gen-jew.html)

[Yeshua](yeshua.html), *the* *last* [*Adam*](adam.html), was given this [name](name.html) because His mission was directly related to the mission of the [first](one.html) [Adam](adam.html). We see that He was given this [name](name.html) in the Nazarean Codicil:

***1 Corinthians 15:45*** *And so it is written, The* [*first*](one.html) *man* [*Adam*](adam.html) *was made a living soul; the last* [*Adam*](adam.html) *was made a quickening spirit.*

To understand the work of the *last* [*Adam*](adam.html), we need to understand the mission of the [*first*](one.html)[*Adam*](adam.html). To help us understand this mission, Rabbi Eliyahu E. Dessler[[40]](#footnote-40) offers us a unique [insight](insights.html):

[ADAM](adam.html)’S TEMPTATION

We have explained elsewhere[[41]](#footnote-41) that each individual is given challenges and tests suited to his current [spiritual](physical.html) level. What kind of test would be suitable for [Adam](adam.html)’s level before the [sin](sin.html), when both good and evil were not yet intermingled in his mind?

His test was not choosing between good and evil, as we understand them, but between [two](two.html) kinds of good.

In the beginning, he was given [one](one.html) [mitzva](cmds613.html): not to [eat](eating.html) from the tree of [knowledge](thetree.html) of good and evil. This meant that he was not to lower himself to the level of knowing good and evil as realities, but to remain on his unique level, seeing the [world](worlds.html) purely in terms of truth and falsehood. There was a certain tension inherent in this situation, which we shall soon consider.

At this point, we must realize that all the *kiddush* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*[[42]](#footnote-42)* which [creation](bara.html) was capable of producing was concentrated in this [one](one.html) choice. Had [Adam](adam.html) made the right choice, the purpose of [creation](bara.html) would have been consummated right then and there. The tension in the situation was that [Adam](adam.html) felt he would, like to achieve a much higher level of *kiddush* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.* He had been placed in [*Gan Eden*](eden.html)without any direct contact with evil. He believed that if he lowered his *madrega[[43]](#footnote-43)* a little and allowed evil - to a small extent - to enter him, and *then* conquered the evil for the greater glory of G-d - the resulting *kiddush* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)would be incomparably greater. He would be transforming darkness itself into light!

So [Adam](adam.html) thought. And it was in this form that temptation came to him. “The woman saw that the tree was...desirable for [insight](insights.html) *[le’haskil]”[[44]](#footnote-44)-* thetremendous [insight](insights.html) (into the greatness of G-d) and revelation which would emerge, they thought, from conquering the greater challenges of the lower level. This was the temptation that came from the outside, that is, in the *second* person in the form of “you ought to do this,” “the truth and the love of G-d *require* you to do this.” It might be a [sin](sin.html), they thought, but it would be a [sin](sin.html) for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html).

The Snake expressed the temptation it was [offering](korbanot) with the words “you shall be like G-d, knowing good and evil,” on which Rashi comments “you will be like gods - makers of [worlds](worlds.html).”[[45]](#footnote-45) Our Rabbis in the [Midrash](orallaw.html) expressed this in the following form: “It was from this tree that He [ate](eating.html) and created the [world](worlds.html). He forbids you to [eat](eating.html) of it so that you shall not create other [worlds](worlds.html).”[[46]](#footnote-46) On the surface, these are very puzzling statements. But from what we have learned above, perhaps we can perceive something of their meaning.

The word *olam,* which we use for the word [*world*](worlds.html)*,* comes from the root meaning *to hide.* The [creation](bara.html) of the [world](worlds.html) is in fact a way of hiding and obscuring the light of [HaShem](hashem.html). This is because any created being necessarily feels himself separate from G-d, and this in itself is a form of darkness. G-d, in His mercy, decreed that man would be able to exercise his free will by revealing the hidden light in the midst of this relative darkness. [This is the meaning of the puzzling phrase, “He [ate](eating.html) from this tree and created the [world](worlds.html).”[[47]](#footnote-47) The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) for tree, *etz,* is related to the word *etza,* counselor idea. “To [eat](eating.html) from the tree” in Midrashic terms means “to conceive of an idea.”] It was this idea - the revealing of the hidden light - which was the basis of G-d’s [creation](bara.html) of the [world](worlds.html). G-d created [Adam](adam.html) in a [world](worlds.html) of minimum darkness, where there was not much obstruction between the man and his Creator. [Adam](adam.html) possibly believed that if he deepened the darkness, he would thus create [new](new.html) [worlds](worlds.html) of opportunity for *kiddush* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

[ADAM](adam.html)’S MISTAKE

But with all his good intentions, [Adam](adam.html) made a mistake. Before the [sin](sin.html), before he [knew](daat.html) of the meaning or existence of evil, he was unable to imagine its magnitude. He underestimated the difficulty of the challenge which he was accepting. He could not conceive that the darkness into which he was throwing himself was a place without G-d, without spirituality. What he thought would be relatively easy was in fact overwhelmingly difficult.

