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“For in the Image of God was Adam Created”

**Jewish Attitudes to the ‘Other’:  
Xenophobic Bias vs. Expansive Inclusion  
in the Judaic Tradition**

**Chaim Seidler-Feller**

June 29 and July 1, 2020

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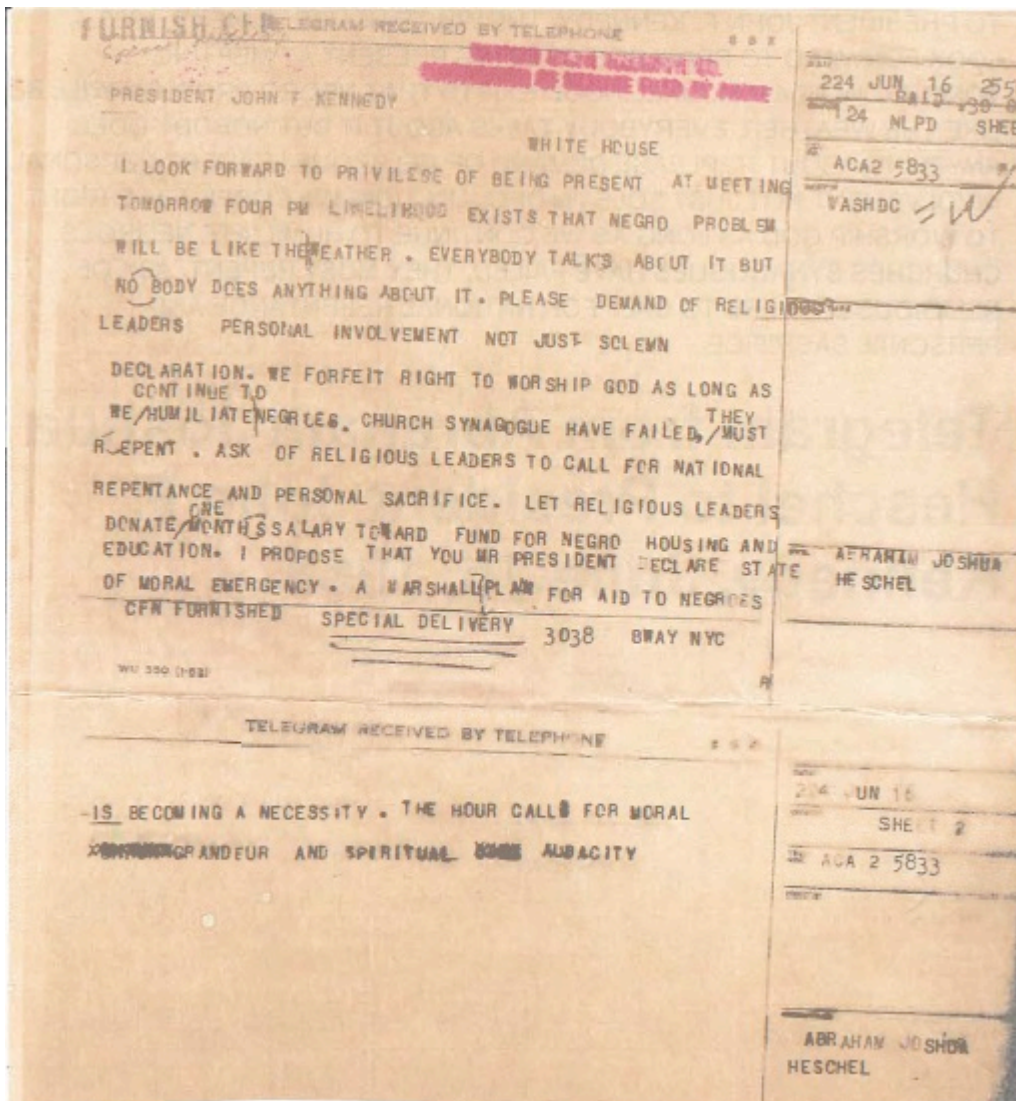
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1. Abraham Joshua Heschel, telegram to John F. Kennedy, June 16, 1963



# I. "Moralization and Demoralization in Jewish Ethics" – Adam as God's Image: Are All Humans Adam?

## 2. Babylonian Talmud Yevamot 60b-61a

תניא וכן היה ר"ש בן יוחאי אומר

It is taught in a *baraita*: **And similarly, Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai would say:**

קברי עובדי כוכבים אינן מטמאין באהל שנאי ואתן צאני צאן מרעיתי אדם אתם אתם קרויין אדם ואין העובדי כוכבים קרויין אדם

