

The second question seems to be implied in the many Talmudic discussions on proselytes. There are opinions, for example, strongly opposed to accepting proselytes. In *Yevamos* 109b, Rabbi Isaac says, "Evil after evil comes from those who accept proselytes," but the Talmud immediately explains away this negative opinion and says that evil comes from those who try to urge and persuade people to become proselytes. But if we do not try to persuade them and they come of their own free will, then it is a *mitzvah* to accept them, especially if we are convinced that their motives are worthy. The proof that it was not a mandate to go forth and seek proselytes is the fact that they never accepted proselytes in the days of David and Solomon because the proselytes would be lured by the grandeur of the Jewish kingdom and therefore their motives would not be pure. In other words, we should welcome proselytes. That is a *mitzvah*, but to go and persuade them to come to us seems to be considered improper. All the various opinions on this question are well summarized in the *Encyclopedia Talmudit*, in the second article on the question ("*Gerut*," at the beginning of the article). The answer, therefore, can be put this way: It is a *mitzvah* to *accept* a worthy proselyte, but not to engage in missionary activity, searching for proselytes.

Regarding the third question, the Talmud (in *Yevamos* 47a) and *the Shulchan Aruch* (in *Yore Deah* 268:1) put the answer as follows: We teach them *some* (*miktsas*) of the lighter commandments (*kalos*) and some of the stricter commandments (*chamuros*). But the sources do not give too many details. The *Shulchan Aruch* says, also, we teach

them the essentials of the law (*ikre ha-das*). The various sources mention certain laws, we might say, sporadically. For example, the men are told about leaving the corner of the field for the poor (*Yevamos* 47b); otherwise, they might kill an indigent gleaner, thinking him a robber. Others mention that the women are taught their three chief commandments as to menses, *challa*, and kindling of the lights, but in general the law states that we do not go into the matters in detail (*en marbin olov*, *Yevamos* 47b).