

Loving the Stranger: The Bible's Moral Revolution

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1. שְׁמוֹת כג:ט

(ט) וְגֵר לֹא תִלְחָץ וְאַתֶּם יִדְעֶתֶם אֶת נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר כִּי גֵרִים הֵיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

1. Exodus 23:9

⁹You shall not oppress a stranger for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt.

2. וַיִּקְרָא יט:לג-לד

(לג) וְכִי יִגֹּר אִתְּךָ גֵר בְּאֶרְצְכֶם לֹא תוֹנוּ אוֹתוֹ

(לד) כְּאֶזְרַח מִכֶּם יִהְיֶה לָכֶם הַגֵּר הַגֵּר אִתְּכֶם וְאַהֲבֵת לוֹ כְּמוֹךָ כִּי גֵרִים הֵיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

2. Leviticus 19:33-34

³³When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. ³⁴The 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.

3. דְּבָרִים יז:יז-יט

(יז) כִּי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים הָאֵל הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִשָּׂא פָנִים וְלֹא יִקָּח שֹׂחַד:

(יח) עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט יְתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה וְאַהֲבֵה גֵר לְתֵת לוֹ לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה:

(יט) וְאַהֲבֵתָם אֶת הַגֵּר כִּי גֵרִים הֵיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

3. Deuteronomy 10:17-19

¹⁷For the Lord your God is God supreme and Lord supreme, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who shows no favor and takes no bribe, ¹⁸but upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, providing him with food and clothing. ¹⁹You too must love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.



4. בְּרֵאשִׁית יב:י-כ

(י) וַיְהִי רָעָב, בְּאֶרֶץ; וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם מִצְרָיִמָּה לְגֹר שָׁם, כִּי-כָבֵד הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ. (יא) וַיְהִי, כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבֹאֵ מִצְרָיִמָּה; וַיֹּאמֶר, אֶל-שָׂרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ, הִנֵּה-נָא יֹדַעְתִּי, כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְת־מֶרְאָה אֶתְּ. (יב) וְהָיָה, כִּי-יֵרְאוּ אֹתְךָ הַמִּצְרַיִם, וְאָמְרוּ, אִשְׁתּוֹ זֹאת; וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי, וְאֹתְךָ יִחְיֶה. (יג) אָמְרִי-נָא, אַחֲתִי אַתְּ--לְמַעַן יִיטֵב-לִי בְּעַבְדֶּיךָ, וְחִיתָה נַפְשִׁי בְּגִלְלָהּ. (יד) וַיְהִי, כְּבֹאֵ אַבְרָם מִצְרָיִמָּה; וַיֵּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה, כִּי-יָפָה הִוא מְאֹד. (טו) וַיֵּרְאוּ אֹתָהּ שָׂרֵי פְרָעֹה, וַיְהַלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל-פְּרָעֹה; וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה, בֵּית פְּרָעֹה. (טז) וְלֹא-אַבְרָם הִיטִיב, בְּעַבְדֶּיךָ; וַיְהִי-לֹו צָאן-וּבָקָר, וַחֲמֹרִים, וְעַבְדִּים וְשִׁפְחוֹת, וְאַתְנֹת וְגַמְלִים. (יז) וַיִּנְגַע יְהוָה אֶת-פְּרָעֹה נֹגְעִים גְּדֹלִים, וְאֶת-בֵּיתוֹ, עַל-דִּבְרֵי שָׂרִי, אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָם. (יח) וַיִּקְרָא פְּרָעֹה, לְאַבְרָם, וַיֹּאמֶר, מַה-זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי; לָמָּה לֹא-הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי, כִּי אִשְׁתְּךָ הִוא. (יט) לָמָּה אָמַרְתָּ אַחֲתִי הִוא, וְאָקַח אֹתָהּ לִי לְאִשָּׁה; וְעַתָּה, הִנֵּה אִשְׁתְּךָ קֵחַ וְלָהּ. (כ) וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו פְּרָעֹה, אֲנָשִׁים; וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אוֹתוֹ וְאֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ, וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לֹו.