**The graves of gentiles do not render items impure though a tent, as it is stated: "And you My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are men [adam]" (Ezekiel 34:31), from which it is derived that you, the Jewish people, are called men [adam] but gentiles are not called men [adam].**

## 3. Chaim ibn Atar, *Or HaChaim*, Commentary to Numbers 19:2

The Jewish people have been elevated above other nations in that they have received the Torah without which the Jews would not be different from any other nation. The wording of our verse then reminds us of the distinction of the Jewish people in that contact with the dead confers ritual impurity on a people who have been given the Torah. Lesser spirits yearn to attach themselves to the Jewish people inasmuch as the latter represent a high level of spirituality not only while alive but even while they are dead. The sanctity Jews experience during their lives is evident due to the fact that contact with the dead, or even being under the same roof with a dead body confers ritual impurity on the bodies of living Jews. This reflects how the Gentiles even while dead aspire to attach themselves to Jews, somehow. Were it not for the power of the ash of the red heifer with which this legislative act of the Torah has endowed us to help counteract the pull of the impurity associated with a dead body, we would not be able to shake off this attachment by the spiritual residue of the dead.

I have already illustrated this relationship between Israel and ritual impurity by means of a parable. Let us assume that we have two containers inside a house, one full of honey, the other full of refuse. If you take both these containers outside it will be observed that the container full of honey attracts swarms of flies whereas the number of flies which are attracted to the container full of refuse is insignificant by comparison. Similarly, when a Jew dies, the fact that he was full of holiness while alive -i.e. sweet as honey,- now attracts all kinds of spiritually negative elements seeing the soul has departed from that body. These are the forces of impurity which always attempt to attach themselves to anything sacred as they wish to benefit from the physical

sweetness of holiness. This is the reason that the body of a dead Jew confers impurity on any other Jew who is under the same roof. This is so even if 1000 houses attached to each other surround the room in which the dead body is kept. As long as one door opens into those houses the impurity is spread throughout the airspace in all these houses. The same does not occur if the dead body is not that of a Jew. This is because the Gentile never possessed holiness while alive so that the spiritually negative elements have no reason to think they would benefit by attaching themselves to it. The body of a dead Gentile confers ritual impurity on a Jew only if the Jew touches it, etc., not if he merely shares the same roofed-over airspace with it. The only impurity which does cling to the body of a dead Gentile is that which is capable of killing on contact. The root cause for all these rules is the Torah (which was given to the Jewish people).

#### 4. Shneur Zalman of Liadi, *Likutei Amarim*, Tanya I

וגם מדות טובות שבטבע כל ישראל בתולדותם, כמו רחמנות וגמילות חסדים, באות ממנה

*From this soul stem also the good traits inherent in every Jew's character, such as compassion and benevolence.*

But since this is a *nefesh* of *kelipah* and evil, how do *good* characteristics come from it? This matter is now addressed.

כי בישראל נפש זו דקליפה היא מקליפת נוגה, שיש בה גם כן טוב

*For in the [case of the] Jew, this soul of kelipah is derived from the kelipah called "nogah", which also contains good; and the good within this nefesh gives rise to these positive natural traits.*

והיא מסוד עץ הדעת טוב ורע

*[This kelipah] is from the esoteric "Tree of Knowledge" [which is comprised] of good and evil.*

מה שאין כן נפשות אומות העולם הן משאר קליפות טמאות שאין בהן טוב כלל

*The souls of the nations of the world, however, emanate from the other, unclean kelipot which contain no good whatever,*

כמו שכתוב בעץ חיים שער מ"ט פרק ג': וכל טיבו דעבדין האומות לגרמייהו עבדין

*as is written in Etz Chayim, Portal 49, ch. 3, that all the good that the nations do, is done out of selfish motives.*

5. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Tum'at Met 1:12–13

יב אֶחָד הַיָּמִת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אוֹ מִן הָעֹכֵפוֹיִם מְטַמָּא בְּמַגֵּעַ וּבְמִשָּׂא :

12 Corpses of both Jews and gentiles impart impurity through touch or through carrying.

יג וְאִין הָעֹכֵפוֹיִם מְטַמָּא בְּאֵהָל וְדָבָר זֶה קִבְּלָהּ הוּא וְהָרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר בְּמִלְחָמָת מִדְּנָן (במדבר לא יט)  
"כֹּל נִגַּע בְּחָלָל" וְלֹא הִזְכִּיר שָׁם אֵהָל.

13 The corpse of a gentile does not impart ritual impurity through *ohel*. This matter was conveyed by the Oral Tradition. With regard to the war with Midian, Numbers 31:19 states: "All who touch a corpse..." but does not mention an *ohel*.