Nevertheless, what he did was considered a serious [sin](sin.html). What he had considered “a [sin](sin.html) for the sake of [Heaven](heaven.html)” was in fact a [sin](sin.html) disguised as a [mitzva](cmds613.html). This was his temptation, and with all his good intentions, he surrendered to it.

The key [insight](insights.html) the Rabbi Dessler brings out, is:

His test was not choosing between good and evil as we understand them, but between [two](two.html) kinds of good.

[Adam](adam.html)’s difficulty was choosing between [two](two.html) [mitzvot](cmds613.html), or so he thought. He had to prioritize which to do. This same difficulty often confronts a [Jew](gen-jew.html) as he seeks to perform the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). He must constantly choose between [two](two.html), or more, [mitzvot](cmds613.html) – knowing he can only do [one](one.html). In [Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s day, the *priority* of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) had become distorted and was in need of a [tikkun](tikkun.html), a correction.

[Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s primary mission to the [Jews](gen-jew.html) was to [teach](teacher.html) about the priority of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). In all of His disputes with the Pharisees, He *never* once told them that they were wrong. Instead, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) simply explained the correct priority of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) that they were discussing.

A few examples should help to clarify this idea.

***Matitiyahu (Matthew) 23:25*** *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make* [*clean*](purity.html) *the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse* [*first*](one.html) *that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be* [*clean*](purity.html) *also.*

Notice that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) is laying out the proper priority: [First](one.html) the inside (that which is closer and contains the liquid), then the outside (which is further away and does not hold the liquid).

In this next example, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) is going to give priority to the [one](one.html) with the greatest need. This is in accordance with what we learned about all tzedaka from the Shulchan Aruch,[[48]](#footnote-48) namely that we give priority according to intensity and need.

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 7:36-50*** *And* [*one*](one.html) *of the Pharisees desired him that he would* [*eat*](eating.html) *with him. And he went into the Pharisee’s house, and sat down to meat. 37 And, behold, a woman in the* [*city*](city.html)*, which was a sinner, when she* [*knew*](daat.html) *that* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, 38 And stood at his* [*feet*](heel.html) *behind him* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*, and began to wash his* [*feet*](heel.html) *with* [*tears*](mashal.html)*, and did wipe them with the* [*hairs*](hair.html) *of her* [*head*](body.html)*, and kissed his* [*feet*](heel.html)*, and anointed them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have* [*known*](daat.html) *who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. 40 And* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41 There was a certain creditor which had* [*two*](two.html) *debtors: the* [*one*](one.html) *owed* [*five*](five.html) *hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my* [*feet*](heel.html)*: but she hath washed my* [*feet*](heel.html) *with* [*tears*](mashal.html)*, and wiped them with the* [*hairs*](hair.html) *of her* [*head*](body.html)*. 45 Thou gavest me no* [*kiss*](mashal.html)*: but this woman since the* [*time*](time.html) *I came in hath not ceased to* [*kiss*](mashal.html) *my* [*feet*](heel.html)*. 46 My* [*head*](body.html) *with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my* [*feet*](heel.html) *with ointment. 47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her* [*sins*](sin.html)*, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. 48 And he said unto her, Thy* [*sins*](sin.html) *are forgiven. 49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth* [*sins*](sin.html) *also? 50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.*

Notice that the woman, who had many [sins](sin.html), is given priority over the Pharisee who had few [sins](sin.html).

In this next pasuk we find [Yeshua](yeshua.html) clarifying [two](two.html) issues and revealing the proper priority for each item.

