

NCSY Torah
in your
Pocket
SERIES

#2: HALF A
DOZEN
OF THE
OTHER

Mitzvos Temidios

The Constant Mitzvos

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Mitzvos are generally classified into two categories, time-bound and not time-bound. Time-bound mitzvos can only be fulfilled at certain times, such as eating matzah on Pesach or shaking a lulav on Sukkos. Even most mitzvos that are not time-bound cannot be fulfilled all the time. For example, one cannot fulfill the mitzvah of mezuzah if one doesn't have a door.

There are, however, six mitzvos that Jews are instructed to fulfill at all times and in all places. Riding the bus? You can fulfill six mitzvos. Laid up in bed with a bad cold? You can do these. These are called the six Mitzvos Temidios or "Constant Mitzvos."

1 TO KNOW THERE IS A G-D

I am Hashem your G-d who brought you out of Egypt.

(Exodus 20:2)

The first of the Six Constant Mitzvos is also the first of the Ten Command-

ments; it is the mitzvah to recognize that Hashem exists. We must acknowledge not only that He created the world, but that He continues to be involved in its day-to-day operations and our personal lives. We should not just believe in G-d; we should go out and look at all the evidence so that we know there's a G-d.

2 NOT TO BELIEVE IN ANY OTHER "GODS"

Do not recognize any other "gods" in My presence.

(Exodus 20:3)

Any place one could possibly go is in G-d's presence; accordingly, there are no other powers! One must not even believe that Hashem created the world but then turned control over to an angel or other servant. We must recognize that no being created by Hashem can thwart His will.

3 TO KNOW THAT G-D IS ONE

Listen, Israel, Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One. (Deut. 6:4)

Aside from constantly recognizing Hashem's unity, it is also a mitzvah to recite this verse, the Shema, both in the morning and at night. Recognizing Hashem's unity means knowing that He is unique, He has no partners, components or divisions, and that He exists outside of time and space. Hashem is the only source of life and existence.

4 TO LOVE G-D

You shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your ability.

(Deut. 6:5)

Loving Hashem should be the natural result of recognizing His existence; if we truly understand all that Hashem does for us, how could we help but appreciate and love Him for it? Studying Torah

enables us to become more aware of Hashem and to become even closer to Him. We should also be prepared to give of our time, our resources and more for the sake of Hashem.

5 TO BE IN AWE OF G-D

*You must revere Hashem your G-d;
Him you shall serve. (Deut. 10:20)*

Similarly, if we are aware that there's a G-d, we couldn't help but be in awe of Him. To revere G-d means to recognize that our actions have consequences.

Just as becoming sick is a consequence of drinking poison, there are spiritual consequences, both positive and negative, to our actions. Knowing that there's a G-d and a system of spiritual checks and balances helps keep us on the right path.

6 NOT TO BE LED ASTRAY BY OUR DESIRES

Don't follow your heart or your

*eyes, after which one
can go astray. (Numbers 15:39)*

"Heart" refers to heretical thoughts and "eyes" refers to physical temptations, both of which can distract a person from what's really important in life. We have to keep our "eyes on the prize," that is, on Torah and its reward. We must not be led astray by philosophies that are not compatible with Torah or by physical desires.

These six mitzvos can be fulfilled with thoughts alone, regardless of a person's physical abilities. All Jews can use these mitzvos to get to know, love and respect our Creator better, as well as to become better people.

*To find out how the Six Constant
Mitzvos (this card) correspond to the
Six Remembrances (see card #1),
visit www.ou.org/ncsy/six.html*

*For more information,
visit www.ncsy.org*

