

Shabbat MKE 5780

November 15th-16th 2019

Source Sheet, Questions and Food for thought for "ViAhavta Lireiacha Kamocha - Loving Your Fellow Like Yourself"

Leviticus Chapter 19, Verse 18

לֹא־תִקֶּם וְלֹא־תִטּוֹר אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמֶּךָ
וְאֶהְבֵּתָ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ אֲנִי ה'

You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge against the members of your people; you shall love your fellow as yourself – I am Hashem.

Rashi, Leviticus Chapter 19, Verse 18

אמר רבי עקיבא זה כלל גדול בתורה
Rabbi Akiva said that this is the
fundamental rule of the Torah.

Sifra Kedoshim, Chapter 4 12 כמוך
YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR FELLOW MAN AS
YOURSELF —Rabbi Akiva said: "This is a
fundamental principle of the Torah" (Talmud
Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:3).

**Why do you think this is such a
crucial principle in Judaism?**

**How can the Bible command us to
have an emotion? To Love?**

Babylonian Talmud Tractate Baba
Metziah, Page 62A

שנים שהיו מהלכין בדרך וביד אחד מהן קיתון של
מים אם שותין שניהם מתים ואם שותה אחד מהן
מגיע לישוב דרש בן פטורא מוטב שישתו שניהם
וימותו ואל יראה אחד מהם במיתתו של חברו עד
שבא רבי עקיבא ולימד וחי אחיך עמך חייך
קודמים לחיי חבריך

Two people are walking (in a desert),
but only one of them has a flask of
water. If both of them drink, then they
both will die, but if only one drinks, then
he will survive long enough to reach a
settlement (and survive)... Ben Putra
inferred, it is better that both of them
drink and die, rather than one witness the
death of his friend. Until Rabbi Akiva
came and taught, " *And your brother
shall live with you,*" – your life takes
precedence to the life of your friend.

**How does this fit with Loving your
fellow as yourself?**

Nachmanides, Leviticus Chapter 19, Verse 18

וטעם ואהבת לרעך כמוך - הפלגה, כי לא יקבל לב האדם שיאהוב את חבירו כאהבתו את נפשו, ועוד שכבר בא רבי (עקיבא ולמד חי"ך קודמין לחיי חבירך) (ב"מ סב) אלא מצות התורה שיאהב חבירו בכל ענין כאשר יאהב את נפשו בכל הטוב - ויתכן בעבור שלא אמר "ואהבת את רעך כמוך", והשוה אותם במלת "לרעך", וכן ואהבת לו כמוך (פסוק לד) דגר, שיהיה פירושו להשוות אהבת שניהם בדעתו, כי פעמים שיאהב אדם את רעהו בדברים ידועים להטיבו בעושר ולא בחכמה וכיוצא בזה, ואם יהיה אוהבו בכל יחפוץ שיזכה רעהו האהוב לו בעושר ובנכסים וכבוד ובדעת ובחכמה, ולא שישווה אליו אבל יהיה חפץ בלבו לעולם שיהיה הוא יותר ממנו בכל טובה, ויצוה הכתוב שלא תהיה פחיתות הקנאה הזאת בלבו, אבל יאהב ברבות הטובה לחבירו כאשר אדם עושה לנפשו ולא יתן שיעורין באהבה ועל כן אמר ביהותן (ש"א כ"ז) כי אהבת נפשו אהבו, בעבור שהסיר מדת הקנאה מלבו 'ואמר (שם כ"ז) ואתה תמלוך על ישראל וגו'

This is an expression by way of overstatement, for a human heart is notable to accept a command to love one's neighbor as oneself. Moreover, Rabbi Akiva has already come and taught, "Your life takes precedence over the life of your fellow-being." Rather, the commandment of the Torah means that one is to love one's fellow-being in all matters, as one loves all good for oneself. It is possible that since it does not say "and you shall love, 'eth Rei'acha', as thyself," but instead it likened them in the word 'l' rei'acha, [which literally means "to" your neighbor], and similarly it states with reference to the proselyte, "and you shall love 'lo' (to him) as thyself", that the meaning thereof is to equate the love of both [himself and his friend] in his mind. For sometimes a person will love his neighbors in certain matters, such as doing good to him in material wealth but not with wisdom and similar matters. But if he loves him completely, he will want his beloved friend to gain riches, properties, honor, knowledge, and wisdom. However, [because of human nature] he will still not want him to be his equal, for there will always be a

