

Summary of the Laws of Giving

This is a summary of a small section of a book named *Mishnah Torah*. It was written by Maimonides, who was a rabbi that lived in the 12th Century. He wrote many books about Judaism. *Mishnah Torah* is a book about Jewish law. This summary is based on the section on “Laws of Gifts to the Poor,” chapter 10, verses 7-14.

These are the eight levels of giving to the poor in order from lowest to highest levels.

1. A person gives but is not happy when s/he digs into his/her pocket in order to give.
2. A person gives cheerfully, but gives less than s/he should.
3. A person gives, but only when asked by a poor person.
4. A person gives without having to be asked, but gives directly to the poor. The poor person knows who gave the help, and the giver knows who was benefited.
5. A person gives a donation in a certain place, but walks away so that the giver does not know who received the benefit. However, the poor person knows the giver.
6. A person makes a donation to a poor person secretly. The giver knows who was benefited, but the poor person does not know who the giver was.
7. A person contributes anonymously to the *tzedakah* fund, which is then distributed to the poor.
8. The highest level of charity is to give money and help to prevent another person from becoming poor. For example, teaching a person a trade, finding them a job, lending money, teaching them to fish.

