

Fill Your Own Cup Year Two *June Sessions – Mishna Avot – Ethics of our Ancestors* **Chapter 3**

1) Mishna Avot/Ethics of our Ancestors 3:14

He (Rabbi Akiva) used to say:

Beloved is the human for they were created in the image [of God].

Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that they had been created in the image [of God], as it is said: “for in the image of God, God made the human” (Genesis 9:6).

Beloved are Israel in that they were called children to the *Makom (God)*.

Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that they are called children of the *Makom* as it is said: “you are children to the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 14:1).

Beloved are Israel in that a precious vessel was given to them.

Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that the precious instrument, with which the world had been created, (i.e. the Torah) was given to them, as it is said: “for I give you good instruction; forsake not my teaching” (Proverbs 4:2).

משנה אבות ג:יד

הוא הָיָה אוֹמֵר,

חָבִיב אָדָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּצֶלֶם.

חֻבָּה יִתְרָה נִדְעָתָ לֹו שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּצֶלֶם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר (בראשית ט) כִּי בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֶת הָאָדָם.

חָבִיבֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּקְרָאוּ בָּנִים לַמָּקוֹם.

חֻבָּה יִתְרָה נִדְעָתָ לָהֶם שֶׁנִּקְרָאוּ בָּנִים לַמָּקוֹם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר (דברים יד) בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.

חָבִיבֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנֶּתַּן לָהֶם כָּלִי הַמִּדָּה.

חֻבָּה יִתְרָה נִדְעָתָ לָהֶם שֶׁנֶּתַּן לָהֶם כָּלִי הַמִּדָּה שֶׁבֹו נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר (משלי ד) כִּי לָקַח טוֹב נִתְּנִי לָכֶם, תּוֹרָתִי אֶל תַּעֲזוּבוּ:

Revealing God's Love is A Deeper Love

2) Rabbi Ovadiah Bartenura, Avot 3:14

"A deeper love - it is revealed to them" –

Rambam explained: A deeper love did the Holy Blessed One, show to the human, as God informed and said to them, "See, I have made you in the Divine image." Because one who benefits his friend and informs him of the good that he has done for him, shows a deeper love than if he had benefited him but it is not important in his eyes to inform him of the good that he has done for him.

And it can be explained, *"A deeper love - it is revealed to them;"* a revealed and publicized love. As not only did God have a secret love for the human but rather even a love that was revealed and known to all.

ברטנורא שם

חֻבָּה יִתְרָה נִדְעָתָ לֹו -

רַמְבַּ"ם פָּרַשׁ, חֻבָּה יִתְרָה הִרְאָה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְאָדָם שֶׁהוֹדִיעָו וְאָמַר לֹו רְאֵה

שֶׁבְּרִאשִׁיתוֹ בְּצֶלֶם, שֶׁהִמְטִיב לְחַבְרוֹ וּמוֹדִיעָו הַטּוֹבָה שֶׁעָשָׂה עִמּוֹ, מֵרָאֵה חֻבָּה יִתְרָה יוֹתֵר מִשְׂאֵלוֹ הַטִּיב עִמּוֹ וְאִינוֹ חָשׁוּב בְּעֵינָיו לְהוֹדִיעָו הַטּוֹבָה שֶׁעָשָׂה עִמּוֹ.

וַיֵּשׁ לְפָרֶשׁ, חֻבָּה יִתְרָה נִדְעָתָ לֹו, חֻבָּה גְלוּיָה וּמְפֻרְסָמָת, שֶׁלֹא בִלְבַד אֶהְיָה מְסֻתֶּרֶת הָיָה לֹו לַמָּקוֹם בְּרוּךְ הוּא עִם הָאָדָם אֲלֵא אַף חֻבָּה גְלוּיָה וְיִדְוָעָה לְכָל:

3) Rabbi Nelly Altenburger, Pirkei Avot Musings – Chapter 3

<https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/558845.4?lang=en&with=all&lang2=en>

Here I see a great lesson – love needs to be expressed. And humanity in general is seen as beloved by God. Yachin affirms that this greatness is due to our capacity of choosing between good and evil, and that due to such knowledge any person should strive to do good to one another, and certainly not to damage others, whether in their bodies, monetarily or their honor, and most certainly not to shame anyone. Yachin understands, however, that any human may lose that image of God if they are evil enough, and that Israel would never stoop to that point.

Universal Relationship with God

4) Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, The Dignity of Difference, p. 47

The radical transcendence of God in the Hebrew Bible means that the Infinite lies beyond our finite understanding. God communicates in human language, but there are dimensions of the Divine that must forever elude us. As Jews we believe that God has made a covenant with a singular people, but that does not exclude the possibility of other peoples, cultures and faiths finding their own relationship with God within the shared frame of the Noahide laws. These laws constitute, as it were, the depth grammar of the human experience of the divine: of what it is to see the world as God's work, and humanity as God's image. God is God of all humanity, but between Babel and the end of days no single faith is the faith of all humanity. Such a narrative would lead us to respect the search for God in people of other faiths and reconcile the particularity of cultures with the universality of the human condition.

Children of God

5) Deuteronomy 14:1

You are children of the Lord your God. You shall not gash yourselves or shave the front of your heads because of the dead.

דברים יד:א

בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לֹא תִתְגַּדְדוּ
וְלֹא-תִשְׂמוּ קֶרֶחַ בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְמַת:

6) Babylonian Talmud Tractate Kiddushin 36a

And both Abaye and Rava, what do they derive from this verse: "You are the children of the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 14:1)? This verse is necessary for that which is taught in a *baraita*: The verse: "You are the children to the Lord your God," indicates that when you act like children and cleave to the Holy Blessed One, you are called children, but when you do not act like children you are not called children. This is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda. And Rabbi Meir says: Either way you are still called children.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת קידושין לו.

האי "בָּנִים אַתֶּם", מאי דְרָשִׁי בִּיה? הָאִי
מִיבְעִי לְכַדְתִּנָּא: "בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַה'
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם", בְּזִמְנָא שְׂאֵתָם נוֹהֲגִים מִנְהָג
בָּנִים – אַתֶּם קְרוּיִם בָּנִים, אִין אַתֶּם
נוֹהֲגִים מִנְהָג בָּנִים – אִין אַתֶּם קְרוּיִם
בָּנִים, דְּבָרִי רַבִּי יְהוּדָה. רַבִּי מַאִיר אָמַר:
בֵּין קָד וּבֵין קָד אַתֶּם קְרוּיִם בָּנִים