

CURRENT TALMUD PASSAGE

Posted October 11, 2001 by Rabbi Judy Abrams. Please refer to Maqom's home page for information about previous passages.

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Exciting Developments in Long-Term, Intensive Talmud Study at Maqom!

About one year ago, I offered those who study Talmud with Maqom the option of working with me on a one-on-one basis to do research and create articles about rabbinic literature that would be posted [here](#) at Maqom. With this article, that project is bearing its first fruit. I hope you enjoy reading Rabbi Louis Rieser's research and the papers that have yet to come.

--Rabbi Judith Z. Abrams, Ph.D.

BH

FOR THE PATHS OF PEACE

Dear Friends,

Who should we help when there is a need: Jews or non-Jews? The answer of the sages, just as we would expect is, "Both!" We are all created in the Divine Image and so the sages decreed the following:

In a city in which Jews and non-Jews live together the charity collectors raise money for the poor of Jews and non-Jews equally for the path of peace.

They provide support for non-Jews and Jews for the path of peace.

They greet non-Jews and Jews alike for the path of peace.

They visit the sick non-Jews and Jews for the path of peace.

They bury and lament for non-Jews and Jews for the path of peace.

They express condolences to non-Jews and Jews for the path of peace.

For Torah's ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. (M. Shevi'it 5:9, T. Gittin 3:13-14, B. Gittin 61a, Proverbs 3:17)

This phrase "for the path of peace" or "for the sake of the path of peace" is used in rabbinic literature to justify something for which we have no textual basis but which the sages knew were the right things to do. It is used extremely rarely.

Today, as we are literally at war, with those who caused us so much pain and fear, these small directions of how to reach peace are more important than ever.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does this teaching affect the way you think about the way you give charity? If so, how?
2. If you were to add to this list, what would add?

3. When you come to the part in the Torah service when the scroll is returned to the ark, and the verse from Proverbs is cited, will it add any significance to know that this is how it later came to be interpreted? If so, why?
4. How did September 11 make us observe these great commandments?