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37 Footnotes

A halakhic and midrashic analysis of the mitzvah of אבהת לברך כמות as found in my parasha Kedoshim of the Holiness Code of Vayikra

Baltimore, Maryland
Introduction:

This paper will explore how the rabbis applied the Biblical commandment, לָעַר כָּמוֹר. We will be asking, "Why is Hillel's golden rule in the negative and to whom is it addressed? Do R.Akiba and Ben Azzai disagree with regards to interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 or can we reconcile their opposing views? Within the context of marriage how has Leviticus 19:18 been cited? Within the context of capital punishment how is Leviticus 19:18 used to justify being as merciful as law allows in seeking justice? What is the significance of Rambam's interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 by calling our attention to care for the honor of our neighbor and doing deeds of loving kindness? In the context of reciprocity how does Ramban ground fulfillment of Leviticus 19:18 in one's own a priori respect for one's own self? Is Christian radical ethics which extends love of one's neighbors to one's enemies and advocated laying down one's own life for neighbors sanctioned by Jewish halakhah?

Leviticus 19:18

The first thing to note about the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself is that it appears in the context of the holiness code. It is therefore a priestly teaching. Dr. Efros comments, "The priests were also responsible for some spiritual upheavals of the people. Probably the reforms of Hezekiah and certainly those of Josiah were due to them. It may be assumed therefore, that they exercised a great educational influence, and one may regard the command, "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" as their contribution to Biblical ethics. This urging of mutual love is in keeping with the general spirit of joy that overwhelmed the people at the time of such sacrifices as thank-offerings, peace-offerings, and paschal lamb, and especially during the feast of ingathering. The joy expressed itself in dances accompanied by instrumental music."

HILLEL'S INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18

The gentile in Shabat 31a who demands an oversimplification by asking to be taught the whole Torah in one rule while Shammai stans pede in uno is disrespectful because as in Horace's Satires conotes doing without effort. Hillel does not abandon Shammai's insistence on the necessity of making a greater effort by urging the gentile to go and learn the commentary. In the gemara of Shabat 31a which is later than mishnaic incorporations of Leviticus 19:18 we read:

כְּאֶחָד מַעְשֵׂה בֶּנְכָרִי אֲשֶׁר שֶׁאָמַר לָהֶם שֶׁאֵלָה יְרוֹנִי וְלֹא מֵעָלֶה שֶׁלְּמַדְּנֵנִי כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כָּלָה. כִּפְרוֹתוֹ וְעָלִיָּה אֵין לְאָדָם, יִתְּנֶנָּה לְאָדָם אִם יִתְּנֶנָּה. אִם לֹא יִתְּנֶנָּה. אִם הַיַּלְּכָה כִּי לֹא תְגַבִּיס. וּכְאִם כִּל הַתּוֹרָה כִּי אִדָּךְ פְּרֵרֵהֶנָּה וּכְאִם.
Hillel's application of Leviticus 19:18 is based on reciprocity. Hillel asserts, 'Do as you would be done by.' Scholars like D. Hoffmann have commented on why Hillel's injunction "What is hateful unto thee do not do unto thy neighbor is in the negative. Because it is in the negative we are prompted to ask, "What would be hateful to oneself?" Leviticus 19:11-17 offers a response to this question. No sane person would want someone to steal from themselves, to deal deceitfully or falsely with themselves, to defraud themselves, to withhold one's wages, to be insulted or humiliated, to be subject to an unfair decision, to be dealt basely with, to be hated, to be subject to vengeance, to be hurt, to be subject to someone bearing a grudge, etc.

This is not to deny that positive formulations of the injunction to love one's fellowman are not abundant in Rabbinic and extra-Rabbinic sources. We will recall that Hillel in Avot 1:12 puts the commandment to love one's neighbor in the positive when we read, הלא אשר תאומץ ידך על-אהרן ואהנים שבלש עיר ורבים שלש אオー, א-נניהו ואת-הغذي מפרע-פי שלום. The 16th C. kabbalistic work Sefer Haredim links Hillel's two formulations of Leviticus 19:18 by commenting, "Loving the creatures and drawing them to the Torah— it does not say 'loving Jews', but loving creatures, and this expression contains a hint of how Hillel with his illuminated intelligence and sweet speech, drew near those gentiles who wanted to convert and brought them under the wings of the Shechinah, as we see in Shabat 31a."

Modern scholars have also argued that the audience or scope to which Hillel's golden rule is meant to apply is humanity in general and alienated Jews. Dr. Hoffmann interprets Hillel's golden rule to apply to all men due to our common ancestry through Adam when he writes, "Der geminsame (mutual) Vater aller Menschen ist es, der alle als Bruder und als Volksgenossen (comrades) verbindet."

In both the negative formulation (Shabat 31a) and the positive formulation (Avot 1:12) Hillel links love of neighbor with the study of Torah. Love culminates in Torah lishma whereby through amore intellectivo one fulfills Deuteronomy 10:20, ואת-השם עד, ויהיה ידך על-אהרן. Since study leads to observance of the mitzvot, Hillel can justify submitting one general rule (Leviticus 19:18) as the pinnacle of the Torah because all the rest of the commandments derive from it. Leviticus 19:18 is the kerna or essence of the Torah. The impulse to formulate a statement that reduces the Torah to its essence, apparent in Hillel's golden rule, is abundant in Rabbinic literature.

RABBI AKIBA'S INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18

In Avot de-Rabbi Nathan a parallel story to the Hillel incident in Shabat 31a occurs. In version B of R. Schechter's edition (ch.26, p.53) we read:
This incident is similar to the Hillel episode in Shabat 31a in that Leviticus 19:18 is again converted into the negative. However this incident differs from the Hillel account in Shabat 31a most notably by the absence of Hillel's remark, "The reset is commentary go and study."

Rashi notes in his commentary on Leviticus 19:18 that R. Akiba declares the Biblical commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself "the great fundamental principle of the Torah (Sifra, Yer. Talm Nedarim 9:3, Gen Rabbah 24:7). Kirschner remarks, "Schon Akiha bezeichnete (denotes) dieses Gebot (commandment) als die umfassende (comprehensive) Haupt (principle) und Grundlehre des Judentums." In Sifra we read:

For Ben Azzai, the central rule of the Torah is contained in Genesis 5:1. Bereshit Rabbah 24:7 elaborates, "Do not say, since I was shamed let my neighbor be similarly shamed, since I was cursed, let my neighbor be similarly cursed. Said R. Tanhum: If you act thus, know whom you are shaming—In the likeness of God made He him." Dr. Hoffmann notes the following logical consequence of Ben Azzai's view namely, "if one injures his neighbor who is created in the image of God, then he offends against God." Because mann ist im Ebenbilde Gottes an insult against man is an insult against God. Ben Azzai is calling on us to recognize the natural form (to'ar) of man's being created in the image of God and through this recognition to come to love one's neighbor as oneself. For Rambam being in the image of God is to be understood with regards to man's capacity for noetic apprehension through active intellect and not with regards to anthropomorphic resemblance.

