



I Hate My Parents

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A Recast from...



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SOURCES FOR STUDY

Where's the Love?!

Genesis 21:9-14

וַתֵּרָא שָׂרָה אֶת-בֶּן-הָעִבְרָיִת אֲשֶׁר-יָלְדָה לְאַבְרָהָם מִצֶּחֶק: י וַתֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָהָם גֵּרֶשׁ הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת וְאֶת-בְּנָהּ כִּי לֹא יִירֶשׁ בֶּן-הָאֵמָה הַזֹּאת עִם-בְּנֵי עַם-יִצְחָק: יא וַיִּרַע הַדָּבָר מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵי אַבְרָהָם עַל אֹדֹת בְּנֹו: יב וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אַל-יִרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עַל-הַנְּעִר וְעַל-אֲמֵתְךָ כֹּל אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵלַיךָ שָׂרָה שָׁמַע בְּקֹלָהּ כִּי בִיצְחָק יִקְרָא לָךְ זֶרַע: יג וְגַם אֶת-בֶּן-הָאֵמָה לְגֹוֵי אֲשִׁימְנוּ כִּי זֶרַעךָ הוּא: יד וַיִּשָּׁכֶם אַבְרָהָם | בְּבֹקֶר וַיִּקַּח-לֶחֶם וְחֲמַת מַיִם וַיִּתֵּן אֶל-הָעִבְרָיִת שָׁם עַל-שִׁכְמָהּ וְאֶת-הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּשְׁלַחַהּ וְתֹלַךְ וְתִתֵּעַ בְּמִדְבַר בְּאֵר שָׁבַע:

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had born to Abraham, mocking. And she said to Abraham, Cast out this slave and her son; for the son of this slave shall not be heir with my son, with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said to Abraham, Let it not be grievous in your sight because of the lad, and because of your slave; in all that Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac shall your seed be called. And also of the son of the slave will I make a nation, because he is your seed. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Genesis 37:3

וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִכָּל-בְּנָיו כִּי-בֶן-זָקֵנִים הוּא לוֹ וַעֲשָׂה לוֹ כְּתָנֶת פָּסִים:
Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat with long sleeves.

What Do We Owe Our Parents?

Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16

כַּבֵּד אֶת-אָבִיךָ וְאֶת-אִמְךָ לְמַעַן יָאָרְכוּן יָמֶיךָ עַל הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ:
Honor your father and your mother, that you may long endure on the land that ADONAI your God is assigning to you.

Leviticus 19:3

איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת-שבתתי תשמרו אני יהוה אלהיכם:

You shall each revere his mother and his father; and keep My sabbaths: I the LORD am your God.

Rashi on Leviticus 19:3

אמו ואביו תיראו. כאן הקדים אם לאב, לפי שגלוי לפניו שהבן ירא את אביו יותר מאמו, ובכבוד הקדים אב לאם, לפי שגלוי לפניו שהבן מכבד את אמו יותר מאביו, מפני שמשדלתו בדברים: *Shall revere his mother and his father.* Here the verse put "mother" ahead of "father," because it is revealed before God that the son reveres his father more than he reveres his mother; therefore the verse needed to emphasize revering the mother. But with regard to honoring parents, the verse put "father" ahead of "mother," because it is revealed before God that the son honors his mother more than he honors his father because she wins him over with pleasant words. (Kiddushin 30b-31a)

ואת שבתתי תשמרו. סמך שמירת שבת למורא אב, לומר, אף על פי שהזהרתיך על מורא אב, אם יאמר לך חלל את השבת, אל תשמע לו, וכן בשאר כל המצוות: אני ה' אלהיכם. אפה ואבין תיבים בכבודי, לפיכך לא תשמע לו לבטל את דברי.

And you shall observe my Sabbaths. The verse juxtaposed observance of the Shabbat to reverence for one's parent to say, although I enjoined you about revering a parent, if your parent should say to you, "Desecrate the Shabbat," do not listen to him. And so, too, with regard to other commandments.

איזהו מורא, לא ישב במקומו ולא ידבר במקומו ולא יסתור את דבריו.

What constitutes reverence of a parent? One may not sit in his parent's place, nor may he speak in his parent's place, nor may he contradict his parent's words.

ואיזהו כבוד, מאכיל ומשקה מלביש ומנעיל מכניס ומוציא:

What constitutes honoring a parent? Feeding him and giving him drink, dressing him, and putting on his shoes, escorting him in and escorting him out.

Keeping Peace in the Home

Genesis 18:13-14

Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "Now that I am withered, am I to have enjoyment - with my husband so old?" Then the Eternal said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I in truth bear a child, old as I am?'"

Ponder this:

- How does the white lie told by God help preserve Shalom Bayit?
- Did this circumstance justify dishonesty?

- In this situation the white lie was ascribed to God. Do you think people, family members, should risk telling such lies?

Genesis 37:31-34

Then they took Joseph's tunic, slaughtered a kid, and dipped the tunic in the blood. They had the ornamented tunic taken to their father, and they said, "We found this. Please examine it; is it your son's tunic or not?" He recognized it, and said, "My son's tunic! A savage beast devoured him! Joseph was torn by a beast!" Jacob rent his clothes, put sackcloth on his loins, and observed mourning for his son many days.

Ponder this:

- Why did the brothers trick their father into assuming Joseph was dead?
- Were they justified in doing so?
- What other options may they have had in preserving peace in the household?
- What better ways are there in handling jealousy of siblings (besides trying to kill them or sell them into slavery!)

A Bissel more...

Ta'anit 20b

When his disciples asked Rabbi Adda bar Ahavah, "To what do you attribute your long life?" He replied, "I never lost my temper in the midst of my family."

The Wisdom of Rebbe D

It's not always *what* is said, but *how* something is said that makes the difference in how a person responds.



Jewels of Elul V

2009 *Inspirations on the Art of Forgiving* 5770

Elul 17

The Gateway To Love by *David Gregory*

As Jews, we are obligated to honor our parents in the way we honor God. The idea reflects a simple truth: without them, we wouldn't be here.

Such an obligation, however, is not always easily met.

I have struggled with my parents as I make sense of my childhood and what I think could have and should have been different.

At times, my relationship with them has been badly strained.

What has brought me back is my commitment to what God expects of me and what it takes to become a giving person. Forgiveness and acceptance - however difficult - are the gateway to love. Without love, resentment can reign; worse, it can become a weapon used unwittingly against the people we care about most.

I am moved daily when saying the bedtime shema. We forgive others and ask that we, too, will be forgiven. We make that expression of the heart to experience peace while we sleep.

Teshuva, repentance, and moving forward are about conquering our desire for punishment or retribution. It is how we honor each other and in so doing, honor God.

David Gregory is the moderator of NBC's "Meet the Press."