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## Getting to Know Your People - 005 How To Hate Evil and Aspire For Unity

### ***When Hatred Is Permissible***

The mitzvah of *ahavas Yisrael* is only to love members of the Jewish people. It is written, “*And you shall love your friend like yourself.*” The mitzvah is to love – whom? “*Your friend.*” How much? “*Like yourself.*” The possuk says that mitzvah is to love “*your friend*”, and the Gemara says that this means that the mitzvah is only to love another Jew, who is called “*your friend*”; whereas the other nations are not called “*your friend*”, so there is no mitzvah to love them.<sup>[1]</sup>

There is also a prohibition “*you shall not hate your brother in your heart.*” What does hatred “in the heart” mean? The Rambam says that hatred is only when it’s in the heart, and not when it is outwardly shown through actions.

Hatred is only prohibited towards “*your brother*”, a fellow Jew. As for a gentile, the Gemara says that it is permitted to hate a gentile, because he is not called “*your brother*”. It is considered a *middas chassidus* (a pious level, and not obligatory), though, not to hate him; but it is not prohibited according to the Torah to hate him.

Why indeed is the mitzvah only Jews, and why is there no prohibition to hate a gentile? This needs understanding. The simple understanding is because someone who has the status of a “brother” has precedence to those who aren’t your relatives, so you should place your priority on loving other Jews (your brethren) rather than on those who aren’t your “relatives” (the gentile nations). But there is a deeper reason to it.

### ***Hating A Sinner Is Not Allowed When It Becomes Personal***

The above-quoted Gemara says that in some situations, we may hate even a Jew, if he is a Jew who sins intentionally, after being warned by witnesses not to commit the sin. Why are we allowed to hate this intentional sinner?

Elsewhere, the Gemara says that if one sees his friend unloading his donkey, and he also sees his enemy unloading his donkey, he must help his enemy first in order to overcome his evil inclination not to help the enemy. There are different opinions what type of “enemy” are we talking about: Some *Rishonim*<sup>[2]</sup> say that it is an enemy whom he is not permitted to hate, such as a person who mistreated him. Therefore, he must overcome his evil inclination of hatred towards him and help him unload.

Others<sup>[3]</sup> however answer that it is referring to an enemy whom it is a mitzvah to hate, but now the hatred has become personal, because the person knows that the other one hates him, for “*just as water reflects a face to a face, so does the heart of man reflect one to the other*”, and therefore he will reciprocate the hatred.

This is perplexing! What is the difference if he hates me or not? If we are speaking of a case in which there is no prohibition to hate him, because he is a sinner, then why must I overcome my evil inclination and help him?

Another fact we must clarify is, in a case where I am allowed to hate a sinner, what does it mean that I can hate him? Do I hate him for any personal reason? If it's a *mitzvah* to hate him, then even if I hate him for a personal reason, it's understandable that I need to overcome my evil inclination and help him unload.

But from the words of *Tosafos*, we see that hating a sinner is not about hating him on a personal level. When the Gemara says that it's a *mitzvah* to hate a sinner, it is because one who loves Hashem hates evil. This means that I have to hate the evil that is present here, but I am not allowed to hate any traces of good that are in this situation. Therefore, if I feel any personal hatred to him, I am hating him already beyond the evil that he does, and I am hating his essence. This is not permitted, and that is why I must overcome my evil inclination and help him unload, if I feel any personal hatred to him.

### **Defining Love and Hate**

Let us understand this further. Why indeed must one hate evil? And why is there a *mitzvah* to love only a Jew and not a non-Jew? In order to know this, we need to know what love is, and what hatred is.

Love is essentially to realize that another person exists, and to want his existence. Hatred is the absence of this feeling. It is when a person wishes that the other person wouldn't exist. Hatred means, I want to negate his existence. Hatred is not simply that “I hate him”. It means that I don't want him to exist.

How do we know this is true? Take a look at the opposite of hatred, which is love. When I love someone, I want him to exist. When husband and wife love each other, when parent and child love each other, they each want the other to exist. If one of them would die *chas v'shalom*, they would be bereft without the other.

So love is that I want the other person to exist. The more I want him to exist, the more I will love him. The more I hate a person, the less I want him to exist.

Hatred is “*sinah*”, which is from the word “*shoneh*”, “different.” When someone is different than me – in other words, when I look at him as “different” – then I don't want him to exist. If he stops existing, I'll feel more at ease. So hatred is: “I don't want him to exist”. Thus, hatred is not that I believe that the other person exists and I am simply bothered by what he does, that I feel an emotion of “hatred” towards him. A feeling of hatred towards another is rather a result of an even deeper negative feeling: that I do not want him to exist.