According to Borowitz and Efros, Ben Azzai is not denying the importance of Leviticus 19:18 but is seeking a more inclusive verse, for neighbor might be understood literally or locally, but creation in the image of God excludes no human being. Hillel (Avot 1:12) and R. Meir (Avot 6:1) as well affirm love of all mankind. Love of non-Jews promotes the pragmatic principle of mi-penei darkei shalom.

The above passage from Sifra does not imply that R. Akiba denies the dignity of
man being created in the image of God for in Pirke Avot we recall that R. Akiba declares:

הא חיהlaughs באדום בחום באדום בצבעה בחום חיה להורדה נודעה לשבורא בצבעה אליהים שצאמר כ
בצלל עשה את האדום.

INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18 WITH REGARDS TO MARRIAGE

A. In Kiddushin 40a, Tosefta Sota 5:11, and Niddah 17a we find citation of Leviticus 19:18 with regards to marriage. In Kiddushin we read:

אמר רב חורית אמר רב, אמר לatron שסקרת את האישה עדشرفנה, שמא יראתה בעל בבר.

מכות התנהנה עליה, והרממה אחר נתניהו לידע כי עד.

Rav Yehudah forbids a man to sanctify his wife until he sees her, lest he will see in her a disgraceful thing. Rav Yehudah interprets Leviticus 19:18 to mean that a man must see his future wife before being married to her lest he will see in her a disgraceful thing. For example a priest must marry a virgin and it would be a disgrace for him if it was found out too late after marriage that she was not a virgin. Accusations of premarital unchastity can be found in Deuteronomy 22:13-21 where we learn that if the bride's parents can produce physical evidence of her virginity, namely, a sheet or garment that was spotted with blood when the marriage was consumated, then upon this evidence the slandering husband is flogged, fined, and prohibited from ever divorcing the bride. However if the charge proves true the bride according to Torah is to be stoned to death for having sexual intercourse before marriage. Rav Yehudah in the merciful interest of avoiding such a unpleasant situation may be suggesting that the groom know beforehand the status of virginity of his bride-to-be in order not to find in her a disgraceful thing.

B. In Tosefta Sotah 5:11 we find R. Meir associating the citation of Leviticus 19:18 with regards to marriage vows: We read:

C: R. Meir did say, "He who marries a woman who is unworthy of him transgresses five negative rules."

D: On the count of not taking retribution, and not having vengeance, and not hating one's brother in his heart, and loving one's neighbor as himself, and the count that your brother should be able to live with you.

E. And not only so, but he stops procreation from happening in the world.

R. Meir implies that if one would marry a woman worthy of himself and he would be worthy of her, then he would be fulfilling the commandment to love one's neighbor as himself. How could a woman not be worthy of a man or a man not worthy of a woman according to rabbinic law? A response to this question is found in Kiddushin chapter 4.
For example if a Cohen would marry a woman of priestly parentage he needs to investigate her family records through four mothers which are actually eight. As well a priest must marry a virgin according to Biblical law.

C. In Niddah 17a we find an application of Leviticus 19:18 that seeks to prohibit licentious behavior. We read:

אמר בר חסדא אסור ול⊄דא שיתמשי משהה דונן. שטאמר הא NST מתעד כלך. ממ הוא,しまי
אמר א" וי אירה בדר הכותנה עלי

R. Chisda implies that daytime exercise of the evil inclination can lead to disgust for one's spouse which will prevent the husband from loving his wife. For the sake of shalom bayit which can be destroyed by a man becoming disgusted with his wife as a result of daytime cohabitation such immodest behavior is prohibited.

INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18 WITH REGARDS TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

In Kethuvoth 37b, Sotah 1:6, Sanhedrin 45a, Sanhedrin 52a, and Tosefta Sanhedrin 9:11 we find application of Leviticus 19:18 as dictating the least painful and most humane mode of execution. In Kethuvoth 37b we read:

ונני כאן למשהו בסך של שודה מה זארא? ת"ל(one) לא תﻫן בחוה הדוה חניך מקברך. חסינך
שכף דמס סנסלה רעפה. ממה לכלל מתן או שפכנל דמס מע תאוה. אימין לכלל בקורי
נממל ערוח ואך בקפיים ומדוועי עוף אם ברגים אמר בר אברד אברד קך עוהות
לעור כמור, בחר על מנותיה פמה.

R. Nachman proscribes death by decapitation for it is the least terrible mode of execution. In Sanhedrin 7:1 where the severer types of death are listed before the lighter types of death we read:

ארבעה מותות משלוב CUT, סקפלה, שריפה, חרב, ותוכה. ר. שמשל אמור שריפה, סקפלה,
תוכה, חרב.

Since decapitation is listed last it is the least painful and thus the most humane.

In Sotah chapter 1, mishnah 6 where a case of adultery is considered whereby it is debated whether the culprit should be disgraced by being executed naked or given the dignity of being executed with a loin cloth in front and behind we read:

אמר בר חסדא אסור בר אברד אברד קך עוהות לצור consequential切れיה פמה לא מותיה פמה לא יכין
האמר וענייה אכי לא כלך לעמע אתי לה דינ בר אברד אברד ממקפל ממ טור ברזזנייה
עדיך לי trop מעןיא דמליה ימר טבר אערד ימך עודי פמה לא יכין מברזזנייה.

We see that the rabbis and R. Judah draw on Leviticus 19:18 to argue for the least harsh
manner of execution. However while the rabbis hold that a woman about to be executed would prefer to be clothed although it may involve a protracted death, R. Judah takes the position that the woman would prefer not to be clothed in order to minimize the anguish and pain of execution.

In Sanhedrin 45a we encounter the application of Leviticus 19:18 as meaning to choose the easiest mode of execution with regards to the height of a stoning platform. We read:

> רבד חומת א玢 רבד בר א玢, אמר קרא ואהבתו lekker כ móc ברוד ולא מיתון הפ
> התשכלה חות נון שתי קומת חור גמד: ננה קומת שלק, חותי שאש. זומ בועה לכל
> התשכלה חות נון שתי קומת חור גמד: ננה קומת שלק, חותי שאש. זומ בועה לכל
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R. Nachman argues for the greater height of the stoning platform because it ensures a quicker death and is thus considered more compasionate.

In Sanhedrin 52a we again find citation of Leviticus 19:18 to support choosing the least agonizing mode of death. We learn from Sanhedrin 52a that "brotherly love extends even to the culprit who should be treated humanely." We read:

> הננ ד licking מופת כרח פִשָּׁת נון מלך הנבון החיא. החיא שירפת מת双重 חות נון ויא עיניו,UNCH
> ילל מים (לשרפת מphants) אמר רב חמא בר רב אחיה, אמר קרא ואהבתו lekker כ móc ברוד ולא מיתון
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While Korah together the Dathan and Abiram and their people were swallowed up by the earth and the 250 chieftans whose complaint against Moses and Aaron was in the domain of holy privileges, were consumed by the fire of the Lord after they offered incense, Nadab and Abihu are miraculously killed for offering up strange fire. In both cases a rebellious haughtiness or pride is punished by death by fire. Because according to Sanhedrin 52a the souls of Nadab and Abihu were burnt although no external injury was visible, R. Nahman questions the validity of the application of the second of R. Ishmael's hermeneutic rules called gezerah shavah. R. Nahman then interprets Leviticus 19:18 as meaning to choose a speedy death by using an abundance of fuel for the punishment of burning.