6. Sifra, Kedoshim 4:12; Bereshit Rabbah 24:7

ד:יב "ואהבת לרעך כמוך" – רבי עקיבא אומר זה כלל גדול בתורה. בן עזאי אומר "זה ספר תולדות אדם...בדמות אל-ים עשה את האדם" – זה כלל גדול מזה .

4:12 "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself": R. Akiva says: This is an all-embracing principle in the Torah. Ben Azzai says: "This is the numeration of the generations of Adam...in the likeness of God was Adam created" — This is an even greater principle.

כד:ז שְׁלֹא תֹאמַר הוֹאִיל וְנִתְבַּזְּזִיתִי יִתְבַּזֶּה חֲבֵרִי עִמִּי, הוֹאִיל וְנִתְקַלְלִיתִי יִתְקַלֵּל חֲבֵרִי עִמִּי. אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחֻמָּא אִם עָשִׂיתָ כֵּן דַּע לְמִי אַתָּה מְבַזֶּה בְּדַמוֹת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אוֹתוֹ.

24:7 Thus, one should not say, "Since I am scorned, I should scorn my fellow as well; since I have been cursed, I will curse my fellow as well." Rabbi Tanchumah said, if you act thus, realize who it is that you are willing to have humiliated - "the one who was made in the likeness of God."

## 7. Avot d'Rabbi Natan A16

שנאת הבריות כיצד מלמד שלא יכוין אדם לומר אהוב את החכמים ושנוא את התלמידים אהוב את התלמידים ושנוא את עמי הארץ [אלא אהוב את כולם] ושנוא את האפיקורסין והמסיתים ומדיחין וכן המסורות וכן דוד אמר (תהילים קל"ט: כ"א-כ"ב) משנאיך ה' אשנא ובתקוממך אתקוטט תכלית שנאה שנאתים לאויבים היו לי הלא הוא אומר (ויקרא י"ט: י"ח) ואהבת לרעך כמוך אני ה' (מה טעם כי אני) בראתיו ואם עושה מעשה עמך אתה אוהבו ואם לאו אי אתה אוהבו.

AND THE HATRED OF MANKIND. What does this mean? It teaches that a man should not adopt the rule: Love the Sages and hate the disciples, or Love the disciples and hate the *'Am ha'arez*. Let his rule be: Love them all, and hate [only] heretics, apostates, seducers and informers. So said David, *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate You? And do not I strive with those that rise up against you? I hate them with utmost hatred; I count them as my enemies (Ps. 139:21-22)*. But does not Scripture declare, *You shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord (Lev. 19:18)*? And why? Because I created him. If he acts as *your people* should act, then you must love him, but if not, then you must not love him.

## 8. Mishnah Avot (Ethics of the Sages) 3:14

הוא היה אומר, חביב אדם שנברא בצלם. חבה יתרה נודעת לו שנברא בצלם, שנאמר (בראשית ט) כי בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם. חביבין ישראל שנקראו בנים למקום. חבה יתרה נודעת להם שנקראו בנים למקום, שנאמר (דברים יד) בנים אתם לה' אלהיכם. חביבין ישראל שנתן להם כלי חמדה. חבה יתרה נודעת להם שנתן להם כלי חמדה שבו נברא העולם, שנאמר (משלי ד) כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם, תורתי אל תעזבו:

He used to say: Beloved is man for he was created in the image [of God]. Especially beloved is he for it was made known to him that he had been created in the image [of God], as it is said: "for in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:6). Beloved are Israel in that they were called children to the All-Present. Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that they are called children of the All-Present, as it is said: "you are children to the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 14:1). Beloved are Israel in that a precious vessel was given to them. Especially beloved are they for it was made known to them that the desirable instrument, with which the world had been created, was given to them, as it is said: "for I give you good instruction; forsake not my teaching" (Proverbs 4:2).



9. Shmuel di Uzeda, *Midrash Shmuel*, Commentary to Mishnah Avot 3:14

ואמר מלת אדם היה נראה כי בכאן רצה לכלול אף אותם אשר לא מבני ישראל המה דהא ראייה שמביא היא אזהרה לבני נח ונתן טעם לאזהרת שפיכות דם בן נח והוא כי בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם נראה כי אף בן נח הוא בכלל חבה זו שנברא בצלם אלהים. ואפשר לי לומר כי אין הצלם הנאמר כאן על הצלם ותמונת תואר האדם אשר הוא משונה בו מן הבעל חי והשווה בו כל מין האנושי ואפי' בן נח רק הצלם האמור כאן הוא צלם של קדושה המיוחד לעם ב"י לבדם... אמנם ברשעים הם חקוקים בצלם שמאל צלם של טומאה ומאי דנקט חביב אדם ולא נאמר חביבין ישראל אפשר לומר שהוא כינוי לאדם הראשון שהוא היה תחלת הבריאה יציר כפיו של הקב"ה ועליו אמר חביב אדם והוא הדין לצדיקים כיוצא בו כי בודאי נבראו בצלם אלהים וצלם של קדושה וכן כל עם בני ישראל

