

## The RYS Daily 10/22/06 Mitzvos and Human Relations

From the Mussar Movement Volume 1, part 2 pages 217 -218.

He would keep repeating: "Scripture states: `The commandment of the L-rd is pure enlightening the eyes. The fear of the L-rd is clean enduring for ever. The civil laws of the L-rd are true, they are righteous altogether.' ' When are the commandments of the L-rd pure and the fear of the L-rd clean? — when they are `righteous altogether' with respect to the civil laws of the L-rd. That is to say: If they are unblemished in respect of the civil laws that govern human relations."

An assiduous student (matmid) would study day and night. Fearing that he might fall asleep, he would press a candle between his fingers, so that the candle would burn his fingers and wake him were he to doze off. Once he did fall asleep. The candle fell on the floor and set the whole Bet Midrash on fire. Local residents praised the student for his application to his studies. R. Israel expressed his criticism. "Look what a disaster this student has brought upon himself for the rest of his life by his act. He is forbidden to continue with his studies since he will have to work for all his life to earn sufficient to pay for the damage he has caused to the Bet Midrash."

Here R. Israel opened up an entirely novel approach. He would check his performance of each and every mitzvah, examine its every aspect, to see whether it entailed any harm to others. He exercised meticulous and far-reaching care. He would balance the gain against the loss incurred in the performance, to prevent any hidden negative element from creeping in. The examples are legion and an object lesson. It is worthwhile to repeat the most characteristic of those that have been recorded.

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