R. Nahman later in the name of Rabbah b. Abbuh in Sanhedrin 52b again interprets Leviticus 19:18 to mean choosing the most speedy death. We read:

> הנה ננה קומת נון, קומת ויא ויא לוכד פִשָּׁת נון. שشعر נוהר זבזב, אמר רב חמא בר חות נון ויא עיניו,UNCH
> ילל מים (לשרפת מפנים) אמר רב חמא בר רב אחיה, אמר קרא ואהבתו lekker כ móc ברוד ולא מיתון
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R. Nahman advocates against execution by being pierced through with a sword lengthwise for the sake of the principle of interpreting Leviticus 19:18 to mean choosing the most humane execution.

In Tosefta Sanhedrin 9:11 again we find Leviticus 19:18 interpreted to mean choosing the most compassionate mode of execution. We read:

C. R. Judah says, "Lo it says, And you will love your neighbor as yourself- Choose for him an easy death.
D. What do they do to him (in the case of decapitation)?
E. They put his head on a block and chop it off with an ax.

We thus see R. Judah justifying his argument for decapitation as a form of execution which is less severe than burning from Leviticus 19:18.

It must be stressed that capital punishment was rarely carried out due to the restrictions such as the requirement of the testimony of no less than two eye-witnesses. According to R. Eleazar ben Azariah, "A Sanhedrin that executes capital punishment even once in seventy years is considered tyrannical (Makkot 1, 10)."

RAMBAM'S INTERPRETATION of LEVITICUS 19:18

Rambam interprets Leviticus 19:18 within the Rabbinic doctrine of kevod habriot. This is the opposite of deprecating, denigrating, or putting to shame. Love of neighbor implies respect for neighbor. In Hilket Deot 6:3 we read:

[Hebrew text]

Raymond Weis comments on Rambam's remark by writing, "love of neighbor, so interpreted would eliminate two potent causes of strife among human beings, it would of course facilitate decent relations among people."

Rambam's insistence to care for the honor of our neighbors recalls for us Pirke Avot 2:12 where R. Eliezer implores וכבר עלי לשליך נ瘁 והני. This injunction is echoed in Avot 4:2 where the rabbis address themselves to the members of the academy R. Elazar declares רבי אלעזר בר折叠 נתיימר ויה כיבר ויהו כיבר עלי לשליך נ瘁 והני. Now we are ready to see that honoring one's neighbor is again urged in Avot de Rabbi Nathan through the use of kal wa-homer logic where we read, "If even the angels who are not burdened with the evil impulse honor each other how much more so should men in whom

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the evil impulse is present."

In the introduction to the MT and Sefer ha-Mitzvot (#206) Rambam again interprets Leviticus 19:18 to mean that it is incumbent upon Jews to love every single member of the covenant or every single member of Israel. This commandment to love each member of Israel is reinforced as an act of *imitatio dei* when we sing in the second berakhah before the kriat Shema, אまとות עלמין באת ישראל עמך אהביו, וברית ומצות, חכמה והשכחתים ואמונת כלמונות.

The fact that the love of the resident stranger (ger) is enjoined in the same chapter of Leviticus 19 in a separate verse (19:33-34) seeks to bring the stranger into the realm of neighbor by insisting that strangers (immigrants) be treated as Israelites. We read in Leviticus 19:34: כעוזר מקסינ המה עלא הגר והיה בהם לא ויהיה להם כי-גרים ויהיו חברנים. We are to have compassion for the stranger for we once shared his predicament and know quiete well what it feels like to be vulnerable in a strange land.\(^{22}\) Sifra on Leviticus 19:18 takes the view that Leviticus 19:18 applies to Jews and the similar passage in Lev.19:34 applies to gentiles in the land of Israel. Shemot 22:20 commands, וגר לא יוהו ויהיו בני ישראל כי-גרים ויהיו חברנים. The Damascus Rule from Qumran also links love of neighbor with love of the stranger when we read, "They shall love each man his brother as himself; they shall succour the poor, the needy, and the stranger."\(^{23}\)

This is not to say Rambam neglects commanding kindness to non-Jews and only advocates the domain of Leviticus 19:18 to Jews and strangers. In Evel 14:12 Rambam writes, "We bury the dead of heathens, comfort their mourners, and visit their sick, as this is the way of peace." Such acts of *gemillut hasidim* motivated by good will apply even more to fellow Jews. We read in H.Evel that we are to do the following: (1) visit the sick, (2) comfort mourners, (3) to participate in removing the dead, (4) to arrange a wedding for the bride, (5) to accompany guests who are leaving a city, (6) to take care of all the needs of the burial, to lift up the casket, to walk before it, to lament, to dig a grave, and bury the body, (7) to cause the bride and groom to rejoice, and to furnish newlyweds with their needs. Such acts of *hesed* promote the betterment of the world. Rabbi Hirsch can therefore write with regards to Leviticus 19:18, "You have been born to do kindesses; you are meant to support, to sustain, to comfort, to instruct, to nourish, to make happy, to revive..."\(^{24}\)

**INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18 BY RAMBAN**

Nahmanides limits the application of the command to love thy neighbor as thyself. Like Hillel's interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 in Shabbat31a, Nahmanides seems to understand the golden rule within the horizon of the concept of reciprocity. We read:
The phrase *love thy neighbor as thyself* is not meant literally, since man cannot be expected to love his neighbor as his own self. Moreover R. Akiva has ruled that your life takes precedence over your fellowman's. The Torah here enjoins that we should wish upon our neighbor the same benefits that we wish upon ourselves. Perhaps this is the reason for the dative instead of the accusative form (ַָּאִּיתוּ יִשָּׂרָאֵל) instead of (ַָּאִיתוּ יִשָּׂרָאֵל) of the verb phrase, as also in "And thou shalt love him (the stranger) as thyself (19:34). Indeed, sometimes a person may wish upon his neighbor certain benefits only, i.e. wealth, but not wisdom, and the like. But even if he wishes his cherished friend well in everything i.e. wealth, honor, learning, and wisdom, he will not do so unstintingly, but will still insist on a larger share of the benefits. It was this shortcoming that the Torah condemned. Rather, a man should wish his fellow well in all things, just as he does in his own case, and place no limitations upon his love. Thus, in the case of Jonathan and David, it says that Jonathan loved him as his own soul (I.Sam.20:17), since he had removed all jealousy from his heart, declaring "And thou shalt rule over Israel."²⁵

Nahmanides' comment that we are not to understand Leviticus 19:18 literally seeks to avoid the absurd situation whereby people would neglect themselves at the expense of living for others. Literal interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 might give rise to the situation where you were to attend to everybody else's concerns and everybody else attend to your concerns. Nahmanides however does assert that Leviticus 19:18 implores us to show good will in wishing that our neighbor enjoy the well being that we wish for ourselves. Nahmanides points out the grammatical construction of the dative form of the verb to emphasize this point. It is competition with one's neighbor that leads to jealousy for the good things one's neighbor might have that you do not share that gives rise to a malignant selfishness that Nahmanides wants us to expunge. We are to recall the tenth commandment (Ex.20:14, Deut.5:18).

