

MACHON PUAH

A New Volume of Sefer Puah

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PUAH was established almost thirty years ago to assist couples undergoing fertility treatment and facing challenges bringing children into the world. Over the years PUAH has helped thousands of people and been a part of the birth of thousands of children.

Over this time couples have asked the Rabbis at PUAH numerous halachic questions. Many of these questions are novel and have never been asked and discussed before modern times. When faced with a new question the Rabbis at PUAH discuss it and then write to many poskim for their opinion.

In recent years PUAH has published a few volumes in Hebrew of these questions and the various answers received. In addition PUAH has published three volumes of what will be a five volume set of Sefer Puah, a halachic work that presents the laws related to fertility. The copious footnotes contain a short precis of the answers that PUAH received both in a written form and orally.

Recently the third volume was published on pregnancy and birth. We are also planning to write a similar book in English that we hope will be as well received as the Hebrew version.

In honor of the publication of the latest book by PUAH we will look at some of the fascinating questions raised in the book of responsa and some of the answers.

One question that applies equally to people undergoing fertility and to their friends, families and other supporters relates to the proper use of ma'aser money. Can one use ma'aser money to pay for fertility treatment?

Avraham gave one tenth of the bounty that he recovered from the war against the four kings to Malkitzedek (B'reishit 14:18-20), and Yaakov promised to dedicate one tenth of his wealth to God (28:22). It would appear that it is appropriate for a person to dedicate one tenth of their wealth to give to charity or for religious purposes but nowhere does the Torah stipulate explicitly that we are obliged to do so. The Torah (D'varim 14:22) instructs us to give a tenth of our produce annually, and this verse is used as the basis for an obligation to give a tenth of one's money to charity.

How much must one give of their wealth to charity and how should this money be used?

More on this next week.