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 11:37-42*** *And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. 38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he had not* [*first*](one.html) *washed before dinner. 39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make* [*clean*](purity.html) *the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*. 40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? 41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are* [*clean*](purity.html) *unto you. 42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of G-d: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*

In the [first](one.html) case, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) indicated that washing [one](one.html)’s [hands](fourteen.html) before [eating](eating.html) bread is important. Never the less, it is more important to repent of our [sins](sin.html) in order to [clean](purity.html) the inside of us [first](one.html), because what is inside is ‘closer’ to us.

In the second example, [Yeshua](yeshua.html) clarifies the importance of tithing versus rendering proper judgments and loving [HaShem](hashem.html). Thus He [teaches](teacher.html) that doing justice and [walking](walking.html) humbly with your G-d is more important than tithing un-important things.

## Skipping a Positive [mitzva](cmds613.html)

Giving priority to the [mitzva](cmds613.html) that is closer, as we stated in the corollary earlier, is exemplified in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), which spends a fair amount of [time](time.html) helping us discern the priority of [one](one.html) [command](cmds613.html) over another. For example, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) gives us the following principle:

[*One*](one.html) *who is performing a* [*mitzva*](cmds613.html) *is exempt from other* [*mitzvot*](cmds613.html).

If [one](one.html) is already performing [mitzva](cmds613.html) X, he is exempt from [mitzva](cmds613.html) Y. The [Talmud](orallaw.html) states this succinctly:

***Sukkah 25a*** *MISHNAH. THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED ON A RELIGIOUS ERRAND[[49]](#footnote-49) ARE FREE FROM [THE OBLIGATIONS OF] SUKKAH.[[50]](#footnote-50) INVALIDS AND THEIR ATTENDANTS ARE FREE FROM [THE OBLIGATIONS OF] SUKKAH. CASUAL* [*EATING*](eating.html) *AND DRINKING[[51]](#footnote-51) ARE PERMITTED OUTSIDE THE SUKKAH.* [*GEMARA*](orallaw.html)*. Whence do we* [*know*](daat.html) *this?[[52]](#footnote-52) — From what our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: When thou sittest in thy house[[53]](#footnote-53) excludes the man who is occupied with a religious duty, And when thou walkest by the way excludes a bridegroom. Hence they[[54]](#footnote-54) said, He who marries a* [*virgin*](virgin.html) *is free [from the obligation of reading the* [*Shema*](shema.html)*’], but [he who marries] a widow is bound [by the obligation].[[55]](#footnote-55) How is this[[56]](#footnote-56) inferred? — R. Huna said, It is compared to ‘the way’[[57]](#footnote-57) just as ‘the way’[[58]](#footnote-58) refers to a secular way,[[59]](#footnote-59) so must every act[[60]](#footnote-60) be secular, thus excluding such a man who is occupied with the performance of a religious duty. But does it not refer to where* [*one*](one.html) *is going on a religious errand [also]?[[61]](#footnote-61) And does not the Divine* [*Law*](law.html) *nevertheless say that* [*one*](one.html) *should read?[[62]](#footnote-62) — If so,[[63]](#footnote-63) the verse should have said, ‘When* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *and when* [*walking*](walking.html)*’;[[64]](#footnote-64) why [then does it say,] ‘When thou sittest and when thou walkest’? [It must consequently mean:] When* [*walking*](walking.html) *for thy own purpose thou art bound by the obligation, but when* [*walking*](walking.html) *on a religious errand thou art free. If so,[[65]](#footnote-65) should not even the man who marries a widow[[66]](#footnote-66) also be exempt?-When he marries a* [*virgin*](virgin.html) *his mind is pre-occupied[[67]](#footnote-67) but when he marries a widow his mind is not preoccupied.*

In the above passage, we see that the most important [prayer](prayer.html), the [Shema](shema.html),[[68]](#footnote-68) takes the back seat when [one](one.html) is a [new](new.html) bridegroom. The bridegroom’s sole priority is to make his bride happy. From this example we can see that [HaShem](hashem.html) [desires](needs.html) that when we are performing a [mitzva](cmds613.html) as a ‘[giver](giver.html)’, thereby imitating [HaShem](hashem.html), we are exempt from the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) which place us in the position of a ‘receiver’. The [Shema](shema.html) is a [prayer](prayer.html) that changes us into people who can see [HaShem](hashem.html) as [one](one.html) and who acknowledge that as ‘receivers’ they have obligations to [HaShem](hashem.html).