I am able to interpret this in such manner that the image spoken of here does not refer to the human form, which sets humans apart from other creatures; by that interpretation all human beings including non-Jews (lit. Noachides) would be made equal. Rather the image in question is the image of holiness which is specific to the Jewish people alone...Indeed the wicked are imprinted with a sinister image, an image of impurity...And the reason that he chose to say "Dear is the human" when he meant "dear are the Jews" may be because he alludes to the first human (*adam*) who was...the work of God himself. Of him the Mishnah says: "Dear is the human," and the same holds for the righteous who are like him...and for the whole of the Jewish people.

**10. A Modern Rejoinder to Jewish Superiority: Yisrael Lifshitz, *Tiferet Yisrael*, Commentary to Mishnah Avot 3:14 and Babylonian Talmud Yevamot 61a**

*(Rav Yisrael Lifshitz was an Orthodox Rabbi in 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany.)*

After commenting on Mishnah Avot 3:14 "Beloved is the human being in that he was created in the image [of God], a theme which is a mitzvah to publicize, I admit that I have always had a hard time understanding what the Rabbis wrote in TB Yevamot 61a: "You are called *human being* and the nations of the world are *not* called *human being*." Is it conceivable that the Rabbis would say about idolators, who have within, as we explained, the image of God, that they are considered as mere animals? But if all their behavior is like that of animals who are not morally responsible and do not rate rewards or punishments, then that contradicts what we know [from the Talmud] that the righteous gentiles of the world have a place in the world to come!

Anyway, we know rationally ... and we see that many of these righteous gentiles, not only acknowledge the Creator and believe the holy Torah is from God, but they also perform acts of lovingkindness for Israel and some of them have made life so much better for the all the creatures of the world.

Like the righteous gentile Janeker (?) who invented a cure for bubonic plague that saved tens of thousands from illness, death and disfigurement. Or Draker (?) who brought the potato to Europe and thereby saved many from famine. Or Gutenberg who invented the printing press.

It is hard to justify this halacha about the gentiles lack of impurity in death, since they do bear the image of God, and they have done acts of justice and kindness and they have a place in the world to come....

It appears that Israel and the nations each have their own unique virtue (or quality). The advantage and virtue of the nations over Israel is that they made themselves [who they are as righteous gentiles] by their own free will and by their own abilities. This is certainly a higher level than Israel who have been pulled [up to their ethical-spiritual level] by the hair on their heads by the coercion of God in order to improve them. So Israel ought not to credit themselves [with the level of their virtue]. For whatever perfection God miraculously managed to bring about in them, was because of God's hand and on the merits of their ancestors.

So the fact that only Israel [in this verse] are called human beings is not so much to praise them. It just shows God [who called them human beings made them who they are]. They did not themselves remove the hard outer covering of their heart [to reach a higher level of holiness or human civilization] rather Israel who were mere raw material in the hands of the Creator.

11. Pinchas Eliyahu Horowitz, *Sefer Ha-Berit II*:13

The essence of neighborly love consists in loving all mankind, all who walk on two legs, of whatever people and whatever tongue, by virtue of their identical humanity, and their civilization—builders, farmers, merchants, artisans...each serving the needs of men in his own way...Human society is to be conceived of as a single individual composed of many organs and parts; each person is like an organ or a part of this individual...All are interdependent and interconnected like the links of a chain...The meaning of the scripture “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” is not confined to Jews only, but the sense is “your neighbor who is a human being as yourself”—people of all nations are included, any fellow humans...