With regards to the good will we are to express for our neighbor Samson Raphael Hirsch comments on Leviticus 19:18 thereby amplifying Nahmanides remarks when he writes, "To see in your fellow-man something else than merely your rival for the acquisition of the good things of the earth, not to look upon his good as an encroachment on yours, to let your neighbor have the spot of earth on which God has set him- as He has set you on yours- and even to let him prosper on it- all this amounts merely to not hating him, not yet to loving him. To love your neighbor means to see in him the condition of your own existence, of your own welfare, or your fulfilling your mission as man and Israelite, and so, in the desire for your own being and living, to include the desire for your neighbor's also."²⁶
Jonathan is too much the gentleman to compete with his friend David for the kingship thereby graciously conceding to David without the least tincture of envy or jealousy. In I Samuel 18: we read ויהי כל날ו לבר פרע-איש אל-שלום והנינו יقترحו עמך רוד. The rabbinic commentators explain that part of Jonathan's love for David was motivated by his respect for David's distinguished ancestry i.e. being decended from Perez. David in turn gives honor to Jonathan's geneological stock after Jonathan's death by bringing Jonathan's son Meribaal back from exile to live at the royal court. David as well acknowledges Jonathan's graciousness in his elegy on Jonathan by saying, "Thy love to me was wonderful, more than the love of women (II.Sam. 1:26)."

Nahmanides further comments on Leviticus 19:18 by asserting the general rule that we may not injure our own legitimate interests at the expense of trying to carry out the commandment of loving one's neighbor as oneself. We read

Love your fellow with all the qualities and modes of love with which you love yourself. The text is concerned with love in its qualitative and not in its quantitative sense. A man may love an inanimate object. But the quality of love is different. Man will not love his animal in the same way he loves his son. A man's wife, his silver, gold, fig, and vine may all be the objects of his love. But in each case, the nature of the love is different. But in objects belonging to the same category, as far as the nature of the love is concerned the strength or intensity may vary. A man may love his younger son more than the older. Wherever he cannot extend love to two objects at one and the same time, he will prefer the one he loves more. God commanded us to love our fellow man, just as we love ourselves. The quality and nature of our love must be of the highest category- parallel to that which we employ in promoting our own welfare. Wherever the love of others does not clash, however with our own legitimate interests, we are obliged to promote our fellowman's welfare, just as we would our own. The quality must be the same but not necessarily the quantity. The intensity, the strength our our love may vary with the circumstances. If we cannot promote his welfare without injuring our legitimate interests, then we are not obliged to do so. The Torah did not allude to the extent of our love but to its character.27

Does Nahmanides interpretation of the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself assume that the natural ground and starting point for such love is man's own self-love? What if a man does not love himself? What if a man treats himself poorly and thereby translates Hillel's injunction to dictate similar poor treatment towards others? Will not a man who is indifferent to his own lot, who has no self-regard, not show any less respect to his neighbor?

While Nahmanides does advocate self-interest in not jeopardizing one's own welfare in attempting to carry out the commandment of love of one's own neighbor, it

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should be noted that Nahmanides risked his own being in order to promote and protect the welfare of the Jewish community of Spain by accepting to defend Judaism in a public disputation in Barcelona against the apostate Pablo Christiani's rancorous attacks. Nahmanides in attempting to protect his fellow Jewish brethren by defending Judaism against its attackers, suffered persecution and barely succeeded in escaping from Spain which eventually led to his emigration to Acre. The above passage represents Nahmanides counseling prudence in carrying out Leviticus 19:18, but when it came to actual practice Nahmanides nobly acted beyond the requirements of the law by acting selflessly all in the name of Judaism and the Jewish people.

INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18 by MOSES MENDELSOHN

All the interpretations of Leviticus 19:18 thus fare offered have been by rabbis. Let us now turn to how a great Jewish philosopher who was also a Biblical exegete comments on Leviticus 19:18. Mendelssohn in the Biur in the context of Hillel's golden rule from Shabat 31a writes:

If the text means that a man must love his fellow as himself, it is hardly conceivable that the Almighty should command something which is beyond human capacity. Moreover, feelings such as hate and love are hardly the object of commands, since they are not under human control. To fulfill such a command to the letter, man would have to grieve for his fellow's sorrows just as he grieves for his own. This would be intolerable, since scarcely a moment passes without hearing of some fellow Jew's misfortune... Hillel therefore correctly interpreted this passage in a negative manner: What is hateful to you do not do to your fellow- at least do nothing to your neighbor which you would not like to be done to yourself. It is obvious that we must never insult or cause hurt to any man, whether wicked or righteous, except through the proper judicial procedure or by way of loving admonition in order to correct his behavior. Just as the Torah ordained the death penalty for the shedding of blood of any man, saint or sinner, scholar or simpleton, so does the command to respect our neighbor's feelings and interests apply to every human being without distinction. 28

Mendelssohn supplies the reason why Hillel reframes Leviticus 19:18 in the negative and indicates that love of one's neighbor a priori commands respect for one's neighbor. In editing the Biur Mendelssohn added this comment to that of N.H. Weisse's, " We are enjoined to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This does not refer to the quantity but to the quality. Let us explain these terms in the realm of emotions. Let us take the example of love which can extend even to inanimate objects. In sum, the Torah here does not refer to the scope but to the quality of love. Provided there is no conflict of interests, you must
love your neighbor as yourself in every way, i.e. not for selfish motives as you love your property, but for the sake of the loved one- as you love yourself." To love someone for their own sake means to see in the face of the other an element of godliness. To love someone for their own sake means to love them for the potential ideal that they can strive to become. It is to love them for how they can most ideally be fulfilled as a child of God. For a philosopher the highest fulfillment of an individual is through cultivation of the mind, through dedication of one's life to study in pursuit of the attainment of understanding. We realize the true ground of the dignity of man and therewith the goodness of the world where we can love our neighbor as ourself through dedication of one's life to the awareness of our understanding, by the understanding of understanding i.e. what the Greek philosophers called *noesis noeseas*.