desire in his heart that he should have more of these good things than his neighbor. Therefore, the Torah commanded that this degrading jealousy should not exist in his heart, but instead a person should love to do abundance of good for his fellow-being as he does for himself, and he should place no limitations on his love for him. It is for this reason that it is said of Jonathan's [love for David], "for he loved him, as he loved his own soul," because Jonathan removed [altogether] the attribute of jealousy from his heart, and he said to [David] "and you shall be the king of Israel."

Is it possible to "Love another as yourself" ?

Ibn Ezra, Leviticus Chapter 19, Verse 18.

אבן עזרא על ויקרא פרק י"ט פסוק יח ואהבת לרעך - על דעת רבים שהלמ"ד נוסף כלמ"ד לאבנר ועל דעתי שהוא כמשמעו שיאהב הטוב לחברו כמו לנפשו:

וטעם אני ה' - כי אני אלוה אחד בראתי אתכם: You shall love "to" your fellow. According to many, the "to" is superfluous, just as the "to" in "to Abner" (Shmuel II 3:30) According to my understanding, the meaning is just the way it sounds, that one should love the goodness belonging **to** his friend just as he loves the goodness belonging **to** himself. And the reason for the phrase, "I am Hashem," Because I am the one G-d that created all of you.

Sefer Ha-Chinuch, Commandment 243

מצות אהבת ישראל - לאהב כל אחד מישראל אהבת נפש, כלומר שנחמל על ישראל ועל ממונו כמו שאדם חומל על עצמו וממונו, שנאמר (ויקרא יח...) ואהבת לרעך כמוך...

ודיני מצוה זו, כלולים הם בתוך המצוה, שכלל (ד) הכל הוא שיתנהג האדם עם חברו כמו שיתנהג האדם עצמו לשמר ממונו ולהרחיק ממנו כל נזק. ואם יספר עליו דברים יספרם לשבח ויחוס על כבודו ולא יתכבד בקלונו, וכמו שאמרו זכרונם לברכה (ירושלמי חגיגה פ"ב ה"א) המתכבד בקלונו חברו אין לו חלק לעולם הבא, והמתנהג עם חברו דרך אהבה ושלים ורעות ומבקש תועלתם ושמה בטובם עליו הכתוב אומר (ישעיהו מט ג): ישראל אשר בך אתפאר.

One should love each and every Jew with a "soul love." That means: One should have compassion on each Jew and on his possessions just like one has compassion on himself and his possessions for it says "and you shall love your fellow as you love yourself." The specific laws of this mitzvah are included in the general principle of the mitzvah, that a person should deal with his fellow just like he would deal with himself; to guard his possessions and protect them from any damage; and if speaking about him, he should speak of his praises; and take compassion for his honor; and not to elevate your honor on account of his humiliation...

The Mitzvah to Love one's Fellow Jew- To love each and every Jewish soul, that is to worry about his finances, just as one worries about himself and his own, as it says, "You shall love your fellow as yourself." Our Rabbis, may their memories be blessed, have said, "Don't do to others, what you wouldn't want to be done to you," (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 31A.) As Rabbi Akiva has said, "This is a fundamental rule of the Torah." That is, many Mitzvot of the Torah are dependent on it, as one who loves his friend as himself would not steal from him, would not be promiscuous with his wife, would not trick him in business or in words, would not infringe on his boundaries, nor damage him because of entrapment. Etc. And similarly, many other commandments are dependent in this, it is well known to all.

The root of this Mitzvah is known, because just as you behave this way to your fellow-person, so will your fellow person do as well. And through this, there will be peace among man.

And the principle of this Mitzvah is included through the Mitzvah. That the rule of all is, that a person should behave with his fellow-person, the same way he would behave with himself, to guard him, and to distance himself from any damage. And if he tells anything over of him, he will tell it over for praise, and to give him honor, and not to take on honor from putting him down. As the Rabbis of blessed memory said, [Jerusalem Talmud Chagiga 81] "Someone who gains honor through the degradation of his friend has no portion in the world to come." And behave with your fellow-person in a manner of love and peace and friendship. And ask to try to benefit him, and celebrate with his success.