# III. Reward for a [mitzva](cmds613.html)

Earlier I said that the Torah never attaches a specific reward to a specific [mitzva](cmds613.html). Any appearance to the contrary should be understood *not* as reward, but rather as an ‘expense account’. Consider the following example:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:12*** *Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy G-d giveth thee.*

In the above example, the prolonging of our days is *not* the reward for honoring our parents. The prolonging of our days is what enables us to continue to honor our parents. It is like an expense account which allows us to [travel](mashal.html) and continue to make sales so that our company will prosper. The expense account is not our reward. Our reward is our salary and commission. The expense account is just an enablement for our mission. The [Talmud](orallaw.html), which is quoted in our [prayers](prayer.html), tells us this explicitly:

[***Shabbat***](sabbath.html) ***127a*** *These are the precepts whose fruits a person enjoys in This* [*World*](worlds.html) *but whose principal remains intact for him in the* [*World*](futures.html) *to Come. They are: the honor due to father and mother, acts of kindness, early attendance at the house of* [*study*](study.html) *morning and evening, hospitality to guests, visiting the sick, providing for a bride, escorting the dead, absorption in* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*, bringing peace between man and his fellow, and the* [*study*](study.html) *of Torah is equivalent to hem all.”*

That said, the [Mishna](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) that “a [mitzva](cmds613.html) brings about a [mitzva](cmds613.html)” and that “the reward of a [mitzva](cmds613.html) is a [mitzva](cmds613.html)”. These statements seem to say that the [mitzva](cmds613.html) we just did will bring us to another [mitzva](cmds613.html), and that this second [mitzva](cmds613.html) is the reward we receive for having done the [first](one.html) [mitzva](cmds613.html).

***Avot Chapter 4 MISHNAH 2****. BEN ‘AZZAI SAID: RUN[[69]](#footnote-69) TO [PERFORM] AN EASY PRECEPT,[[70]](#footnote-70) AS [YOU WOULD] IN [THE CASE OF] A DIFFICULT* [*ONE*](one.html)*, AND FLEE[[71]](#footnote-71) FROM TRANSGRESSION; FOR [*[*ONE*](one.html)*] PRECEPT DRAWS [IN ITS TRAIN[[72]](#footnote-72) ANOTHER] PRECEPT, AND [*[*ONE*](one.html)*] TRANSGRESSION DRAWS [IN ITS TRAIN ANOTHER] TRANSGRESSION;[[73]](#footnote-73) FOR THE RECOMPENSE FOR [PERFORMING] A PRECEPT IS A PRECEPT, AND THE RECOMPENSE FOR [COMMITTING] A TRANSGRESSION IS A TRANSGRESSION.*

From here we learn the *value* of training oneself in the performance of [mitzvot](cmds613.html), since the more we do them, the *less* we find obstacles in the way to prevent us. The end result is a constant flow of [mitzva](cmds613.html) performance!

As we learned earlier, [HaShem](hashem.html) does not want us to serve Him for the reward. [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to serve Him because we love Him. Never the less, [HaShem](hashem.html) does not withhold the reward from any of His creatures, the *a priori* position is for man to act as “a servant serving his master with no regard the issue of reward”.[[74]](#footnote-74)

***Avot Chapter 1 MISHNAH 3****. ANTIGONUS[[75]](#footnote-75) (A MAN) OF SOCHO11 RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS. HE USED TO SAY: BE NOT LIKE UNTO SERVANTS WHO SERVE THE MASTER IN THE EXPECTATION OF RECEIVING A GRATUITY,[[76]](#footnote-76) BUT BE LIKE UNTO SERVANTS WHO SERVE THE MASTER WITHOUT THE EXPECTATION OF RECEIVING A GRATUITY, AND LET THE* [*FEAR*](fear.html) *OF* [*HEAVEN*](heaven.html) *BE UPON YOU.*

***Avodah Zarah 19a*** *Happy is the man that feareth the Lord:[[77]](#footnote-77) Does it mean happy is the ‘man’ and not the woman? — Said R. Amram in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rab: [It means] Happy is he who repents whilst he is still a ‘man’.[[78]](#footnote-78) R. Joshua b. Levy explained it: Happy is he who over-rules his inclination like a ‘man’. That delighteth greatly in His* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, was explained by R. Eleazar thus: ‘In His* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*,’ but not in the reward of His* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*.[[79]](#footnote-79) This is just what we have learnt. ‘He used to say, Be not like servants who serve the master on the condition of receiving a reward; but be like servants who serve the master without the condition of receiving a reward.’*

# IV. Conclusion

In this [study](study.html) we learned that there are taryag [mitzvot](cmds613.html), 613 [commandments](cmds613.html), in the Torah. We examined some principles that will assist us in performing those [mitzvot](cmds613.html) which apply to us.

