

THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF

By Bro. Ken Ng, Shabbat, 20th June 2020

Mat 22:34 But the Pharisees, having heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, were gathered together,

Mat 22:35 and one of them, one learned in the Torah, did question, trying Him, and saying,

Mat 22:36 "Teacher, which is the great command in the Torah?"

Mat 22:37 And יהושע said to him, " **'You shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your mind.'** Deu 6:5.

Mat 22:38 "This is the first and great command.

Mat 22:39 "And the second is like it, **'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'** Lev 19:18.

Mat 22:40 "On these two commands hang all the Torah and the Prophets."

1. Jesus is quoting here from Leviticus 19:18. Let us look at its context:

Lev 19:9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

Lev 19:10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

Lev 19:11 Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

Lev 19:12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

Lev 19:13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob *him*: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

Lev 19:14 Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.

Lev 19:15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

Lev 19:16 Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD.

Lev 19:17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in

any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

Lev 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

2. Loving our neighbour would include sharing with the poor and the strangers; In fact, The Apostles James called loving thy neighbour the “royal law” in Jas 2:8.

Jas 2:8 However, if you fulfill the royal law, according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well.

Jas 2:9 But if you show partiality, you commit sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors.

3. Adonai Yahshua taught us in **Mat 7:12** Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, commonly known as the golden rule, is similar, in principle, to loving thy neighbour as thyself.

- Yahshua demonstrated this love in the night of His arrest. He said to His disciples in John 13:34-35, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another”

Who Is My Neighbour Biblically?

4. Loving one’s neighbour is more than just simply loving those who are like us and who can love us in return, as mentioned by Yahshua in **Mat 5:46** For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Don’t even the tax collectors do the same?

5. Yahshua affirmed the response with the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Luk 10:30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

Luk 10:31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

Luk 10:33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

Luk 10:34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Luk 10:35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence,

and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Luk 10:36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

Luk 10:37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

6. **In essence, two Jews, both of whom were from the priestly line of Israelites and should have known and followed God's law, failed to show love to their fellow Israelite in need.** And it was the Samaritan who stopped to help the injured man. Yahshua asked the scribe which of the three passers-by was a neighbour to the injured man. "The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.' Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise'".

7. Our neighbour is thus anyone in our proximity with whom we can share God's love. We are called not only to love those who are like us or with whom we are comfortable, but all whom God places in our path.

Mat 5:43 "You heard that it was said, '**You shall love your neighbour** and hate your enemy.

Mat 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you, and pray for those insulting you and persecuting you,

Mat 5:45 so that you become sons of your Father in the heavens. Because He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.

Mat 5:46 "For if you love those loving you, what reward have you? Are the tax collectors not doing the same too?

Mat 5:47 "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more *than others*? Are the tax collectors not doing so too?

Mat 5:48 "Therefore, be perfect, as your Father in the heavens is perfect.

8. God shows love to all people in Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. As His children, we are called to do the same.

9. In real life, we do not really have a choice to choose who our neighbours are. The fortunate ones will have good neighbours that care and share good things with you. But there are also bad neighbours, who are hellbent to make your life difficult. It could be YHWH's test for us to demonstrate how to love our neighbours, including neighbours who seem like enemies to us. We will need to adopt what the proverb teaches:

Pro 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

10. By demonstrating our love toward them with a heart that loves God, they may realise their shortcomings and restrict their actions because we had shown love instead of anger. We must love our neighbours out of an overflow of God's love for us and as a way of demonstrating our love toward God as in 1 John 4:7–12.

1Jn 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1Jn 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

1Jn 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1Jn 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

1Jn 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

1Jn 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Who are the Samaritans?

11. Interestingly, Yahshua used the Samaritans, whom the Jews regarded as the worst of humankind, in His parable. Why? To illustrate the fact that loving thy neighbour surpasses religious and cultural differences. This brings to the question who are the Samaritans and why are they hated by the Jews?

12. The Samaritans occupied the country formerly belonging to the tribe of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh. The capital of the country was Samaria, formerly a large and splendid city. When the ten tribes were carried away into captivity to Assyria, the king of Assyria sent people from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim to inhabit Samaria (2 Kings 17:24; Ezra 4:2-11).

13. Additional grounds for animosity between the Israelites and Samaritans were as follows:

a. The Jews, after their return from Babylon, began rebuilding their temple. While Nehemiah was engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem, the Samaritans vigorously attempted to halt the undertaking (Nehemiah 6:1-14).

b. The Samaritans built a temple for themselves on "Mount Gerizim," which the Samaritans insisted was designated by Moses as the place where the nation should worship.

c. Samaria became a place of refuge for all the outlaws of Judea (Joshua 20:6-7; 21:21).

d. The Samaritans received only the five books of Moses and rejected the writings of the prophets and all the Jewish traditions.

14. From these causes arose an conflicting difference between them, so that the Jews regarded the Samaritans as the worst of the human race (John 8:48) and had no dealings with them (John 4:9).

15. Yahshua will use the most extreme of examples to bring across His teaching in His parables. This is similar to the rich young man where He said in Mat_19:24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, to illustrate the difficulty for rich people to give up their wealth for the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Final Judgment for the Goat and the Sheep

Mat 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

Mat 25:32 Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Mat 25:33 He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Mat 25:34 Then the King will tell those on his right hand, 'Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;

Mat 25:35 for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in.

Mat 25:36 I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me.'

Mat 25:37 "Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink?

Mat 25:38 When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you?

Mat 25:39 When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?'

Mat 25:40 "The King will answer them, 'Most certainly I tell you, because you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

Mat 25:41 Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels;

Mat 25:42 for I was hungry, and you didn't give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink;

Mat 25:43 I was a stranger, and you didn't take me in; naked, and you didn't clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

Mat 25:44 "Then they will also answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn't help you?'

Mat 25:45 "Then he will answer them, saying, 'Most certainly I tell you, because you didn't do it to one of the least of these, you didn't do it to me.'

Mat 25:46 These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

16. Jesus used this parable to connect helping the needy with eternal rewards and punishments. However, please note that Salvation is by grace through faith in Yahshua, apart from the good deeds we do.

Eph 2:8 for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

Eph 2:9 not of works, that no one would boast.

17. In fact, Jesus Himself makes it very clear in the parable that the salvation of the “sheep” is not based on their works—their inheritance was theirs “since the creation of the world” (Matthew 25:34), long before they could ever do any good works!

18. The good works mentioned in the parable are not the cause of salvation but the effect of salvation. As Christians we become like Christ. Galatians 5:22 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. Good works in a Christian’s life are the direct overflow of these traits, and are only acceptable to God because of the relationship that exists between servant and Master, the saved and their Saviour, the sheep and their Shepherd (see Ephesians 2:10).

19. God has always shown a special concern for the poor and needy (Psalm 35:10). As followers of Messiah, we must extend our helping hands to fellow believers in difficult situations.

20. The “least of these” refers to those in a variety of needy situations. They include the hungry, thirsty, impoverished, sick, and imprisoned. In this context, Jesus is speaking to the righteous. The needy are called Christ’s “brothers”.

21. The core message of the Parable of the Sheep and Goats is that God’s people will love others. Good works will result from our relationship to the Shepherd. Followers of Christ will treat others with kindness, serving them as if they were serving Christ Himself. While “goats” can also perform acts of kindness and charity, their hearts are not right with God, and their actions are not for the right purpose – to worship God and accord all honour and glory to Him.