

Parshat Acharei Mot-Kedoshim: Loving Your Fellow

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You shall neither take revenge from nor bear a grudge against the members of your people; you shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. Kedoshim/Leviticus 19:18

V'Ahavta lereiacha kamocho...

In Parshat Kedoshim, Hashem commands us, “Love your fellow as you love yourself.”

Reb Nosson tells us that we must do our absolute best to avoid strife and conflict between people. We need to keep in mind that each person thinks and acts differently – we are all individuals. Yet, even though we don't understand our fellows, we must still judge them favorably.

Sometimes when there is conflict, we begin to be blinded. We begin to think that the person we have a disagreement with is all bad. We generalize the one negative point and build on it. Now, no longer is there merely a point which we don't like, now we believe they can't possibly be sincere in their prayer, in their service of Hashem, or in their relationships. We feel the one thing that we don't like about them has eclipsed all the possible good.

Reb Nosson explains that we must not think like this. We must think of each other as being sincere in all our spiritual efforts. We have a tendency to think that people who are less outwardly religious or spiritual are somehow lesser than ourselves. We have the opposite tendency too. We think that people who are more outwardly religious than ourselves appear nitpicky and "missing the point." But even people we perceive to be overly-zealous are entitled to their thoughts and opinions.

Everyone is an individual. Everyone is an entire world unto themselves. We have to learn to respect people's whose spiritual service of Hashem

In Likutey Moharan 239 Rebbe Nachman tells us that before we daven in the morning, we should accept upon ourselves the commandment

Through the merit of loving your fellow, you'll find it easier to reach a place of peace and you'll be able to pray with greater focus and intention.

May you have a day in which you are able to live "V'ahavta lereiacha kamocha."

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