We also learned that these [mitzvot](cmds613.html) contain fantastic rewards for us in the [world](futures.html) to come. Yet in this [world](worlds.html), the Torah does not [teach](teacher.html) us the rewards for the [mitzvot](cmds613.html).

So [one](one.html) should never attempt to evaluate and weigh up the relative importance of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) based upon their perceived level of reward. Insofar as both function to successful bring man closer to [HaShem](hashem.html), the [Jew](gen-jew.html) truly has no way of knowing the exact reward within each [mitzva](cmds613.html). Whether it is classified an ‘easy’ compared to ‘harder’, he has to scrupulously perform both with the same vigilance and zeal.[[80]](#footnote-80) This comes out of cognizance that their defining objective, i.e. to draw close to [HaShem](hashem.html) by obeying His will, lies at the [heart](body.html) of each and every [mitzva](cmds613.html).

This beautifully explains why, apart from some occasional side benefits (the ‘expense account’), the principal of man’s reward is not within this [world](worlds.html).[[81]](#footnote-81) Fundamentally flawed, the [physical](physical.html), fleeting [world](worlds.html) lacks the *currency* to adequately reward the righteous. Such a person’s reward is reserved, instead, for the [world](futures.html) to come. How pathetically inadequate any reward in this [world](worlds.html) is, is memorably explained by Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler.

*“All the happiness and pleasure of a lifetime coupled with the joy of every person in every* [*city*](city.html) *and country who have ever lived, if it was possible to concentrate them into* [*one*](one.html) *moment; could still not provide reward even for the smallest* [*mitzva*](cmds613.html) *compared to the delight man will* [*experience*](experience.html) *in connecting with* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in the* [*world*](futures.html) *to come”.[[82]](#footnote-82)*

# V. For further [study](study.html)

There is much to learn concerning the details of the taryag [mitzvot](cmds613.html). As I mentioned earlier, the oral [law](law.html) is replete with examples of the priority and precedence that we must give to the various [mitzvot](cmds613.html). To help you get started in this arena, I present the following areas for [study](study.html):

[*Commandment*](cmds613.html) *vs.* [*Commandment*](cmds613.html) *or vs. Prohibition*

[Commandment](cmds613.html) vs. prohibition: [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 132b; Beitzah 8b.

[Commandment](cmds613.html) vs. prohibition and [Commandment](cmds613.html): [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 132b, 133a; [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h 32b; Beitzah 8b; Bava Metzia 30a, 32a.

[Commandment](cmds613.html) vs. [two](two.html) prohibitions: Temurah 4b.

A public [commandment](cmds613.html) vs. a personal [commandment](cmds613.html): [Moed](settimes.html) Katan 14b.

Priority for a [mitzva](cmds613.html) involving [one](one.html)’s personal [body](body.html): Kiddushin 29b.

Priority for a [mitzva](cmds613.html) which will not be fulfillable later [[mitzva](cmds613.html) overet]: Kiddushin 29b.

Extrapolating priority from the juxtaposition of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) in the Torah: Kiddushin 29b.

Requiring that the [commandment](cmds613.html) be fulfilled with the Violation of the prohibition, immediately: [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 132b; Beitzah 8b.

[Commandment](cmds613.html) vs. prohibition where both the Active [mitzva](cmds613.html) and the prohibition can be fulfilled: [Shabbat](sabbath.html) 133a; Kiddushin 40a.

[Commandment](cmds613.html) with a punishment of Divine Ex-Communication, vs. an ordinary [commandment](cmds613.html): Pesachim 59a; Zevachim 32b.

Where [one](one.html) of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) could be fulfilled by another individual: Berachot 14b; Kiddushin 32a.

Where [one](one.html) [mitzva](cmds613.html) is more central to an act than the other is: [Succah](succoth.html) 56a.

Whether the more common [mitzva](cmds613.html) [“Tadir”] has precedence: [Succah](succoth.html) 54b, 56a; Pesachim 114a; Megillah 29b; Menachoth 49a.

Whether the holier entity has precedence: Menachoth 49a.

