

הֵלֵל אָמַר, הֵינִי מִתְלַמְּדֵיךְ שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן, אוֹהֵב  
שָׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שָׁלוֹם, אוֹהֵב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת  
וּמְקַרְבֵּן לַתּוֹרָה

Hillel said, be of the students of Aharon:  
loving peace and chasing after peace,  
loving creations and bringing them  
closer to Torah.

# A discussion on Teaching Judaism based on Avot 1:12

## Some Textual Questions to ask Chanichim:

- Why is there a mem ('from') and not a kaf ('like') before the word "students"? Does the translation capture the meaning of the letter?
- What is the difference between "loving" and "chasing after" peace?
- This Mishna is the first source of the word "kiruv." How was the meaning of the word changed since its use in this Mishna?
- Is there a significance to the *order of phrases* in this Mishna?

## Some General Questions to ask Chanichim:

- What does bringing someone close to Torah mean? Do we all have a responsibility to do this?
- What is the difference between brainwashing and education? Are we always being brainwashed?
- Most of us probably know more Judaism than 95% of Jews in the world. Why is it that following that fact, lots of people rarely feel a responsibility?
- Do we have the responsibility to teach Judaism to non-Jews? Why?

## Some Personal Questions to ask Chanichim:

- What qualities do you bring to the table as a Jewish leader?
- What are your best qualities in a madrich?
- How did your parents or family teach Judaism to you? How will you teach it to your kids?
- Where does the best Jewish education come from? Home? Shul? School?

## Some Interactive Resources:

**SLAM Poetry** – Bronz Youth Poetry SLAM 2013, Ethan Metzger – This is one of the best videos for chanichim to see. It is about the notion of brainwashing and the dynamic between peer pressure and family life.

**Poem** – Rudyard Kipling – *No printed word nor spoken plea, can teach young minds what they should be.*

*Not all the books on all the shelves, but what the teachers are themselves.*

**Article** – "Are we a kiruv movement?" – Torat Habayit 80 – Dani Jacobson

**Art** – What is the real definition of brainwashing?

**JTV** - Discussing Jewish outreach - its necessity and potential dangers.

**Youtube** – "The Lubavitcher Rebbe's approach to outreach" – 1 minute 38s

**Youtube** – "Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on being a Jewish Leader." – 2:12



## Other sources and quotes to bring into discussion:

**Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook:**

"It says loving creations, then bring them close to Torah. You cannot bring someone close to Torah without first truly loving them." (paraphrased)

**Rav Moshe Feinstein:**

Just as each of us devote a tenth of our money to charity we should devote a tenth of our time to kiruv.

**Rav Lichtenstein (By His Light):**

"We are all, to some degree, Esther. Each of us, for whatever reason, has doubts as to his or her abilities. We too are hesitant: What, I'm going to achieve all that? I'm going to save Am Yisrael? I'm going to put a stop to assimilation? I'm just a youngster – I can achieve only a little – a little bit in my neighbourhood, a little bit in my youth group, a little bit in the family. But to start a revolution? To determine the future of a nation? To avert an evil decree? Little me?!"

**Vayikra 19:16:**

"Do not stand by the blood of your friend, I am Hashem."

**Rav David Aaron:**

"A gardener gives plants the nutrients they need to grow. A carpenter hammers his raw materials into shape – imposing the form he imagines on the wood. In our teaching, we must be like gardeners, not carpenters."

**Lubavitcher Rebbe:**

If you know aleph bet and someone else just knows aleph, then you can be a teacher.

**Maya Angelou:**

"They will forget what you said, they will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel."

**Chovot Halevavot (Duties of the Heart) Gate 10 Chapter 6:**

"And it is appropriate to you to know that the merits of a believer, even if he reaches the ultimate distant purpose in the correction of his soul to Hashem, and he is close to prophets/angels in his good middot and praiseworthy customs and he works so hard in serving Hashem, this is nothing like merit of someone who teaches (moreh) people the good way and turns the wicked to serving the creator..."

## A Related Story: Told by the Maggid of Dubno

An old man is having a birthday party and calls everyone together – his whole wider family living in different cities all around the country! He says he is happy to pay for all expenses spent in his honour. He had a great many sons, the two oldest of which happened to live in the same village. His eldest son took a Chariot to go and see his father. He writes in big letters on the chariot "for the honour of my father and teacher!" His second eldest son was not quite as wealthy – in fact he was a pauper dressed in rags. The oldest brother kindly took him with to see his father for his birthday in his lavish chariot.

The celebration was very extravagant and lasted for 7 days. At the end of the seven day celebration the eldest son asks his father for compensation for the money for the chariot. The father refuses to even give him a penny. His eldest son is outraged: "you promised you would pay all expenses done in your honour!" His father replied "if you really cared about my honour, you wouldn't let your own brother walk around in rags."

## A Related Story: Told by the Chafetz Chaim

A fire is engulfing a certain town and all the citizens run to the local water source forming a bucket brigade to extinguish the great fire. One man goes in to hiding and doesn't involve himself. When confronted afterwards he explains that he is not a trained fireman and the public should of relied on professional fire-people to put out a fire of this scale. His neighbours rebuked him saying "No! When there is a contained fire then we can rely on the professionals, but when the entire town is burning everyone must take action!"