We see this apparent from the fact that when someone hates somebody, he doesn't talk to him (for at least three days, as the Gemara says), because in his mind, the other person doesn't exist. If he talks to him and tells him he hates him, the Rambam says that it's not hatred, because hatred is only when it is kept in the heart and not revealed outward. Why? It is because verbalizing the hatred is at least acknowledging the other's existence [Soon we will bring other opinions in the *Rishonim* who disagree with this]. Hatred is to ignore the person and act like the other doesn't exist.

## **Baseless Hatred Cannot Allow For The Beis HaMikdash**

The *Midrash* recounts that when Moshe Rabbeinu met Dasan and Aviram fighting, he immediately realized why the nation wasn't worthy of redemption: because he saw a "disagreement" between them. He realized that because there was disparity among the nation, the nation could not yet be redeemed; the depth of this is that when people disagree, they don't want the other to exist. This is the whole idea behind *sinas chinam* (baseless hatred). Redemption can only happen to a nation in which each person wants the other to exist - or else there is no "nation" to redeem, for they are not unified.

The Gemara [4] says that *sinas chinam* destroyed the *Beis HaMikdash*, and "it still dances among us." What is the connection between *sinas chinam* and the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*? Why is it that the *Beis HaMikdash* cannot exist if there is *sinas chinam*? The *Beis HaMikdash* is called the *makom* (place) of this world where Hashem wants His *Shechinah* to dwell in. If one Jewish soul doesn't want another Jew's soul to exist, he doesn't want the other person to have a "place" on this world. The *Beis HaMikdash* cannot either have a "place" on this world if that is the situation among us.

*Sinas chinam*, which destroyed the *Beis HaMikdash*, was therefore not a "punishment". It created a reality in which people are apart from each other, and this cannot allow for a concept of a *Beis HaMikdash*.

### **"Kamoicha" - To Love Another Jew "Like Yourself"**

*Sinas chinam* means, I don't recognize the other's existence, and even if I am aware that the other exists, I don't want him to exist.

Hillel told the convert that love for Jews is the entire Torah, to love another Jew *kamoicha*, "like your friend". Love for others Jews has to be *kamoicha*, to love another Jew "like yourself", and the depth of this is to realize that the essence of Creation is the existence of the Jewish people, every Jewish soul.

Whenever we feel hatred, the emotion of hatred that we feel toward others isn't the hatred itself! The hatred we feel is just a resulting feeling of some other deep evil force. The hatred itself is the fact that we don't want another to exist! That is hatred. Everything else is its *result*, and that is what we know and recognize as "hatred".

*Ahavas Yisrael*, then, which is the opposite of *sinas chinam*, is to realize that another Jew exists! When we contemplate the fact that another Jew exists, there will be love.

Thus, *ahavas Yisrael* is only a *mitzvah* towards "your friend", a fellow Jew, because the Jewish people is necessary for Creation to exist, whereas the other nations are not needed for Creation to survive [from the perspective of the current 6000 year era, that is. Later, we will see that there is a higher perspective which will be revealed in the future]. It is to become aware of reality, the reality that the Jewish people are the essence of Creation - and to want that reality.

Therefore, we do not have an *avodah* to actually love the other nations [in our current era]. We had a *mitzvah* to destroy the seven nations who were dwelling in Eretz Yisrael in order to conquer it from them, and we have a *mitzvah* to wipe out Amalek. Only the Jewish people are necessary for the world to survive and uphold existence. There is only a *mitzvah* to love that which is necessary to hold up the universe, thus, the concept of love is only towards Jews.

What do we need to be aware of? We need to realize that the entire essence of Creation is the Jewish people. To love another Jew is essentially to realize who is - that another Jew is the essence of

creation. Our **awareness** to that is, essentially, the meaning of “*Ahavas Yisrael*”.

The emotion of “love” that we feel to others is thus only the external layer of love, and it is the only superficial layer of the love. The essence of the love, the inner dimension of the love itself, is to realize another’s existence. Just like I want myself to exist, so must I want the other to exist. That is love. “*Ahavah*” has the same numerical value of “*echad*”, “one” – love is about being at one with another.