**INTERPRETATION OF LEVITICUS 19:18 in the NEW TESTAMENT**

In the NT Christians are enjoined to love their neighbors by writers who appeal to the golden rule as the summation of the Mosaic Law (Mt 7:12, Gal 5:14; Rom 13:9, Jas 2:8). James claims that the commandment to love the neighbor is "the royal (basilikon) law laid down in Scripture (2:8). Such valorization and privileging of neighborly love can be seen leading to St. John proclaiming, "God is love (4:16)." Practitioners of idealized universal love are commanded, "let us attend to arousing each other to love (Heb.10:24)." In the book of Hebrews we find the admonition for the continuance of *philadelphia* or brotherly affection. This Christological messianic hope that *alle die Menschen werden Bruder* can be traced back from Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, which Beethoven adapted for the ninth symphony, to the NT. The scope of this idealized appeal of Leviticus 19:18 is not that of R. Akiba who understands love of one's neighbor as enjoining the Jew to love his fellow Jew. R. Akiba cannot love his enemies. R. Akiba can not love Rufus' soldiers who stripped his skin layer by layer from his body in torturing him in his martyr's death. R. Akiba loves his students to whom he serves as a model of *kiddush ha-shem* to be able to call out the shema in such terrible circumstances. R. Akiba's greatest love is dedicated to God's gift of Torah that allows him to sanctify the divine name i.e. proclaim ethical monotheism.

The double commandment to love the Lord with one's whole being and the neighbor as oneself appears in Luke 10:25-28, Mt.22:37-40, and Mark 12:29-37. In Luke 10:25-28 we find the depiction of a lawyer asking Jesus about eternal life and Jesus countering with a question which draws forth from the lawyer the double quotation of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. We recall:
Once a lawyer stood up, trying to test Jesus with a question, "Teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life? Jesus said to him, 'What is written in the Law? How do you read it?' He said in reply, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might, and with all your mind; and you must love your neighbor as yourself." You have answered correctly; Do this, and you shall live.'

Carrying out the first sentence of the Shema and Leviticus 19:18 are seen by Jesus as leading one to eternal life as opposed to the three questions cited in the Talmud that will be asked of all of us before the heavenly court, namely, (1) Did you do good deeds?, (2) Did you make a time for study?, (3) Did you carry out the commandment of being fruitful and multiplying?

Ahad Ha-Am argues against equating the positive formulation of Jesus (and you must love your neighbor as yourself) with the negative formulation of Hillel in Shabbat 31a, and thus against the tendency of some Jews to equate Christian ethics, which Ahad ha-Am saw based on radical altruism that is ultimately reverse egotism, with Jewish ethics which he feels is founded on the commandment to pursue Justice (צדק ורבים; Deut.16:20). The just man for Aristotle does not only not harm anyone but gives others what they deserve with regards to their substantive merits (i.e. just deserts).

How does Jesus interpret Leviticus 19:18? It is to be recalled that the Lukan Jesus on the plain insists on the love of one's enemies (6:27-35). In Mt 5:44 we also find the NT teaching agapate tous echthrous hymen. Luke writes, "Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." The command to love the enemy is grounded in the patience and forgiveness of God and His compassion (Sir.18:8-14).

Classicists see this NT teaching as a development of the ethos of education (paideia) that we find carried out by Homer's Achilles, namely to treat your friend properly (i.e. Patroklos) and to take revenge on those who do evil to you (i.e. Paris by stealing away Helen). In 2 Samuel 19:16 Joab is astonished that David ha-Melech inverts this pattern, "be good to your friends, and hate your enemies when we read, "You love those who hate you, and hate those who love you." Luke would not share in Joab's astonishment for he (Luke ch.10) depicts a Samaritan who proves more neighborly to his enemy while a Cohen and Levite do not offer help to a fellow Jew who has been robbed. The passage in Luke (also Mark 2:27) represents an attack against the Priesthood. Christian doctrine wants to insert Jesus as the "new highpriest."

The teaching of love of one's enemies is a radical ethic not necessarily adopted by Judaism according to some scholars. Klassen remarks, "For the argument goes that the
coup|ling of these two commandments is an un-Jewish act, indeed the broadening of the concept of neighbor to include the enemy is inimical to Judaism."32 Although the principle of non-resistance is clearly enunciated in Isaiah (50:6) where the prophet says, "גוי מית呵护, the Talmud is filled with examples that invalidate the if... then logic of Christian teachings (Luke 6:29-30) such as (a) if hit on the cheek offer the other one also, (2) if your coat is taken offer the shirt as well, (3) if someone robs you then do not demand it back. Emmanuel Levinas has show that one can not love a Nazi as a neighbor because the Nazi's ideology deny the status of neighbor to the Jew i.e. the Jew has no right to exist according to the Nazi. Jewish interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 also departs from Christian interpretation with regard to idolaters. Eugene Borowitz writes, "It is clear that according to the interpretation of the rabbis of the Talmudic period the commandment of loving one's neighbor does not refer to idolaters. Idolatry is of course the classic wickedness in Jewish eyes. While there is no commandment to hate idolaters, and while there are in rabbinic literature many stories about the positive relations between Jews and idolaters, the law places, so many restrictions on association with idolaters and their gods that the commandment of neighborly love cannot easily be said to apply to them."33 The Jewish rejection of love of one's enemies and enemies unqualifiably is further remarked on by Rashbam when commenting on Proverbs 8:13. He writes, "Love thy neighbor as thyself- if thy neighbor is good, but if he is wicked, 'the fear of the Lord is to hate evil." Solomon in Proverbs 8:13 remarks, וראות והות שמאא רע פמא רואות, וראות והות רע פמא והות שמאא רואות.

Christianity presents a radical ethic with regard to the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself when we are told, "Greater love (agape) hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13)." Although it is true that in Mark 12:28-31 and Matthew 22:34-40 we find Jesus ranking Deuteronomy 6:5 over Leviticus 19:18 as the first and second commandment in importance respectively, Jesus' injunction to sacrifice one's own life for the sake of another is presented as a mode of emulation that all true Christians are to follow who take up their cross to carry it in the process of what they view as imatatio dei. People are not only to imitate God's love for his creatures thereby becoming children of God, but also to imitate Jesus who according to Church doctrine gave his life so that others might live eternally through him. Christianity teaches that Christians are to love others so much that they are ready to lay down their lives. Judaism however rejects this doctrine in the name of a Jewish ethic that operates within the logic(s) of halakhah. Let us see how this interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 is rejected.

In Sifra (ed. Weiss, Behar VI, p.109c) and Baba Mezia 62a we read, "If two men are travelling on a journey and one has a pitcher of water, if both drink they will both die,

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but if only one drinks, he will reach civilization. Ben Petura taught that it is better that both should drink and die, rather than that one of them should behold his companion's death. Until Rabbi Akiba came and taught: "that thy brother may live with thee; thy life takes precedence over his life." The options in how to interpret love of your neighbor in this situation appear to be:

(1) both drink and both die
(2) neither drink to avoid making a decision and witness the death of the other and both die
(3) the person who brought the water drinks the water and lives
(4) the person who brought the water gives the water to be drunk by a friend (Radical Ethic)

Logic that supports the first option proceeds as follows, "since equity seems to demand that in a situation where two men are sharing the same dangers they should likewise share an opportunity of preserving their lives even though the opportunity is original possession of but one of them." The first option is clearly rejected by Rabbi Akiba who is arguing that it would be wrong and against prudence for both to die if one can live. Rabbi Akiba reasons that sharing the water equally proves fruitless since both will still die. Dr. J.H. Hertz in this commentary to the Pentateuch comments that those who deem the view of Ben Petura the more desirable "would have preferred the words as thyself (in the commandment "and you shall love your neighbor as thyself") had not occurred in the Golden Rule." Both would be guilty of committing suicide if they were to allow both of themselves to be killed. According to Rambam where there is no obligation for a Jew to give his life for the Torah (i.e. except to avoid worshiping idols, committing murder, or committing incest) he is guilty of committing suicide if he allows himself to be killed.