Gauging which [mitzva](cmds613.html) to perform, if [one](one.html) involves a Holier item, and the other is more Common: Menachoth 49a-b.

Honoring [one](one.html)’s Father and Mother – *Rules:*

Whether a child is responsible to spend his own funds: Kiddushin 31b-32a.

Whether a father may [forgive](forgive.html) his honor: Kiddushin 32a, 32a-b.

Requirement on both sons and daughters: Kiddushin 29a, 30b-31a, 34b, 35a.

Requirement on a married/divorced daughter: Kiddushin 30b.

Which parent has precedence: Kiddushin 31a; Keritot 28a.

Which parent has precedence, post-divorce: Kiddushin 31a.

Choosing between honoring [one](one.html)’s parents, and fulfilling a [mitzva](cmds613.html) which someone else could also fulfill: Kiddushin 32a.

Whether [one](one.html) may leave Israel, to fulfill the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of honoring [one](one.html)’s parents: Kiddushin 31b.

Choosing between listening to parents and the prohibition for a [kohen](priests.html) to become impure: Bava Metzia 32a.

Choosing between listening to parents and the requirement of returning lost property: Bava Metzia 32a.

Whether a Rebbe should stand before his father who is also his student, and whether the father stands for him: Kiddushin 33b.

Learning Torah vs. honoring [one](one.html)’s Parents: Megillah 16b-17a.

Honoring [one](one.html)’s Rebbe vs. honoring [one](one.html)’s parents: Keritot 28a.

Honoring a sinful parent: Bava Metzia 62a.

Burying a [Body](body.html) which has no Buriers - *Special* [*laws*](law.html) *for such a burial*

Whether the [Head](body.html) [Kohen](priests.html) should make himself impure in order to bury a [body](body.html) which has no buriers: Megillah 3b.

Whether this [mitzva](cmds613.html) has precedence over the Reading of the [Purim](Purim.html) Story: Megillah 3b.

Whether this [mitzva](cmds613.html) has precedence over the [Study](study.html) of Torah: Megillah 3b.

Whether this [mitzva](cmds613.html) has precedence over the [Temple](temple.html) Service: Megillah 3b.

Whether this [mitzva](cmds613.html) has precedence over the [Pesach](passover.html) [Offering](korbanot): Berachot 19b; Megillah 3b.

Whether this [mitzva](cmds613.html) has precedence over the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of [Circumcision](circumcz.html): Berachot 19b; Megillah 3b.