### מאמר י"ג אהבת רעים

**פרק א' מדות** אהבת רעים הוא, שיהי' האדם אוהב כל מין האנושי, וכל מהלכי שמים, יהי' מלא זה עם שיהי', ויהי' ראיה נשון שיהי', בעבור שהוא אדם בדמותו וצולמו כמוהו, ועוסק ביסודו של עולם, או בונה או חורט, או זורע, או קוהר, או שוכר, או איזה בעל מלאכה, או חובב בחכמות, ותחבולות יקנה ללרכי העולם, וחושב מחשבות לבלתי ידח דבר מלרכי הדריית, והוא מבין חבל בחכמתו, ואין וחקר ותקן כלים ומלאכות כפלאים ברעיון לבו שהוא עמל, כי על ידי אלה הדברים העולם עומד כחוקו, ונותקיים בטלמותו, ונמלאים כל הדברים אשר נראו אלהים לעשות, ואשר עשה, והנה טוב מאד לכל אדם, ולא ילא מכלל ההסבה הזה אלא שמים זו, האחד בן אדם המדבר, הנקרא [חילור מאן], שאין להם נפיש, ולא מקום מיוחד, לא חריטה, ולא זריעה, רק אוכלים פירות, והולכים ערומים, וכל הנפיש הפקר, וחיים כמו בהמות הארץ, כלאן אשר אין להם רע, לא זה עם זה, ולא עמנו, והשני הוא בן אדם עדיני, אך עיסק בהפחתת העולם, כמו הרומחים, והנגבים, והמודדים, וכדומה, אבל מלבד שמי אלה, כל בני שם בעשמת, ולא יחד בזה אומה זולת אומה, ואדם זולת אדם, כי לא יבד האדם בעבור עמנו לבד, רק מניאות כל אדם בעבור אדם אחר ג"כ, כנאמר החכם, כל הארץ ומלמה נברא בעבור מין האנושי, ומין האנושי בעמנו איש בעבור רעהו נברא, להמיר איש באיש בחושלתיו, לכן לא יאן טוב לישראל הדבר הזה, רק ראוי לטמור הדבר הטוב הזה לכל אדם, ללאוב עמים כלם וקמר מין האנושי בכלנו, כל הקהל חוקה אחת, לגר ולמזרחי, כל יושבי הארץ, ולהסתדל כל איש ממנו בעשיית הטוב איש אל רעהו, על דרך החליטין והתמורה, בין בהסתדלות הגוף, בין בקבין מה הבידו, להסתבר בה טובת כללוחם, ולהרזית בה חובלת חדרתם, זה הוא ענין רע, וזהבנת בני אדם, אשר יחובר אל כל החיים המדברים, הנקרא [מעגמן פריינד].

**פרק ה' אמנם** לדעת אם אנו חייבים עליה מן הכתוב, נאמר כי פקד ה' את עמו עליה עטורט, והחורה מחייבת אותנו זאת באר הטיב, כמה טכחוב וזהבנת לרעך כמון [ויקרא י"ט], ואין הכונה זו לישראל דוקא, שאלו היה בן היה כתוב וזהבנת לאחך כמון, כמו טכחוב אלל ריביש לא סידך לאחך ערך כסף [דברים כ"ג], או וזהבנת לבני עמך כמון, כמו טכחוב לא תקום ולא חטורט אפ בני עמך [ויקרא י"ט], אבל הכונה זו לרעך שהוא אדם כמון, ועוסק ביסודו של עולם כמון, וכל האומות בחשמת, וכל הרע לאיש, רעי גרר עם רעי יחק, סהרי חזיל לא מעטו ערעך בטחוק זה אהבת רעים מן הכמות, ולא דרמו בו דבר

12. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

לְפִיכֹךְ נִבְרָא אָדָם יְחִידִי, לְלַמְדֶּךָ, שֶׁכֹּל הַמַּאֲבָד נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת [מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל], מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַפְּתוּב כְּאֵלוֹ אֲבָד עוֹלָם מְלֵא. וְכֹל הַמְּקַיֵּם נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַפְּתוּב כְּאֵלוֹ קַיֵּם עוֹלָם מְלֵא. וּמִפְּנֵי שְׁלוֹם הַבְּרִיּוֹת, שֶׁלֹּא יֵאמַר אָדָם לְחֻבְרוֹ אֲבָא גְדוֹל מֵאֲבִיךָ. וְשֶׁלֹּא יְהוּ מִיַּיִן אוֹמְרִים, הֲרֵבָה רְשָׁיוֹת בְּשָׂמַיִם. וְלִהְיִיד גְּדֻלָּתוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, שֶׁאָדָם טוֹבֵעַ כַּמָּה מִטְּבַעוֹת בְּחוֹתָם אֶחָד וְכֻלָּן דּוֹמִין זֶה לָזֶה, וּמְלֻךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא טֹבֵעַ כֹּל אָדָם בְּחוֹתָמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הָרֵאשׁוֹן וְאִין אֶחָד מֵהֶן דּוֹמָה לְחֻבְרוֹ. לְפִיכֹךְ כֹּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד חַיֵּב לוֹמֵר, בְּשִׁבְלֵי נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם.