The second option that the water be wasted clearly goes against the principle of *pikkuaḥ nefesh* and thus is to be ruled out. The duty of trying to save an endangered life allows one to suspend all the commandments of the Torah except the three prohibitions mentioned above (idolatry, murder, incest). Breaking of the commandment in the name of saving a life is allowed through the logic "he shall live by them (Leviticus 18:5)." If one were to try to observe the law "not to stand idly by the blood of one's neighbor" by neither party drinking the water, *pikkuaḥ nefesh* forbids such action. The humanitarian definition of the suspension rule signifies the duty to promote life and health.

The third option for the person who used foresight by bringing the water in the first place is for him to drink the water for himself and thereby live. This is clearly allowed if
not sanctioned within Judaism. Such a person would be acting within the letter of the law. Such action would not necessarily be selfishness. Dr. J.H. Hertz in his commentary to the Pentateuch writes, "Rabbi Akiba could not agree that two should perish where death demands but one as its toll. And indeed, if the Torah had meant that a man must love his neighbor to the extent of sacrificing his life for him, in all circumstances, it would have said, 'And thou shalt love thy neighbor more than thyself.' R. Akiba justifies this course of actions by citing Leviticus 25:26 i.e. 'that thy brother may live with thee.' Similarly Leviticus 19:18 does not demand that one share or give the water to the companion for Leviticus 18:5 commands "live by them" implying not to die because of the commandments. Thus the duty of self-preservation is justifiable i.e. one is not bound to sacrifice one's life for the sake of the fulfillment of the commandments. However this principle of self-preservation does not warrant saving one's life at the cost of another as Pesahim 25b attests where we find Raba asking, "what reason do you see for thinking that your blood is redder? Perhaps his blood is redder." R. Akiba does not say that the man may not give the water to his fellow but implies that to do so would be a special act of piety i.e. middath hasiduth.

The fourth option of giving the water to the companion represents a radical New Testament ethic. The rejection of this ethic is implied by Dr. Hertz when we read, "Others again preach the total annihilation of self, or at any rate its submergences as the basic principle of human conduct." Louis Jacobs attempts to refute the view that Judaism rejects this radical ethic. Jacobs supports his position deoreita from the cases of: (1) Zebulon and Naphtali who jeopardized their lives unto death in the high places of the field (Judges 5:18), (2) Abraham's risking of his life to save Lot (Gen.16:14-16), (3) Lot risking his life to shelter two angels (Gen.12:10-20), (4) Moshe risks his life by smiting the Egyptian (Exodus 2:11-15), (5) Moshe risks his life by delivering the daughters of Jethro from the shepherds (Ex.2:17-19), (6) Moshe offers his life in his prayer of intercession (Ex.32:32), (7) Samson kills himself in order to slay Philistines (Judges 16:28-30), and (8) David places his life in jeopardy when he accepts the challenge of Goliath (I.Sam 17). to support his position derabbanan Jacobs brings the example of Peshachim 25b, Terumot 8,12, and Pesahim 50a. Such action that goes beyond the requirements of the law constitutes piety. Such action is said to be lifnim meeshurath ha-din, middath hassiduth.

The Hasid's act of unselfish devotion to the welfare of his neighbor constitutes gemillath Hassadim. Jacobs sees the Hasid's desire for the annihilation of the self in contemplative prayer as well. While most prayer involves asking of blessings from God, the Hasidic concept of Bitul ha-yesh includes the annihilation of selfhood, the soul soaring to God with the ego left behind.36 Not only in altruistic deeds that embody
Christianities radical ethic does the Hasid abandon the self but through prayer as well. Jacobs writes, "When a man attains to the stage of self-annihilation he can thus be said to have reached the world of divine Nothingness. Emptied of selfhood his soul now become attached to true reality, the divine Nothingness."\textsuperscript{37}

The importance of going beyond the requirements of the law is expressed when we read in Baba Mezia 30b that "Jerusalem was destroyed only...because they based their judgement (strictly) upon Biblical law, and did not go beyond the requirements of the law. " Jacobs concludes his article with, "But the rare individual who in a moment of tremendous crisis, can rise to the height of giving his life for his friend- like the Sidney Carton of fiction and the Captain Oates of fact, is a saint and would be recognized as such by Judaism. Jewish history has not lacked such 'Fools of God.'"

While Jacobs wants to argue that the implications for ethical action of Jesus' interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 is similar to the code of behavior of a hasid, we must contend that normative Judaism and Christianity ultimately differ with regards to ethics- a divide greater than Judaism's rejection of Jesus' advice to his disciples not to pick corn on Shabat (Mt.1,1) or the dismissal of the ritual washing of hands before meals as unnecessary (Mt 15, 1-20).

CONCLUSION

Hillel in Shabat 31a re-formulates Leviticus 19:18 in the negative in order to evoke an ethics of reciprocity. R. Akiba sees the commandment לא ת%! as the pinnacle of the Torah and the essence from which all the other commandments derive. Within the context of marriage Leviticus 19:18 has been interpreted to foster modest sexual relations that promote shalom bayit. In the context of capital punishment, Leviticus 19:18 is cited in order to advocate the least painful and most humane mode of execution. Rambam understands Leviticus 19:18 to mean caring for the honor of one's neighbor by doing acts of gemillat hasidim. In Christianity Leviticus 19:18 is idealized to extend to love of one's enemies and laying down one's life for others. This radical Christian interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 is not necessarily an ethic sanctioned by normative Judaism.
Footnotes

1 Efros, Israel, Ancient Jewish Philosophy, "Love", Wayne State University Press, 1964, p.113

2 Horace criticises Lucilius who "in hora saepe ducentos ut magnum versus dictabat stans pede in uno." Edward Gershfield comments that "while Hillel probably never read Horace it is not inconceivable to think that Horace's expression was a current one easily recognizable to anyone with some education (see Hillel, Shammai, and the Three Proselytes", in Conservative Judaism, 21:3, Spring 1967, p.33).

