

Tora Study, Parashat Aachari Mot – Kdoshim

Rodef Shalom

1. Leviticus Rabbah, Chapter 9, Section 3

There was an incident involving Rabbi Yanai who was walking along the way, and he saw a certain person who was exceedingly distinguished in dress. He said to him: 'Would the Rabbi [agree to] be received as a guest with us?'

He said to him: 'Yes.' He took him into his house and gave him food and drink. He tested him in Bible, but did not find him knowledgeable; in Mishna, but did not find him knowledgeable; in *agadda*, but did not find him knowledgeable; in Talmud, but did not find him knowledgeable. He said to him: 'Take and recite the blessing.' He said to him: 'Let Yanai recite the blessing in his house.' He said to him: 'Are you able to repeat what I say to you?' He said to him: 'Yes.' He said to him: 'Say, the dog ate Yanai's piece of bread.' [The guest] stood and grabbed [Rabbi Yanai] and said to him: 'My inheritance is with you and you are preventing me from it.' He said: 'In what sense is your inheritance with me?' He said to him: 'One time, I was passing before a school and I heard the voices of the children saying: "Moses commanded us Torah, the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob" (Deuteronomy 33:4). "The inheritance of the congregation of Yanai" is not written here, but rather "the congregation of Jacob."' He said to him: 'Why did you merit to eat at my table?' He said to him: 'In all my days, I never heard a bad word and related it to its subject, and I never saw two [people] quarreling with one another and did not make peace between them.' He said: 'You have so much civility to your credit, and I called you a dog?' He applied in his regard: "And for one who sets his path" – one who assesses his path, his value is great. As Rabbi Yishmael bar Rav Nahman said: Civility preceded the Torah by twenty-six generations. That is what is written: "To guard the path to the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24). "Path," this is civility, and then "the tree of life," this is the Torah.

2. Leviticus 19:18

You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against members of your people. Love your fellow [Israelite] as yourself: I יהוה am.

3. Rashi

And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Rabbi Akiva said this is a great commandment in the Torah (Safra):

4. Leviticus 19:33-34

When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them.

The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I יהוה am your God.

5. Leviticus 17:1-2

6. Leviticus 17:29-31

7. Leviticus 18:1-6

8. Leviticus 19:1-2

9. Leviticus 19:3-19

10. Leviticus 18:1-5

11. Rashi

יִתְּנֶנּוּ אֶת מִשְׁפָּטֵי תִּנְשׂוּ Matters prescribed in the Torah which are in conformity with the human feeling of justice such as one feels ought to be ordained if they had not been already ordained by the Torah.

ואת חקתי תשמרו AND KEEP MINE ORDINANCES matters which are decrees of the King (promulgated without any reason being stated)

against which the evil inclination raises objections: "Why should we observe them and against which also the nations of the world raise objections, as e. g., the prohibition of eating swine's flesh, of wearing clothes of a mixture of wool and linen, the purgatory power of "water mingled with the ashes of the Red Heifer" (טהרת מי חטאת) — therefore it is stated: "I", the Lord, have enacted this for you — you are not at liberty to evade the obligation (Yoma 67b).

12. Yoma 85 a-b

The Gemara relates: **It once happened that Rabbi Yishmael, and Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya were walking on the road, and Levi HaSadar and Rabbi Yishmael, son of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, were walking respectfully behind them**, since they were younger and did not walk alongside their teachers. **This question was asked before them: From where is it derived that saving a life overrides Shabbat?**

Rabbi Yishmael answered and said that it is stated: **"If a thief be found breaking in and be struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood-guiltiness for him"** (Exodus 22:1). **Now, if this is true for the thief, where there is uncertainty whether he comes to take money or to take lives, and it is known that bloodshed renders the land impure, since it is stated about a murderer: "And you shall not defile the land" (Numbers 35:34), and it causes the Divine Presence to depart from the Jewish people, as the verse continues: "In the midst of which I dwell, for I the Lord dwell in the midst of the children of Israel" (Numbers 35:34), and even so the home owner is permitted to save himself at the cost of the thief's life, then a fortiori saving a life overrides Shabbat...**

Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya answered and said: Just as the mitzva of circumcision, which rectifies only one of the 248 limbs of the body, overrides Shabbat, so too, a fortiori, saving one's whole body, which is entirely involved in mitzvot, overrides Shabbat...

Rabbi Yonatan ben Yosef says that it is stated:

"For it is sacred to you" (Exodus 31:14). This implies that **Shabbat is given into your hands, and you are not given to it to die on account of Shabbat...**

Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya said: It is stated: **"And the children of Israel shall keep Shabbat, to observe Shabbat"** (Exodus 31:16). **The Torah said: Desecrate one Shabbat on his behalf so he will observe many Shabbatot. Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: If I would have been there among those Sages who debated this question, I would have said that my proof is preferable to theirs, as it states: "You shall keep My statutes and My ordinances, which a person shall do and live by them"** (Leviticus 18:5), **and not that he should die by them.** In all circumstances, one must take care not to die as a result of fulfilling the mitzvot.

13. Safra Achari Mot, Parsha 9, Chapter 13

"Whoever does them" – Rabbi Jeremiah used to say: You say: How come even a Gentile who does the Torah is a high priest? The Talmud says: "Whoever does them, he will live by them."

14. Midrash Tehillim (Buber) Psalm 10

When the Blessed One said to Moses: Speak to Aaron your brother and let him not come into the Holy Place at any time, he began to regret it. He said: It seems to me that my brother cannot gather before the partition. There is a time for an hour, a time for a day, a time for a year, a time for twelve years, a time for seventy years... The Blessed One said to him: Not as you think, not a time for a day, nor a time for an hour, nor a time for a year, nor a time for twelve years, nor a time for seventy years, nor a time for eternity – but whenever he wants to enter, he will enter.