4. Genesis 12:10-20

¹⁰There was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are." ¹²If the Egyptians see you, and think, 'She is his wife,' they will kill me and let you live. ¹³Please say that you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may remain alive thanks to you." ¹⁴When Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians saw how very beautiful the woman was. ¹⁵Pharaoh's courtiers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's palace. ¹⁶And because of her, it went well with Abram; he acquired sheep, oxen, asses, male and female slaves, she-asses, and camels. ¹⁷But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his household with mighty plagues on account of Sarai, the wife of Abram. ¹⁸Pharaoh sent for Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me! Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? ¹⁹Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her as my wife? Now, here is your wife; take her and begone!" ²⁰And Pharaoh put men in charge of him, and they sent him off with his wife and all that he possessed.

5. בְּרֵאשִׁית יט:ז-ט

(ז) וַיֹּאמֶר: אֶל-נָא אַחִי, תִּרְעֵנוּ. (ח) הִנֵּה-נָא לִי שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדָעוּ אִישׁ--אוֹצִיָּאה-נָא אֶתְּכֶן אֲלֵיכֶם, וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶן כְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם; רַק לֹא-נָשִׁים הָאֵל, אֶל-תַּעֲשׂוּ דָבָר, כִּי-עַל-כֵּן בָּאוּ, בְּצֵל קִרְתִּי. (ט) וַיֹּאמְרוּ גֹשׁ-הַלָּאָה, וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאֶחָד בָּא-לְגֹר וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שְׁפוֹט--עַתָּה, נָרַע לָךְ מֵהֶם; וַיִּפְצְרוּ בְּאִישׁ בְּלוֹט מְאֹד, וַיִּגְשׁוּ לְשֹׁבֵר הַדָּלֶת.

5. Genesis 19:7-9

⁷And said, "I beg you, my friends, do not commit such a wrong. ⁸Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please; but do not do anything to these men, since they have come under the shelter of my roof." ⁹But they said, "Stand back! The fellow," they said, "came here as an alien, and already he acts the ruler! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." And they pressed hard against the person of Lot, and moved forward to break the door.



6. שמות כב:כא-כג

(כא) כָּל-אַלְמָנָה וְיָתוֹם, לֹא תַעֲנוּן. (כב) אִם-עֲנֵה תַעֲנֶה, אֹתוֹ--כִּי אִם-צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי, שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקָתוֹ.
(כג) וְחָרָה אַפִּי, וְהִרְגַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּחָרֶב; וְהָיוּ נַשִּׁיכֶם אֲלֵמָנוֹת, וּבְנֵיכֶם יִתְּמִים.

6. Exodus 22:21-23

²¹You shall not ill-treat any widow or orphan. ²²If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me, ²³and My anger shall blaze forth and I will put you to the sword, and your own wives shall become widows and your children orphans.

7. R. Abraham Ibn Ezra, Shorter Commentary to Exodus 22:21-23

לא תענון - בלשון רבים, כי משפט הרואים הענוי והחרישו כמשפט המענה, על כן כתוב אם ענה תענה...
והרגתי אתכם (כב):

“You shall not oppress”— in the plural, since the one who oppresses and the one who witnesses the oppression but remains silent have the same status.

8. דברים כג:טז-יז

(טז) לֹא-תִסְגִּיר עֶבֶד, אֶל-אֲדֹנָיו, אֲשֶׁר-יִנְצֹל אֵלָיו, מֵעַם אֲדֹנָיו. (יז) עִמָּךְ יֵשֵׁב בְּקִרְבְּךָ, בְּמִקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר
בְּאַחַד שְׁעָרֶיךָ--בְּטוֹב לוֹ; לֹא, תוֹנֶנּוּ.

8. Deuteronomy 23:16-17

¹⁶You shall not turn over to his master a slave who seeks refuge with you from his master. ¹⁷He shall live with you in any place he may choose among the settlements in your midst, wherever he pleases; you must not ill-treat him.

9. ויקרא כה:כג

וְהָאָרֶץ, לֹא תִמָּכַר לְצַמְתָּת--כִּי-לִי, הָאָרֶץ: כִּי-גֵרִים וְתוֹשְׁבִים אַתֶּם, עַמִּדִּי.

9. Leviticus 25:23

But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me.

