



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

A Great Principle of the Torah

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

Regarding the verse, "You shall love your fellow like yourself," (19:18) Rabbi Akiva famously commented: "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah* – This is a great principle of the Torah." The commentaries wonder what about this mitzvah warrants the title as a "great principle of the Torah" above other mitzvos. Furthermore, Rabbi Akiva appears to contradict himself. In Parshas Behar (Vayikra 25:36) the Torah states, "Your brother shall live with you." From this verse, Rabbi Akiva derives (Bava Metziah 62a) that if two people are in a desert and there is only enough water for one of them to survive, the owner of the water should keep it, rendering, "Your brother shall live *with you* – your life comes before that of your friend's." How can this be reconciled with the commandment to love your fellow like yourself?

The Chasam Sofer suggests that Rabbi Akiva's comment, "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah*," actually comes to resolve the apparent contradiction. When it comes to life in this world, one's own life comes first. Therefore, in certain situations, the commandment "You shall love your fellow like yourself" just cannot be realized. When it comes to life in the next world, however, there is no rule that one's own life comes first. When it comes to elevating another's spiritual state and providing a greater experience in the eternal world, one is required to sacrifice their own. "*Zeh Klal Gadol Ba'Torah*" therefore means: "this is a great principle that applies to Torah." Although a person might feel that they can reach greater spiritual heights by investing time for their own Torah study, one is still required to take time to teach others Torah because of the commandment, "You shall love your fellow like yourself."

The Chasam Sofer admonishes us that, in truth, we will not be sacrificing any of our eternal life by adhering to this principle. On the contrary. If we put others above ourselves when it comes to Torah study, we will not be sacrificing anything because the mitzvah of teaching others Torah will be as great a merit as if we had studied on our own.

We often think of the mitzvah to love our fellow only in the physical sense, such as giving charity, visiting the sick, or lending a helping hand. In truth, one of the greatest kindnesses we could do for another is to teach them Torah, thus elevating them spiritually. If one is not able to teach Torah, he or she can still impact others by acting as a role model and showing others the importance of making time to study Torah or by recommending a Torah class. May we each merit to love our fellow like ourselves – the great principle that applies to Torah!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Every man, your mother and father you shall revere... (19, 3)

A person is not permitted to call his parent by their name, not while the parent is alive, nor when the parent has left this world. (Yoreh Deah 240)

Yaakov wanted to reveal to his children what would occur at the end of days, and the Shechina left him. Yaakov said, "Perhaps I have a child that is unworthy, as my father had Esav and my grandfather had Yishmael." So Yaakov's children responded, "Shema Yisrael / Hear Yisrael... (referring to their father – Rashi) just as you only have one G-d in your heart, so too we only have one G-d in our hearts." (Pesachim 56a)

How could the shevatim refer to their father by name, calling him Yisrael?

Parsha Riddle

What was Nechemia's other name?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

On which day of the week are people the weakest?

Answer: Sunday (Taanis 27b)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Kedoshim* (19:18), the Torah commands: "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge." Chazal explain:

What is revenge and what is bearing a grudge? Revenge is illustrated by the following example: **One said to his fellow: Lend me your sickle, and he said: No. The next day he, the one who had refused to lend the sickle, said to the other person: Lend me your ax. If he said to him: I will not lend to you, just as you did not lend to me, that is revenge.**

And what is bearing a grudge? If one said to his fellow: Lend me your ax, and he said: No, and the next day he, the one who had refused to lend the ax, said to the other man: Lend me your robe; if the first one said to him: Here it is, as I am not like you, who would not lend to me, that is bearing a grudge. (Yoma 23a, citing *Toras Kohanim* 4:10)

From these examples, the Talmud infers that the prohibitions of taking revenge and bearing grudges are limited to where the initial offense was monetary, but they do not apply to one who was personally insulted. Many authorities accept this distinction as normative (e.g., *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3:38), although others seemingly do not, and maintain that the prohibition applies regardless (Rambam and *Sefer ha-Chinuch*, as understood by the Chofetz Chaim in *Hilchos Lashon Hara*, *Pesichah*, *Lavin* 8-9, *Be'er Mayim Chaim*).

Even the stringent view, however, concedes that the Torah does not prohibit retaliation in response to an insult in the heat of the moment. In such a context, while it is certainly a *mitzvah* and a matter of good character traits to refrain from retaliation, this is impossible for ordinary individuals, and only feasible for someone "whom Hashem has blessed with holy character traits." Subsequently, however, when one's anger has cooled, the Torah prohibits taking revenge or even bearing a grudge in one's heart, "but with the passage of a brief period of time after [the offense], one must forget the matter from his heart." (*Be'er Mayim Chaim*)

(The wording "from his heart" alludes to the Chofetz Chaim's earlier ruling that bearing a grudge in one's heart is forbidden even in the absence of any verbal expression.)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I am for the fruit.
2. I was for Moshe's lips.
3. I am for a baby boy.
4. I am for the heart.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am right before Shabbos.
2. I flip from honor.
3. I am a nature switch.
4. Don't sit in their place.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The two goats for Yom Kippur (We are double, Totally similar, Our end is different, One would make the red white.)

#2 Ketores (I cause wealth, I allow entering, I am for smoke, Breath is good for me.)

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