\* \* \*

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**\* \* \***

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1. This is another name for the Mishneh Torah - מִשְׁנֶה תּוֹרָה. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word *mitzva* (**מִצְוָה**) means “divine commandment” *(mitzvot* is the plural form). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. TaRYaG is the gematria for the number “613” (*tav* - ת *=* 400, *Resh* - ר *= 200, yod* - י *=* 10, and *gimel* - ג *=* 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Our Sages. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Sephardi Rabbis. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Sanhedrin 74a [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Nazir 23a [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Tanach is an acronym for Torah, Neviim, and *Ketuvim*. These are the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) words for [*Law*](law.html), *Prophets*, and *Writings*. This is what [Jews](gen-jew.html) call the so called Old Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Though she committed a sin (v. infra), her intention was to weaken and exhaust the [wicked](wicked.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Shoftim (Judges) 5:24. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Baba Kama 38b [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Chazal = Our Sages. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. **Dabar ha-lamed me-’inyano**: Interpretation deduced from the context. See [RULES](rules.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Wearing a garment of wool and linen together. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Bereshit (Genesis) 18:12-13 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. see Yevamot 65b; Vayikra Rabba 9:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The Tanach [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Bereshit (Genesis) 50:16ff. It is nowhere found that Jacob commanded it; but the brothers attributed the request to him for the sake of preserving the peace between themselves and Joseph. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Modification of a statement in the interests of peace. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. I Samuel 16:2. In response to this, Samuel was advised by God to say that he came to sacrifice to the Lord (ibid.) though his mission, in fact, was the anointing of David (v. ibid. 1 and 13). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Bereshit (Genesis) 18:12, a slight on Avraham, [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid. 13. Thus [HaShem](hashem.html), when speaking to Avraham, modified Sarah’s expression concerning him, which he might have resented, to one in which the slight of ‘crabbed old age’ was directed towards Sarah herself. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Thus, hiding from Avraham, the fact that Sarah had called him ‘an old man’. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. But he did not tell Manoah that his wife was constitutionally barren, which might have made him despise her. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. I.e. apart from and in addition to the negative precautions. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Implying that she was not barren but could be made to bear by these means. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Job 25:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Prayer book used during the week and on the [Shabbat](sabbath.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Prayer book used on the festivals. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. [Chanukah](chanukah.html) and [Purim](purim.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. E.g. if we have the blood of the daily burnt-offering and that of a [sin-offering](sin.html) for sprinkling: the daily [burnt-offering](offering.html) is more constant, while the sin-offering is more sacred. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For they are brought on Sabbath and Festivals, whereas continual offerings are brought on week-days too. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Just as it invests the former with greater sanctity, so it invests the latter too, seeing that we are now treating of the continual offering brought on the Sabbath. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Shemot (Exodus) 29:39. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Musaf (additional) prayers are offered on the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) and the festivals only. There are no Musaf [prayers](prayer.html) on the weekdays. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Additional Shabbat and [Festival](festival.html) prayers. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The afternoon prayers which are said everyday of the year. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Although the time for the additional service came first. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Aruch HaShulchan 251.10,11, Blau pp. 52ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Strive for Truth! (Mictav Me’Eliyahu), volume III parts 5-6, Rabbi Eliyahu E. Dessler. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Strive for Truth! I, pp.87-90. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The sanctification of HaShem’s name. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. A step. From the verb *dereg*, to rise in grade, step by step. Plural = *madregot*. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Bereshit Rabbah 19:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Bereshit Rabba 19:4 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The ***Shulchan Aruch*** ([Hebrew](hebrew.html): שׁוּלחָן עָרוּך‎, literally: “Set Table”) [Also spelt *Shulchan Aruch*; *Shulchan Aruch*.] also known as the **Code of Jewish** [**Law**](law.html), is the most authoritative legal code of Judaism. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Lit., ‘those that are sent forth for a religions duty’. Those, for instance, who go to study the Torah or to [redeem](redemption.html) a captive. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Even when they stay for a rest. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. I.e., but not a set meal. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. The first ruling in our [Mishna](orallaw.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:7, dealing with the duty of reading the [Shema](shema.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Our Hakhamim. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Berachot 11a [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. That those engaged in a religious act are exempt. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:7, dealing with the duty of reading the Shema. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. In [walking](walking.html) in which the duty of reading the Shema’ must be performed. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Or, ‘optional. It is now taken to mean that one is walking by the way to pursue his normal occupations. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. The performance of which must not interfere with the duty of reading the Shema’. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Apparently, it does. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. How then is it inferred that those engaged in a religious act are exempt? [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. That Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:7 refers also to one engaged in a religious act. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Which would have included all forms both secular and religious. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. That the performance of a religious act exempts one from the obligations mentioned. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Who also is performing a religious duty. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. And he cannot, therefore, perform another duty at that time. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. The mitzva outlined in Debarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Show eagerness, carpe diem - seize the opportunity! [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Cf. Psalm 69:60. One is more liable to be slack and procrastinating with regard to an easy task, and thus forget it entirely; to obviate this one should hasten to perform it as soon as it presents itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Not merely avoid, but as quickly as you can, put as long a distance as possible between transgression and yourself (L.). In both cases (i.e. of fulfillment of a precept and of avoidance of transgression) Ben ‘Azzai advocates quickness of resolve and action (Buchler, Sin and Atonement, p. 309). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Automatically (Buchler, ibid). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. This saying has been explained variously: (i) Virtue is its own reward, and sin its own penalty. (ii) The spiritual joy one derives from the performance of a divine precept, (mitzva) is in itself a mitzva, i.e., a valuable religious experience. (iii) The practical gain from the carrying out of a precept, is the new precept which it automatically brings in its train. See Buchler, ibid., for a fine analysis of the dictum. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Pirke Avot 1:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The first noted [Jew](gen-jew.html) known to have had a Greek name. First half of the third century B.C.E. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. ‘Gratuity’ rather than ‘reward’ since a servant may rightly and without reproach expect and accept his wage (v. M.). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Tehillim (Psalms) 42:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. [Enjoying the full vitality and energy of youthful manhood.] [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Cf. Ab. IV, 2. ‘The reward of a precept is the precept.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Avot 2:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Kiddushin 29b [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Michtav MiEliyahu I, p 4-5 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)