So “*kamoicha*” is not just about how much to love another, but is rather the entire essence of the *mitzvah*. If I realize how necessary it is for another Jew to exist, by default there will be love to him. “*Kamoicha*” is to love another in the same way that you love yourself.

### ***Hatred Does Not Exist In Our Inner Dimension***

Hatred is only hatred when it is in one’s heart and not openly revealed or verbalized, or else it is not hatred, according to the Rambam. However, other *Rishonim* argue on the view of the Rambam and are of the opinion that a person is not allowed to hate another in his heart even if he takes no action against the person. According to this opinion, why does the Torah say that you are not allowed another “in your heart”, if it is not dependent on the heart?

It is because really, it is not possible to hate another Jew. In reality, the entire Jewish people are all one, and there is only love. We are “one” nation; we all stood with “one” heart by Har Sinai. From the perspective of the *Yechidah* in our soul – our essence – we are all unified with other Jews.

How then are we able to hate someone? If it is not really possible in essence to hate another Jew, why then does the Torah forbid hatred towards another Jew? The answer is: hatred is only possible in the external layer of Creation. On the surface of things, which is the superficial layer on reality, we are able to hate another, but in our essence, in the inner dimension of reality, it is not possible for a Jew to hate another Jew.

Chazal say, “A Jew who sins, is still a Jew”, because a Jew is always inherently good. Thus, when I hate a sinner, I have to hate his sin, and not the person himself, because he is good in his essence.

When I hate someone, I don’t want him to exist. I am only allowed to hate the sin that a Jew commits, and not the Jew himself, because it is the *sin* which I shouldn’t want to exist. I must wish he wouldn’t sin; but I want him, as a person, to exist.<sup>[5]</sup> If I don’t want him to exist, then I can’t exist either, for we are all one at our root, and if I deny this oneness, I’m really negating my own existence.

Thus, hatred is only “in the heart”, even according to the opinion that the prohibition of hatred to another Jew extends beyond hatred in the heart. It is because hatred cannot reach deeper than the heart itself, for deep in our heart is our soul’s essence, where hatred cannot penetrate. The [external layer of the] heart can hate, but my actual soul [the inner point of the heart] cannot hate another Jew, *chas v’shalom*.

### ***Hating The Evil, Not the Person***

Thus, the way to understand the *mitzvah* to hate evil is that by hating evil, I don’t want it to exist. The fact that I hate a sin means that I don’t want it to exist and that is how I nullify it. We are obligated to hate idol worship, meaning, we should wish that it wouldn’t exist. The more we hate evil, the more we nullify it and destroy it. But we have to be careful to wish that the evil acts a person does should be destroyed, and not wish to destroy another Jew’s existence, *chas v’shalom*.

The Maharal explains that sin in a Jew is *mikreh*, happenstance, and not *etzem* – not a part of his

actual essence. The depth in implementing the Maharal's words is, if I hate another Jew's evil as being a part of him, then I consider his *etzem*/essence to be evil, and this is denying the intrinsically good essence of a Jew. Rather, you should hate the *mikreh* aspect of his sin, and instead reveal the *etzem* aspect of his sin, which is to remind yourself of his *etzem*, that his soul is always pure.

There is another way how you can look at it. The permission to hate the wicked, and the *mitzvah* to hate them, is hatred, which is *sinah*, from the word *sheini*, "two". You can only hate the evil he does, not the person himself, in other words, you need to reveal that the evil he does is *sheini*, a "second force" apart from his essence, and not the person himself. It is not part of his essence.

(There is another way to understand it as well. In the word *Beraishis*, we find the letter *beis*, which represents the number two, and the word *raishis*, which means beginning. Every Jewish soul, has a *raishis*/beginning, which is intrinsically pure. Look at his *raishis*, his beginning point, his essence, and not at the "*beis*" in his *Bereishis*....)

### **The Depth of Ahavas Yisrael**

Thus, the *mitzvah* to love another Jew "like yourself", "*kamoicha*", is to realize the reality, that every Jewish soul is necessary for existence. It is called the "*klal gadol*" (great rule) of the Torah, according to Rabbi Akiva. Why is it called the great rule of the Torah? There are many explanations, but the deep answer is as follows.

It is the "*klal gadol*" of the Torah, meaning, the world can't survive without Torah, as the *Nefesh HaChaim* writes; and the world cannot survive without Yisrael. Both Torah and Yisrael are called *raishis*, because without the *raishis*, the universe cannot exist. Chazal state that Torah was created 2000 years before Yisrael, and this is a deep matter. If Torah was created before Yisrael, then how why is Yisrael called *raishis*? The answer is, that *raishis* doesn't mean the "first" with regards to chronological order. *Raishis* really means something which, if it is taken away, nothing can exist.

