

Keser Shem Tov- Intro

Siman #1

A Teaching from the Baal Shem Tov, of Blessed Memory:

1. Be wholehearted in your service to the Blessed One, serving with complete devotion.
2. Study a lesson in moral instruction (mussar) every day, whether large or small.
3. Always strive to attach yourself to good traits and upright conduct.
4. Do not let a single day pass without performing acts of mitzvah, whether minor or significant.

As a reminder, be as careful with a "light" mitzvah as with a "weighty" one. The term "careful" (zahir) is related to the phrase "and the wise will shine like the brightness" (Daniel 12:3), meaning that the soul will shine with light, And be as vigilant with a "minor" mitzvah as with a "major" one, for the Merciful One desires the heart (intent and sincerity). This aligns with the verse, "One who keeps a mitzvah will know no evil" (Ecclesiastes 8:5).

The word "keeps" (shomer) is linked to the phrase "and his father kept the matter" (Genesis 37:11), which means "anticipated." Similarly, one should wait and hope from morning until evening for the opportunity to perform any mitzvah that may come their way.

A reminder for this is the verse: "God's kindness endures all day" (Psalms 52:3), encouraging one to seek acts of kindness and mitzvot throughout the day.

Siman#2

To Dance with Each Word of the Shema

It is a great practice to "dance" (engage with joy and devotion) on every word of the *Shema*. Even if one finds it impossible to pray without distractions, they should accustom themselves to recite the *Shema* without foreign thoughts. This focus is critical and has a profound effect.

The reminder for this is the teaching: "Whoever recites the *Shema*, harmful forces flee from them"—whether physical harm or harm to the soul.

Siman#3

To perform immersion (tevilah) as much as possible, especially at times of necessity.

Keser Shem Tov- Intro

Siman#4

To observe Shabbat according to its laws in all their details and particulars. Your mnemonic is: "You return man to contrition" (Psalms 90:3), where "you return" can be read as referring to the letters of "Shabbat." The Sages expounded that "man" refers even to one who worships idols, as in the generation of Enosh, who is forgiven.