Only one man, Adam, was originally created in order to teach us that if one destroys a single life, it is as if he destroyed an entire world, while if one saves a single life, it is as if he saved an entire world. Also, only one person was initially created for the sake of peace, so that no one should be able to claim lineage superior to another person, also so that heretics could not use multiple creations to support the idea of multiple deities. This also demonstrates God's greatness because a human can stamp out many coins using the same die and they are all identical, but God "stamped out" every person from the "seal" of Adam but no two are alike. Therefore, every person should say, "The world was created for my sake."

## II. The Hamitic Hypothesis: Racist Prejudice and Slavery in the Jewish Tradition

### 13. Genesis 9:20–26

כ ויחל נח איש האדמה ויטע כרם :  
כא וישת מרחינין וישכר ויתגל בתוך אהלה :  
כב וירא חם אבי כנען את ערות אביו ויגד לשני אחיו בחוץ :  
כג ויקח שם ויפת את השמלה וישימו על שכם שניהם וילכו אחרנית ויכסו את ערות אביהם  
ופניהם אחרנית וערות אביהם לא ראו :  
כד וייקח נח מיינו וידע את אשר עשה לו בנו הקטן :  
כה ויאמר ארור כנען עבד עבדים יהיה לאחיו :  
כו ויאמר ברוך ה' אלהי שם ויהי כנען עבד למו :

**20** Noah, the tiller of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. **21** He drank of the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself within his tent. **22** Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. **23** But Shem and Japheth took a cloth, placed it against both their backs and, walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness; their faces were turned the other way, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. **24** When Noah woke up from his wine and learned what his youngest son had done to him, **25** he said, "Cursed be Canaan; The lowest of slaves Shall he be to his brothers." **26** And he said, "Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem; Let Canaan be a slave to them.

### 14. Midrash Tanhuma, Noah 13

וחם על שראה בעיניו ערות אביו, נעשו עיניו אדמות. ועל שהגיד בפיו, נעשו שפתותיו עקמות. ועל שחזר פניו, נתחרף שער ראשו וזקנו. ועל שלא כסה הערוה, הלך ערם ונמשכה לו ערלתו. לפי שכל מדותיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא מדה כנגד מדה.

Because Ham had glanced at his naked father, his eyes became red. Because he related (what he had seen) to others with his mouth, his lips became twisted. Because he turned his face away (ignored his father's condition), the hair of his head and beard was singed. And because he neglected to cover his naked father, he went about naked, with his prepuce extended. This happened to him because the Holy One, blessed be He, exacts retribution measure for measure.

15. Genesis Rabbah 36:7

וַיֹּאמֶר אַרְוּר כְּנָעַן עֶבֶד עֶבְדִּים יִהְיֶה לְאַחֲיוֹ, חָם חָטָא וְכָנְעַן נִתְקַלָּל, אֶתְמָהָא, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה וְרַבִּי נְחֻמְיָה, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר לְפִי שְׁפָתוֹב (בְּרֵאשִׁית ט, א): וַיְבָרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת נֹחַ וְאֶת בְּנָיו, וְאֵין קָלָלָה הָיָה בְּמִקּוֹם בְּרָכָה, לְפִיכֻךְ וַיֹּאמֶר אַרְוּר כְּנָעַן. רַבִּי נְחֻמְיָה אָמַר כְּנָעַן רָאָה וְהִגִּיד לְחָם, לְפִיכֻךְ תּוֹלְדֵינוּ אֶת הַקָּלָלָה בְּמִקְלָל. אָמַר רַבִּי בְּרַכְיָה הֲרֵבָה צַעַר נִצְטַעַר נֹחַ בְּתִבְתָּה שְׁלֵא הָיָה לוֹ בֶן קָטָן שְׂיִשְׁמְשֵׁנוּ, אָמַר לְכִשְׂאֲצָא אָנִי מֵעַמִּיד לִי בֶן קָטָן שְׂיִשְׁמְשֵׁנִי, כִּינֹן שְׁעָשָׂה לוֹ חָם אוֹתוֹ מַעֲשָׂה, אָמַר אֶתְהָ מְנַעַת אוֹתִי מִלְּהַעֲמִיד לִי בֶן קָטָן שְׂיִשְׁמְשֵׁנִי, לְפִיכֻךְ יִהְיֶה אוֹתוֹ הָאִישׁ עֶבֶד לְאַחֲיוֹ שְׁהֵן עֶבְדִּים לִי. רַב הוֹנָא בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי יוֹסֵף אָמַר אֶתְהָ מְנַעַת אוֹתִי מִלְּעֲשׂוֹת דְּבָר שְׁהוּא בְּאַפְלָה, לְפִיכֻךְ יִהְיֶה אוֹתוֹ הָאִישׁ כְּעוֹר וּמְפָחָם. רַבִּי הוֹנָא בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי יוֹסֵף אָמַר לוֹ אֶתְהָ מְנַעַת אוֹתִי מִלְּהַעֲמִיד בֶּן רַבִּיעִי, לְפִיכֻךְ אָנִי מְאָרֵר בֶּן רַבִּיעִי שְׁלֵךְ. אָמַר רַבִּי חִזְיָא בְּרַ אַבָּא חָם וְכָלֵב שְׁמֵשׁוּ בְּתִבְתָּה, לְפִיכֻךְ יִצָּא חָם מִפְּחָם, וְכָלֵב מִפְּרָסָם בְּתִשְׁמִישׁוֹ.

