



Human Dignity in at a Time of Crisis

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Pirkei Avot 2:10

(10) Rabbi Eliezer says: The honor of your friend should be as dear to you as your own.

משנה אבות ב'י'

(י) רבי אליעזר אומר, יהי כבוד חברך חביב עליך כשליך:

* What does Rabbi Eliezer leave undefined?

* Under what circumstances should this principle apply and how might it be applied today?

Avot D'Rabbi Natan 15

(1) 'Let the honor of your fellow be as dear to you as your own' – How so? This teaches that even as one looks out for his own honor, so should he look for his fellow's honor. And even as no man wishes that his own honor be held in ill repute, so should he wish that the honor of his fellow shall not be held in ill repute.

אבות דרבי נתן ט"ו

(א) והם אמרו שלשה דברים רבי אליעזר אומר יהי כבוד חברך חביב עליך כשליך. אל תהי נוח לכעוס. שוב יום אחד לפני מיתתך. יהי כבוד חברך חביב עליך כשליך כיצד מלמד שכשם שרואה את כבודו כך יהא אדם רואה את כבוד חברו וכשם שאין אדם רוצה שיהא שם רע על כבודו כך יהא אדם רוצה שלא להוציא שם רע על כבודו של חברו.

* How does this source attempt to answer the questions undefined above?

* In what ways is "honor" defined here?

Bereishit Rabbah 24:7

(7) Ben Azzai said: "These are the generations of Adam" is a great principle in the Torah. Rabbi Akiva said: This is a great principle of the Torah: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). Thus, one should not say, "Since I am scorned, I should scorn my fellow as well; since I have been cursed, I will curse my fellow as well." Rabbi Tanchumah said, if you act thus, realize

בראשית רבה כ"ד:ז'

(ז) בן עזאי אומר זה ספר תולדות אדם, זה כלל גדול בתורה, רבי עקיבא אומר (ויקרא יט, יח): ואתהבך לרעה כמוך, זה כלל גדול בתורה, שלא תאמר הואיל ונתבזיתי ומבזה חברי עמי, הואיל ונתקללתי ומקלל חברי עמי. אומר רבי תנחומא אם עשית בן דע למי אתה מבזה בךמות אלהים עשה אותו.

who it is that you are willing to have humiliated -
 "the one who was made in the likeness of God."
 Rabbi Tanchuma says, "If you do so, you should
 know who are you scorning — 'in the likeness of
 God He created him.'"

- * What is the source of human dignity according to the different scholars quoted here?
- * How does the inclusion of the proof text from Leviticus make a difference in defining human dignity?

Pirkei Avot 2:5

(5) In a place where there are no leaders strive to
 be a leader.

משנה אבות ב'ה'

ובמקום שאין אנשים, השתדל להיות איש:

- * What are the ways in which you can be a leader in bringing the Jewish values of human dignity to the forefront of your life and our communal conversations?
- * What new commitments might you be prepared to make?



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