



SHALOM HARTMAN מכון  
INSTITUTE שלום הרטמן

## Nationalism and the Jewish Value of Encumberedness *with Rabbi Lauren Berkun*

iEngage Global Online Class  
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### 1. Genesis 18:17-25

<sup>17</sup>Now the Lord had said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, <sup>18</sup>since Abraham is to become a great and populous nation and all the nations of the earth are to bless themselves by him? <sup>19</sup>For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is just and right, in order that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what He has promised him.” <sup>20</sup>Then the Lord said, “The outrage of Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sin so grave! <sup>21</sup>I will go down to see whether they have acted altogether according to the outcry that has reached Me; if not, I will take note.”

<sup>22</sup>The men went on from there to Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord.

<sup>23</sup>Abraham came forward and said, “Will You sweep away the innocent along with the guilty?”

<sup>24</sup>What if there should be fifty innocent within the city; will You then wipe out the place and not forgive it for the sake of the innocent fifty who are in it? <sup>25</sup>Far be it from You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the innocent as well as the guilty, so that innocent and guilty fare alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

חללה לך מעשית | כדבר הזה להמית צדיקים עם רשעים והנה בצדיק כרשע חללה לך  
השפט כל-הארץ לא יעשה משפט

## 2. Deuteronomy 15:1-11

Every seventh year you shall practice remission of debts. <sup>2</sup>This shall be the nature of the remission: every creditor shall remit the due that he claims from his fellow; he shall not dun his fellow or kinsman, for the remission proclaimed is of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>You may dun the foreigner; but you must remit whatever is due you from your kinsmen.

<sup>4</sup>There shall be no needy among you—since the LORD your God will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a hereditary portion—<sup>5</sup>if only you heed the LORD your God and take care to keep all this Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day. <sup>6</sup>For the LORD your God will bless you as He has promised you: you will extend loans to many nations, but require none yourself; you will dominate many nations, but they will not dominate you.

<sup>7</sup>If, however, there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman. <sup>8</sup>Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs. <sup>9</sup>Beware lest you harbor the base thought, “The seventh year, the year of remission, is approaching,” so that you are mean to your needy kinsman and give him nothing. He will cry out to the LORD against you, and you will incur guilt. <sup>10</sup>Give to him readily and have no regrets when you do so, for in return the LORD your God will bless you in all your efforts and in all your undertakings. <sup>11</sup>For there will never cease to be needy ones in your land, which is why I command you: open your hand to the poor and needy kinsman in your land.

## 3. Leviticus 19:17-18; 33-34

<sup>17</sup>You shall not hate your brethren in your heart. Reprove your kinsman but incur no guilt because of him. <sup>18</sup>You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your countrymen. Love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD...

<sup>33</sup>When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. <sup>34</sup>The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I the LORD am your God.

לא-תשנא את-אחידך, בלבבך; הוכם תזכים את-עמיתך, ולא-תשא עליו חטא. יח לא-תקם ולא-תטר את-בני עמך, ואהבת לרעהך כמוך: אני, ה'... לג וכי-גור אתה גר, בארצכם--לא תונו, אתו. לד באזרח מכם יהיה לכם הגר הגר אתכם, ואהבת לו כמוך--כי-גרים הייתם, בארץ מצרים: אני, יהוה אלהיכם.

#### 4. Baba Metzia 71a

Rav Yosef taught: The verse states: "If you lend money to any of My people, even to the poor person who is with you" (Exodus 22:24). The term "My people" teaches that if one of 'my people,' i.e., a Jew, and a gentile both come to borrow money from you, 'my people' take precedence. The term "the poor person" teaches that if a poor person and a rich person come to borrow money, the poor person takes precedence. And from the term: "Who is with you," it is derived: If your poor person, meaning one of your relatives, and one of the poor of your city come to borrow money, your poor person takes precedence. If it is between one of the poor of your city and one of the poor of another city, the one of the poor of your city takes precedence.

איכא דמתני לה להא דרב הונא אהא דתני רב יוסף אם כסף תלוה את עמי את העני  
עמך עמי ונכרי עמי קודם עני ועשיר עני קודם ענייך ועניי עירך ענייך קודמין עניי עירך  
ועניי עיר אחרת עניי עירך קודמין

#### 5. Tosefta, Baba Metzia 11:14

With respect to a wellspring belonging to the residents of the city: [in a choice between] them and others [from another city], they come before the others. [In a choice between] the others and the animals [of the residents of the city], the life of the others come before the animals. Rabbi Yossi says that the animals of the residents of the city come before the life of others. [In a choice between] their animals and the animals of others, their animals come before the animals of others.

[In a choice between the life of] others and the laundry of the people of the city, the life of others comes before the laundry [of the people of the city.] Rabbi Yosi says that the laundry of the people of the city comes before the life of others.

מעין של בני העיר הן והן ואחרים הם קודמים לאחרים אחרים ובהמתן חיי אחרים  
קודמים לבהמתן רבי יוסי אומר בהמתן קודמת לחיי אחרים בהמתן ובהמת אחרים  
בהמתן קודמת לבהמות אחרים אחרים וכביסתן חיי אחרים קודמין לכביסתן ורבי יוסי  
אומר כביסתן קודמת לחיי אחרים

## 6. Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 54b

Whoever has the ability to protest against the members of his household but does not protest is punished for [the transgressions of] the members of his household. [If one can protest] against the people of his town [but does not] he is held accountable for [the sins of] the people of his town. [If he can protest] against the whole world [but does not] he is held accountable for [the sins of] the whole world. Rav Pappa observed, "And the members of the Exilarch's household are held accountable for the whole world." This is as Rabbi Hanina said: Why is it written, "The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders of His people, and its rulers" (Isaiah 3:14)? If the rulers sinned, how did the elders sin? The answer is that the elders sinned because they did not protest against the rulers.

כל מי שאפשר למחות לאנשי ביתו ולא מיחה - נתפס על אנשי ביתו, באנשי עירו - נתפס על אנשי עירו, בכל העולם כולו - נתפס על כל העולם כולו. אמר רב פפא: והני דבי ריש גלותא נתפסו על כולי עלמא. כי הא דאמר רבי חנינא: מאי דכתיב (ישעיהו ג) ה' במשפט יבא עם זקני עמו ושריו, אם שרים חטאו - זקנים מה חטאו? אלא, אימא: על זקנים שלא מיחו בשרים.

## 7. Theodore Herzl, "The Jewish State" (*Der Judenstadt*), 1896

We have sincerely tried everywhere to merge with the national communities in which we live, seeking only to preserve the faith of our fathers. It is not permitted us. In vain are we loyal patriots, sometimes super-loyal; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow citizens; in vain do we strive to enhance the fame of our native lands in the arts and sciences, or her wealth by trade and commerce. In our native lands where we have lived for centuries we are still decried as aliens, often by men whose ancestors had not yet come at a time when Jewish sighs had long been heard in the country...

Let me repeat once more my opening words: The Jews who will it shall achieve their State. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and in our own homes peacefully die. The world will be liberated by our freedom, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness. And whatever we attempt there for our own benefit will redound mightily and beneficially to the good of all mankind.