And He said: Cursed be Canaan (Genesis 9:25): Ham sinned and Canaan is cursed! Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Nehemiah disagreed. Rabbi Yehudah said: Since it is written, 'And God blessed Noah and his sons' (Gen. 9:1), while there cannot be a curse where a blessing has been given, consequently, he said: Cursed be Canaan. Rabbi Nehemiah explained: It was Canaan who saw it [in the first place] and informed them, therefore the curse is attached to him who did wrong. Rabbi Berekiah said: Noah grieved very much in the Ark that he had no young son to wait on him, and declared, 'When I go out I will raise a young son to do this for me.' But when Ham acted thus to him, he exclaimed, 'You have prevented me from raising a young son to serve me, therefore that man [your son] will be a servant to his brothers!' Rabbi Huna said in Rabbi Yosef's name: [Noah declared], 'You have prevented me from raising a fourth son, therefore I curse your fourth son,' Rabbi Huna also said in Rabbi Yosef's name: You have prevented me from doing something that is done in the dark, therefore your seed will be ugly and dark-skinned. Rabbi Hiya said: Ham and the dog copulated in the ark, therefore Ham came forth black-skinned while the dog publicly exposes its copulation. Rabbi Levi said: This may be compared to one who minted his own coinage in the very palace of the king, whereupon the king ordered: I decree that his effigy be defaced and his coinage cancelled. Similarly, Ham and the dog copulated in the Ark and were punished.

16. Saul Morteira, *Givat Shaul*, Interpretation #17

אח"כ נאמר וירבו כי לא בלבד נתרחבו בבתיהם וכיוותם אלא ג"כ באיכות נתרבו ונעשו גדוליי כמו תושיע ורב והוי' כלבושיהם ועניניה' החיצונים בהרבות להם בגדים יקרים סוסים ויורכות ואנשיי רצים לפניה' מה שלא יאוצת לגרים בארץ לא להם ולגולים כי זה מלבד שמרב' הקנאה הנה הוי' מאריך הגלות

Then the verse says, *wa-yirbu*. It was not only that they expanded in their houses quantitatively, but also qualitatively *they became great* and magnificent... This refers to their manner of dress and to other externals. They began to have expensive clothes and horses and chariots with men running before them, all of which is inappropriate for aliens and exiles in a land not theirs. In addition to increasing envy, it prolongs the exile.

