

TEN STEPS TO GREATNESS by Rabbi Avigdor Miller

STEP ONE: Spend at least 30 seconds each day thinking about the WORLD TO COME – *Olam Haba* – and that we are in this world only as a preparation for the World to Come. This is the purpose of life.

STEP TWO: Spend a few seconds each day in a private place and say to the Almighty / Hash-m, “I love you God / Hash-m.” You will be fulfilling a positive commandment from the Torah. This will kindle a fire in your heart and will have a powerful effect on your character. Your exteriority bestirs your interiority. The Almighty is listening. He loves you much more than you love Him.

STEP THREE: Every day do one act of kindness that no one knows about, in secrecy. Have intention beforehand that you are doing this in order to fulfill your program to greatness.

The practice of doing acts of kindness – *Gemilut Hasadim* – is one of the three most important functions in the world.

Examples: If you are the first one in the Beit HaMidrash (Place of Torah Study) put the books in the proper order and place. If your wife is not in the kitchen, clean a few dishes or straighten up for her without her knowing. If you should see something potentially dangerous on the sidewalk, clear it off to the side so no one will get hurt.

STEP FOUR: Encourage someone every day. “The Almighty / Hash-m encourages the humble.” Have in mind you are doing it because of the program. Anonymous letters of kindness can do a great deal of good to encourage people.

STEP FIVE: Spend one minute a day thinking about what happened yesterday. “Let us search out our ways and investigate.”

Everyone should have his mind on what he is doing – by reviewing yesterday's actions daily.

STEP SIX: Make all your actions for the purpose of Heaven. Say it once a day.

Example: "I am doing this in order to be more aware of the Almighty."

STEP SEVEN: Be aware of the principle — "Man was created in the image of God." Every human face is a reflection of the Almighty / Hash-m. Your face is like a screen and your soul like a projector which projects on your face the glory of the human soul which has in it the greatness of the Almighty / Hash-m. Once a day pick a face and think "I am seeing the image of God." You will begin to understand the endless nobility of a face.

STEP EIGHT: Once a day give a person a full smile. Just as the Almighty / Hash-m shines on us, we should smile on others. Smile because the Almighty / Hash-m wants you to, even though you really don't want to.

When you smile have intentions that you are doing it for the purpose of coming closer to the Almighty / Hash-m through the Ten Steps To Greatness.

STEP NINE: "The Almighty / Hash-m clothes the naked." Clothing is a testament to the nobility of man. Man is unique — has free will, has a soul, made in the image of the Almighty / Hash-m . Even Angels are beneath man in greatness. To demonstrate the superiority of mankind, we must be clothed. Spend 30 seconds in the morning thinking about our garments: what a gift they are from the Almighty / Hash-m .

STEP TEN: Spend time each day thinking about the olden Jerusalem during the time of the Temple. Every day sit on the floor (before going to sleep), spend one second on the floor and mourn for the destruction of Jerusalem. Think "If I should forget you Jerusalem, let my right arm forget how to function" (Psalms 137:5).

King Shlomo / King Solomon "The wise man seizes the opportunity to do *mitzvot*" (King Solomon). The lazy person says — someday I'll do it. If you start this program, after 30 days you will be tired. So, wait six months until you start

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again. Do another 30 days then wait five months and so on. After a while you might do it all the time. If you do it even one day you are extraordinary!

Do the following once a day. (if this is too much, maybe do one/day)

1. Spend 30 seconds thinking of Olam Haba
2. Say once "I love you Hashem"
3. Do one hidden act of chesed.
4. Be like Hashem who lifts the humble, say something to encourage someone.
5. Spend 1 minute about what happened yesterday (cheshbon hanefesh).
6. Your actions should be l'shem shamayim (say once during meals)
7. Look into someone's face and think - I'm seeing a tzelem Elokim
8. Just like Hashem's face shines on us, give someone a big smile.
9. When saying "malbish arumim", think about the great gift of garments.
10. When reciting the words, "If I forget you, Yerushalayim...", sit on floor and think of loss of Yerushalayim (privately, 1 second)