As proof, the other nations were around before the inception of the Jewish nation, so there can be definitely be nations that existed before the Jewish people became a nation. So what does it mean that the Jewish people are the *raishis* of Creation?

Without Torah, there is no world. Without Yisrael, there is no world. That is why the Jewish people are called *raishis*. Without Yisrael, everything would cease, just as everything would cease if there would be no more Torah.

Thus, love of other Jews is called the *klal gadol* of the Torah. Superficially, to love another Jew like yourself is to simply "feel love" for another Jew. But the deeper meaning is: to realize that without another Jew's existence, nothing can exist. Thus, it is the *klal gadol* of the Torah, because the Torah cannot exist without the Jewish people, without all 600,000 souls that accepted it.

Hashem is called "your friend", whom you must not "abandon".[\[6\]](#) Loving Hashem is not just to "love" the Creator in the way we think we understand, but rather to realize that if I don't recognize the reality of Hashem, I can't exist.

The convert wanted Hillel to teach him the entire Torah on one foot, and Hillel told him, "Do not do unto your friend what you do not want done to yourself." The depth of this was, the convert wanted that the entire Torah should be taught to him in one fact alone. Hillel was telling him, there is one thing you need. If you love other Jews like yourself, you recognize that reality depends on the existence of other Jews, and then you will have everything; and if you don't have this fact straight, you have nothing.

So loving other Jews "*kamoicha*", to love another like yourself, is not just simply "*ahavah*." It is to realize that I need other Jews to exist, for the Jewish people is necessary for the survival of Creation.

### **Returning To The Perfected State of Mankind**

In the future, there will be unity between Jews and non-Jews. Why do we need the non-Jews, if the universe depends on Jews, and not on non-Jews?

The answer is, the goal of *Ahavas Yisrael* is to reach love for the Torah and for the Creator, whom we all depend on for our existence. We were all once part of Adam's soul. Adam, originally, was the embodiment of the entire Creation, contained into one man. All of Creation was included in man in his initial state, which was called "*Adam Kadmon*" (original man), and *sefer Nefesh HaChaim* discusses this at length. In the ideal state of man, man is all-inclusive; all of Creation is part of him. This is the perfected state of man. Nothing was created for no purpose; because everything is necessary for man's existence.

Thus, our goal in *ahavas Yisrael* is not simply to arrive at a "love" for all of Creation. It is to grasp that ultimately, we need all the details in Creation in order to exist, because that is the ideal state of mankind, *Adam Kadmon*.

In our current 6000 year era, we cannot reach the state of *Adam Kadmon*, but we can gather together some of our parts, by reaching *ahavas Yisrael*. Ultimately, we need to reach *Adam Kadmon*, which will be in the future. Therefore, we need to want others' existence, although we cannot actually reach this perfected state right now. So we need to realize that we need other Jews in order to exist, and along with this, we should also wish that all of Creation should also exist. In recognizing that everything in Creation is necessary for us to exist - everything, including every non-Jew, even animals, plants, and rocks. It's all necessary and it's all a part of our existence.

In the current 6000 year era, we are after the sin of Adam, and we cannot reach true love with Creation. There are wars in the world all the time. All we can reach is a degree of perfection. *Ahavas Yisrael* alone is a part of the perfection process, thus, it is not complete perfection. But the will of Hashem is that all of the world will become unified. We need to at least yearn for such a thing. If we reveal this wish in our soul, then we can reach love for all of Creation, and then upon that, we can become closer to the Creator.

In the future, it will be revealed that all of Creation is part of man, for all of Creation was created in Hashem's image. Man will then become a perfect container for the *Shechinah* to dwell upon. In our current era, our love for other Jews is not complete, because our *ahavas Yisrael* cannot be true *ahavas Yisrael* when it lacks the unity with the rest of Creation. Therefore, we cannot reach complete love for Hashem.

But in the future, may it come speedily, it will be revealed the complete form of mankind, in which we all recognize that we need all of Creation in order to exist, and only then, can we become totally attached with the Creator.

[2] Tosafos in Bava Metzia 31a

[3] Tosafos in Pesachim 113b

[4] Yoma 9b

[5] This is explained at length in sefer Tanya

[6] Shabbos 31a

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