

WHEN SERVING DINNER

by Rabbi Label Lam

For if you will observe this entire commandment that I command you, to perform it, to love HASHEM, your G-d, **to walk in all His ways** and to cleave to Him. HASHEM will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will drive out greater and mightier nations than yourselves. Every place where the sole of your foot will tread shall be yours- ...No man will stand up against you; HASHEM your G-d will set your terror and fear on the entire face of the earth wherever you tread, as He spoke to you. (Devarim 11:23-25)

Quite a powerful formula for success is offered here. Let's see if we can demystify partially at least one of the main ingredients needed for gaining that kind of ultra-respect wherever we go. How does one "walk in the ways of HASHEM"? Rashi quotes the Midrash. "Just as He (HASHEM) is merciful so you should be merciful. Just as He does acts of kindness so you too should do acts of kindness." Is this a complete or only a partial list? Are these inclusive of "all His ways"? Where do we find a complete list of "all His ways"? This mandate opens the door to a large treasure trove of daily opportunities when we begin to seek out some sources for "all HASHEM's ways".

Amongst the ways to discover HASHEM's ways is through observing what's called the natural world. We say nightly in the blessings before Shema, "He creates day and night, removing light before the darkness and darkness before the light." We can observe with our own eyes how gently darkness falls and how tenderly the day light appears. Even when the sun has set, there is still sufficient light in the sky to have a chance to settle down before the real darkness arrives. Even then, HASHEM leaves a soft nightlight - the moon to reflect some sunlight and the stars too, so we are not plunged suddenly into absolute blackness. When the sun rises it doesn't shock the world by jumping to high noon height in an instant but rather He gradually stirs us lovingly from our sleep.

So when we put our children to bed it should be done with kindness. First a nightlight is put on then the lights go out. When waking them up too, it can be done with a soft reminder, an opening of the shades, at first. If you are doing these nice things anyway you might just remind yourself to have in mind that you are actually "walking in His ways".

Based on blessings and declarations in the Siddur, that we make daily here is a partial list of activities ascribed to HASHEM that we too might emulate throughout the day while having in mind that we are aiming to "walk in all His ways". 1) "Who clothes the naked" - When we dress our children. 2) Who provides for all my needs"- when taking care of an elder parent or child. 3) Who gives

strength to the weary"- When giving encouragement or sustenance to anyone. 4) "Who prepares the steps of man"- when giving guidance to others. 5) "Blessed is He Who says and does"- When we keep our promises and do what we say. 6) "HASHEM is good to all"- When we are being pleasant to people. 7) "The builder of Jerusalem is HASHEM" - When we escort a bride and groom or contribute to our brothers and sisters in Israel or when we mourn for the destruction of the Temple. 8) "He is the healer of the broken hearted" - When we comfort people who feel hurt. 9) "The selector song-hymns" -When we choose appropriate and holy music. 10) "Who chooses His people Israel with love"- When we look kindly upon our fellow Jews. 11) "Helper, Deliverer, and Shield"- When we put on a seatbelt and when we lock the door at night. 12) "Fulfiller of His faithfulness to those who sleep in the dust"- When we say Kaddish and follow the wishes of parents and grandparents even after they have passed. 13) "Teaches mankind understanding"- When learning Torah or doing homework with our children! 14) "Who blesses His people Israel with peace"- When praying for the welfare of the Jewish People! 15) "Who nourishes the entire world with His goodness, with favor and kindness and mercy"- **When serving dinner!** DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and [Torah.org](https://torah.org).