And this Mitzvah applies in every place and every time. And one who transgresses this, and is not careful with his fellow-person's finances to protect it, and surely if he damages him or pains him in any way intentionally, is abrogating a positive commandment.

According to the Sefer HaChinuch, what is the general principle of this mitzvah?

Rambam, Hilchot De'ot (Laws of Characteristics) 6:3

מצוה על כל אדם לאהוב את כל אחד ואחד מישראל כגופו שנאמר ואהבת לרעך כמוך לפיכך צריך לספר בשבחו ולחוס על ממונו כאשר הוא חס על ממון עצמו ורוצה בכבוד עצמו והמתכבד בקלונו חבירו אין לו חלק לעולם הבא:

It is a Mitzvah incumbent on every man to love every Jew like his own person as

it says, “You shall love your fellow as you love yourself.” Therefore, one is required to speak his praises, and to be concerned with his financial welfare, just like he is concerned with his own finances and desires his own honor. And he who receives honor at the expense of his friend has no share in the World to Come.

Rambam, Hilchot Avel (Laws of Mourning) 14:1

מצות עשה של דבריהם לבקר חולים ולנחם אבלים ולהוציא המת ולהכניס הכלה וללוות האורחים ולהתעסק בכל צרכי הקבורה לשאת על הכתף ולילך לפניו ולספוד ולחפור ולקבור וכן לשמח הכלה והחתן ולסעדם בכל צרכיהם ואלו הן גמילות חסדים שבגופו שאין להם שיעור אף על פי שכל מצות אלו מדבריהם הרי הן בכלל ואהבת לרעך כמוך כל הדברים שאתה רוצה שיעשו אותם לך אחרים עשה אתה אותן לאחריך בתורה ובמצות:

It is a positive Rabbinic law to visit the sick, to comfort mourners, to escort the dead, to provide for a bride, to escort guests, and to engage in all aspects of burial, such as carrying the dead on the shoulders and walking in front of it, eulogizing, digging, and burying. Similarly it is commanded to entertain a bride and groom, and to feed them and provide for all of their needs. These are considered acts of loving-kindness which in essence have no limit. Even though all of these Mitzvot are Rabbinic in nature, they are included in the realm of “Loving your friend as you love yourself.” Anything that you would want others to do for you, you should do for your brother, in Torah and in Mitzvot.

Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 31A

שוב מעשה בנכרי אחד שבא לפני שמאי א"ל גיירני ע"מ שתלמדני כל התורה כולה כשאני עומד על רגלי

אחת דחפו באמת הבנין שבידו בא לפני הלל גייריה אמר לו דעלך סני לחברך לא תעביד זו היא כל התורה כולה ואיך פירושה הוא זיל גמור

There was a story of a gentile that came before Shamai and demanded, “Convert me on the condition that you teach me the entire Torah while standing on one foot.” Shamai responded by chasing him out with a stick. The gentile then came before Hillel and made the same request. Hillel replied, “Don’t do to others, what you wouldn’t want to be done to you. This is the entire Torah. Everything else is just commentary. Go and learn.”

Why did Hillel frame this in the negative? Why didn't he just quote the verse from the Bible?

Rashi, Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 31A

רש"י שבת דף לא/א דעלך סני לחברך לא תעביד - ריעך וריע אביך אל תעזוב (משלי כז) זה הקדוש ברוך הוא, אל תעבור על דבריו שהרי עליך שנאוי שיעבור חבירך על דברך, לשון אחר חבירך ממש, כגון גזלה גנבה: ניאוף ורוב המצות

“Don’t do unto others what you wouldn’t want done to you.” As it says in Proverbs 27:10, “Your own friend and your father’s friend, do not forsake.” This is the Holy One, Blessed be He, do not ignore what He says, just as you would dislike your friend ignoring what you say. Another explanation, Your actual friend, such as robbery, theft, adultery, and most other Mitzvot.

How does Rashi's first interpretation change our way of thinking about this commandment?