3 The original meaning of reciprocity was retaliation i.e. a man should suffer the wrong he had done to another man. The principle of *Lex talionis* in Gen. 9:6, Ex.21:23-25, Ex.32:20, Lev.24:19-20, Deut.19:19, Deut.25:12, Judg.1:7, II Sam 4:12, II Kings 9:26, and Dan 6:25 was interpreted by the rabbis as monetary compensation. According to Haim Hermann Cohn this primitive rule in the Torah perhaps influenced by the Code of Hammurabi developed into the more refined principle of Hillel's Golden Rule. (see Encyclopedia Judaica, "Talion", vol.15, p.742.)

4 Dr. Hoffmann notes the significance of Hillel's negative formulation of Leviticus 19:18 by writing, "da her kann man negativ jedenfalls (at all events) verlangen (extend), dem Nachsten (neighbor) das nich zu thun, was man sich selbst nicht thun lassen mochte; aber positiv wird man stets (always) sich mehr Gutes erweisen (prove), als dem Nachsten. In diesen Sinne (sense) ist daher das Gebot (order) nicht unbeschräkt (boundless) zu fassen (grasp) (see Hoffmann, D., Das Buch Leviticus: Ubersetzt un Erklaert, Berlin, Verlag von M. Poppelaer, 1905, p.44.)

5 see Kohler, Kaufmann, "Nachstenliebe in Judenthum", Festschrift an Herman Cohen, p.475. Albrecht Diicle in Die Golden Regel: Eine Einführung in die Geschichte der Antiken und Frühchristlichen Vulgarethik (Gottingen, 1962) argues that the golden rule originated in Greek sophist literature of the second half of the fifth century B.C.E. and came into Judaism in the second pre-Christian century (p.84).


7 For example Claude Montefiore writes, "After all, the man was a heathen, and it is very cumbersome and improbable if we have to argue that what Hillel meant was 'When you have become a Jew, the whole Law that you will have to observe is to love your fellow-Jew.' It is surely more natural to suppose that Hillel meant something far more general: something which applied to the man as heathen no less than it would apply to him if he became a Jew (see Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings, New York, Ktav, 1970, p.72.). Dr. Brody similarly argues "it was with reference to the gentile world that the Golden Rule was pronounced by Hillel as the cardinal principle of Jewish law (see the Jewish Encyclopedia, "Ethics", vol.5, Funk and Wagnalls Co., p.248).

8 Yizhak Buxbaum comments, "Still another incentive for him (Hillel) to reduce the Torah
to a single principle was Hillel's attempt to bring Judaism to people far removed from it- to Jews who were far away, and even to gentiles. When presenting the tremendous expanse of the Torah to those who new little about it, who had not grown up with it, it was helpful to be able to put its meaning most simply, to pare it down to its vital essence (see Buxbaum, Yitzhak, "Loving People", in The Life and Teachings of Hillel, Jason Aronson Inc., London, 1994, p.99).

9 Hoffmann, D., Das Buch Leviticus: Übersetzt und Erklärt, Berlin, Verlag von M Poppelauer, 1905, p.44.

10 R. Kaufmann Kohler writes, "love being the essence of God's holy nature, the law of human life culminates in the commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (see The Jewish Encyclopedia, "Love", vol.8, p.189.)

11 Bruno Kirschnner argues, "In dieser Herausschaltung (picking out) des ethischen kerns (kernel) des Tora liegt die menschliche GroBe der Weisung (wisdom) (see Judische Lexicon, "Golden Regel", vol.2, p.1182.)

12 For example in Makkot 23b we read that R. Simlai said, "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai; Three hundred and sixty-five of which are prohibitive laws, corresponding to the number of days of the solar year, whilst the remaining two hundred and forty-eight are affirmative injunctions, being as numerous as the limbs constituting the human body." The sequel of R. Simlai's homily runs thus:
"David came (after Moshe) and reduced them to eleven, as it is said, Lord who shall abide in thy tabernacle who shall dwell in thy holly hill? He that walketh uprightly (Psalm 15:2-5). Then Isaiah came and reduced them to six, as it is said: He that walketh righteously (Isa.33:15). Then Micah came and reduced them to three: He hath shewed thee, O Man what is good, and what doeth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly (Micah 6:8). Then Isaiah came again, and reduced them to two, as it is said: thus saith the Lord, Keep my judgements, and do justice (Isa.56:1). Then Amos came and reduced them to one, as it is said, Seek the Lord and live (Amos 5:6). Whilst Habakkuk (also) reduced them to one, as it is said: But the just shall live by his faith (Hab.2:4)." Further it is to be noted that R. Mordecai Kaplan notes that Hillel's reduction to one single rule is given linguistic density by a pun on the Hebrew word וָאַל and the Latin word regula (rule). Rabbi Kaplan is suggesting that Hillel sees Leviticus 19:18 as the basic principle, rule, pattern, model, or example on which the whole Torah stands. Raphael Jospe argues that Rabbi Kaplan's reading is in harmony with that of Samuel Edels in his commentary Hiddushe Aggadot where Edels asserts that Hillel's intent was to teach us that all the Torah should have one foundation. According to Edels Shammay's actions of pushing the gentle away with a builder's cubit is meant to suggest that just as a building cannot stand on one foundation, so too the Torah extends to all its commandments (see Jospe, Raphael, "Hillel's Rule", JQR, LXXXI, July-October, 1990, p.45-47.)

13 Kirschnner, Bruno, Judische Lexicon, "Liebe Deinen Nachsten Wie Dich Selbst", Judischher Verlag, Berlin, p.1104. In the Talmud we find a second passage where different
sages submit their opinions as to the most comprehensive verse in the Bible when we read, "Ben Zoma says, 'I have found a verse that contains the whole of the Torah: 'Listen O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.' Ben Nanus said, 'I have found a verse that contains the whole of the Torah: You will love your neighbor as yourself.' Ben Pazi said: I have found a verse that contains the whole of the Torah: You shall sacrifice a lamb in the morning, and another at dusk.' And Rabbi their master stood up and decided: 'The law is according to Ben Pazi.' R. Judah ha-Nasi affirms the sacrificial law as more essential than any of the other commandments thereby affirming the longing for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of the Temple service that we evoke in returning the Torah scroll to the ark and at the end of Lamentations, והשב את הכתובת לדביר ביתך. As well in the 18th section of the Amidah we read, והשב את הכתובת לדביר ביתך.

14 Dr. Hoffmann further remarks on Ben Azzai's citation of Genesis 5:1 when he writes, "Ben Azzai meint: Der Vers Gen.5:1 enthält eine Lehre die wichtiger ist als diese, dass du nicht sagst: Da ich beschimpft (injure) worden bin, mag mein Nachster (neighbor) mit Mir beschimpft werden; da ich verflucht (curse) worden bin, mag mein Nachster mit mir verflucht werden...B Azzai fügt (unites) nur hinzu, dass der Masstab (rule) für die Nachstenliebe (neighborly love) nicht die Liebe des Menschen zu sich selbst bilden darf, denn dann konnte Einer, der gleichgültig Schmähungen (abuse) über sich ergehen (issued) lasst, auch seiner Nachsten beschimpfen (injure)- sondern die Liebe und Achtung, die wir unserem Nachsten schulden (indebted) haben ihren Grund und ihren Masstab in dem Fundamentalsatz (fundamental sentence), Der Mensche is im Ebenbilde Gottes geschaffen (created); wer also einen Menschen beschimpft (injure), der schmaht Got (see das Buch Leviticus: Übersetzt und Erklaert, p.44). It is to be noted the Ben Azzai's linkage of being created in the image of God with the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself is similarly maintained in the Mekhila (Yitro) where we read, "If with regard to the stones of the altar that are void of any understanding of good and evil, the Holy One Blessed be He, demands that they should not be treated in a degrading manner, then certainly one's fellowman who was created in the image of the Creator of the world should not be dealt with contemptuously."

15 Rambam writes, "It was because of this something, I mean because of the divine intellect conjoined with man, that it is said of the latter that he is in the image (selem) of God and in His likeness (demuth), not that God, may He be exalted, is a body and possesses a shape (see Guide of the Perplexed, I, 1, trans. Shlomo Pines, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963, p.22.)

16 Borowitz, Eugene, "Love of Neighbor", in Encyclopedia Judaica, vol.11, p.530; Dr. Efros also suggests that Ben Azzai is being more inclusive than R.Akiba when he writes, "Biblical justice is extensive or universal in that it knows no economic, social, or political barriers, and sees on all human faces the image of God, so that as bearer of this image, no man is more human than another...There is something greater than to love your neighbor and that is to think him God-like (see Ancient Jewish Philosophy: A Study of Metaphysics and Ethics, "Justice", Wayne State Univ. Press, 1964, p.93.)


19 see Goldin, Hyman E., Hebrew Criminal Law and Procedure, Twayne Publishers, 1952; Dr. Goldin shows that Jewish jurists "made every endeavor to so interpret Biblical law, and make the legal restrictions so numerous, that it became almost impossible to impose a death sentence" due to the fact that Jewish jurists surrounded the culprit with so many legal safeguards (p.24).

20 Statements about Kevod habrioth can be found in Avoth 2:15, 4:1, 3,15. As well we find in Baba Metzia 59a the remark, "Be careful about the honor of your wife, for blessing enters the house only because of the wife." Elsewhere we read, "Love your wife as much as yourself; honor her more than yourself...If your wife is short, bend your head and take her advice." Similarly we learn, "A man should eat and drink beneath his means, clothe himself within his means, and honor his wife and children above his means (Hullin 84b)." We also recall, "It is not the place that honors the man, but the man that honors the place (Sanhedrin 113b, Nedarim 49b, Ta'annith 21b). On the other hand, "whoever promotes his own honor at the expense of his neighbor's degradation has no share in the world to come (Genesis Rabbah 1:5). In Berakhoth 43b we read, "Throw yourself into a blazing furnace rather than shame a fellow man in public."


22 In commenting on Lev.19:34 Baruch Levine writes, "The ger referred to in the Bible was most often a foreign merchant or craftsman or a mercenary soldier. This term never refers to the prior inhabitants of the land; those are identified by ethnological groupings such as Canaanites and Amorites, or by other specific terms of reference. In the Biblical ethos the importance of being considerate to foreign residents drew added impetus from the memory of the Israelite sojourn in Egypt-Israelites should be able to empathize with the alien (see JPS Torah Commentary, Leviticus, p.134). In regards to Ex.20:22 Sarna who notes that the stranger is often classified in scripture with the widow, the orphan, and the Levite comments, "the numerous Biblical prohibitions against the maltreatment of strangers are supplemented in the legislation by positive injunctions to love them, and even as God does, which entails supplying their basic needs and extending to them the same
social services and amenities to which disadvantaged Israelites were entitled (see JPS Torah Commentary, Exodus, p.138).

23 The Damascus Rule from Qumran also links love of neighbor with love of the stranger when we read, "They shall love each man his brother as himself; they shall succour the poor, the needy, and the stranger." (see Vermes, G. ed., The Dead Sea Scrolls, CD 6:20-21, 1987.)


26 Hirsch, Samson Raphael, p.53.

27 Leibowitz, Nehama, p.195

28 Leibowitz, Nehama, p.368

29 Ibid., p.371

30 see "Judaism and the Gospels" in Ten Essays on Zionism and Judaism, trans. by Leon Simon; This essay was originally published in Hebrew in 1910 under the title "Al Shete ha-Se'ipim" as a response to the publication in 1909 of Claude Montefiore's commentary on the Synoptic Gospels. The title can be translated as "Between two Braches" or "Between Two Opinion" thereby meaning something like the phrase "straddling the fence" and is a reference to Elijah's challenge to the people of Mount Carmel, "How long will you skip between two opinions (I Kings 18:21).

31 W. Klassen in his book Love of Enemies: The Way to Peace is in the minority of scholars when he proposes that the source of the commandment to love one's enemies can be traced to Judaism. Dr. Efros too argues that love of one's enemies derives from the following passages in the Torah: Ex.23:4-5; Lev.19:17-18; I Sam.24:20; Prov.20:22; Prov.24:17, Prov.24:29; Prov.25:21; and Job 31:29-30. (see Ancient Jewish Philosophy, "Love", p.107-108.) However the majority of NT scholars agree with Piper that Jesus's teaching of love of enemies is a radical departure from Judaism. Piper writes, "the perceptive Jew must have viewed Jesus' love command as an attack on the Torah...Jesus' command to love the enemy as well as the friend contained the seed for the dissolution of the Jewish distinctive (1979, 91-92;204, n.83).

32 Klassen, William, "Love in the Synoptic Gospels", in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol.4, p.386; Klassen remarks (p.384) that "the mandate for Christians to love their enemies stretches the human capacity to its limits, but is based on God's love for humans, 'while we were his enemies" (Rom5:10)."

34 Reines, Chaim, "The Self and other in Rabbinic Ethics", in Contemporary Jewish Ethics

35 Rambam, Yesode Ha-Torah 5.1 and 4

36 Jacobs, Louis, Hasidic Prayer, JPS, Schocken Books, 1972, p.21; The Hasid is expected to attain to the state described in Hasidic thought at bittul ha-yesh, 'the annihilation of somethingness', that is an awareness that God alone is true reality and that all finite things are, as it were dissolved in His unity. Bittul ha-yesh includes the annihilation of selfhood, the soul souring to God with the ego left behind. This attitude is especially to be cultivated at the time of prayer, so that in Hasidism prayer is essentially an exercise in world-forsaking and abandonment of self.

37 Jacobs, Louis, p.78: Jacobs writes, "The world of emanation is identified with the Sefirah Hokmah. In Hasidic thought this Sefirah is called ayin, Nothingness, because of this stage of the divine process nothing can be said; it is utterly beyond all human comprehension. When a man attains to the stage of self-annihilation he can thus be said to have reached the world of the divine Nothingness. Emptied of selfhood his soul has now become attached to the true reality, the divine Nothingness. Thus in our passage the stages of the mystics ascent in prayer are described in terms of the four worlds, which in fact are mirrored in his own soul..."