17. Abraham Isaac Kook, *Letters (Iggerot HaRaaya)* Vol. 1, No. 89, 1905; Alex Israel, translation and commentary

דע עור, שהעבודות, כמו נ"ל דרכי ד' הישרים, שצדיקים ילכו בהם ופושעים יכשלו בהם, לא הביאה מצד עצמה לעולם שום תקלה, כי עצם חק העבודות הוא חק טבעי בבני"א, ואין שום הבדל בין העבודות החוקיות להעבודות הטבעיות, ואדרבא העבודות החוקיות שהיא ע"פ רשותה של תורה באה לתקן כמה תקלות, שהעבודות הטבעיות היא צפויה אליהם. למשל, הרי המציאות של עניים ועשירים חלשים וגבורים דבר מוכרח ונהוג הוא, אי"כ אותם שקנו להם נכסים מרובים, שהם השתמשים בכח המשפט לשכר עובדים עניים לעבודתם, הרי השכירים הללו גם להם עובדים בטבע, מצד החכמה החברתית, והנה למשל העובדים במכרה-הפחמים, שהם נשכרים מרצונם, הרי הם עובדים לאדוניהם, וכודאי חלק האנשים שהם צריכים להיות שפלים במצב, לולא הרשעה ששלטה כ"כ בלבבות בני"א, עד כדי רמיסת משפט, הנה אם היו עובדים קנויים קנין כסף או היה מצבם יותר טוב, למשל עכשיו אנהנו צריכים להענות מוסריות לדאג בעד חיי העובדים, החומרי והמוסרי, והעשיר שלבו אטום לרעג לכל צדק ומוסר, ויותר נח לו שבמנתרה יחסר אור ואויר, אע"פ שעיניו יתקצרו חייהם של עשירות אלפים אנשים, ויעשו חולים אנשים, רק שלא יוציא מכיסו עשירות אלפים שקלים לכונן את המנהרה במצב יותר טוב, ואם לפעמים תפול סכרה, ויקברו חיים עובדיה, לא ישים על לב, כי ימצא עבדים אחרים נשכרים, מה שא"כ אם היו העבודות הללו נעשות ע"פ זק עבודות חוקיות, שהעבדים המה קנין כסף של אדוניהם, אז הדאגה להייהם ואשרם תהיה שוה לדאגתו על הונו, "כי כסף הוא", אז היו באמת העובדים הדלים הללו יותר מאושרים וצפויים לעתיד יותר טוב, ע"כ תורתנו הקדושה היא תולכת בדרכה לרומם את לב האדם, לקרבו אל דרכי אדון כל המעשים ב"ה, וממילא כל זמן שהעבודות הטבעיות תהיה מוכרחת להיות נהוגה בחברה האנושית, "בראתי יצהיר בראתי לו תורה תבלין", תהיה העבודות החוקיות מבטמתה ומחזירתה לטובה.

“You should know,” says Rav Kook, “that slavery, as with all the moral, upstanding ways of God ‘in which the righteous walk and the evil stumble,’ never in itself caused any fault or error. Slavery is a natural law amongst the human race. Indeed there is no difference between legal slavery and ‘natural’ slavery. In fact legal slavery is within the jurisdiction of Torah, and is legislated in order to control certain flaws, and this, because God anticipated the reality of ‘natural’ slavery. Let me explain. The reality of life is that there is rich and poor, weak and strong. A person who has great wealth hires poor people – legally – in order to do his work. These employees are in fact ‘natural’ slaves, due to their socio-economic standing. For example, coal miners. These people go to work in the mines of their own free will, but they are in effect slaves to their employers...and maybe if they were actually owned by their employer, they would be better off! ...The rich, with their stone hearts scoff at all morals and ethics. They don’t care if the mines lack air and light even if this shortens the life expectancy of their workers, whose numbers run into the tens of thousands, many of whom become critically ill. They certainly won’t engage in any extra expense to improve working conditions in the mines, and if a mineshaft collapses burying workers alive, they don’t care. Tomorrow they will find new workers to employ. If these people were owned by the master by legal slavery, he would have a financial interest to look after their lives and well-being, because they are his own assets.”

Rav Kook continues to develop his theory, adding that...there are certain sectors of society who fail when they have to fend for themselves and they thrive when they are given direction: “people whose absolute freedom is bad for themselves and negative for society”. His belief is that under the moral imperatives of the Torah, the lot of these people will be made infinitely better than in the current situation where they have become prey for irresponsible industry and charlatan businessmen.



**18. Morris Raphall of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, "The Bible View of Slavery," sermon delivered on the National Day of Fasting and Prayer, January 4, 1861**

Having thus, on the authority of the sacred Scripture, traced slavery back to the remotest period, I next request your attention to the question, "**Is slaveholding condemned as a sin in sacred Scripture?**" How this question can at all arise in the mind of any man that has received a religious education, and is acquainted with the history of the Bible, is a phenomenon I cannot explain to myself, and which fifty years ago no man dreamed of. But we live in times when we must not be surprised at anything. Last Sunday an eminent preacher is reported to have declared from the pulpit, "The Old Testament requirements served their purpose during the physical and social development of mankind, and were rendered no longer necessary now when we were to be guided by the superior doctrines of the New in the moral instruction of the race." I had always thought that in the "moral instruction of the race," the requirements of Jewish Scriptures and Christian Scriptures were identically the same; that to abstain from murder, theft, adultery, that "to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with G-d," were "requirements" equally imperative in the one course of instruction as in the other. But it appears I was mistaken. "We have altered all that now," says this eminent divine, in happy imitation of Molière's physician, whose new theory removed the heart from the left side of the human body to the right. But when I remember that the "now" refers to a period of which you all, though no very aged men, witnessed the rise; when, moreover, I remember that the "WE" the reverend preacher speaks of, is limited to a few impulsive declaimers, gifted with great zeal, but little knowledge; more eloquent than learned; better able to excite our passions than to satisfy our reason; and when, lastly, I remember the scorn with which sacred Scripture (Deut. xxxii. 18) speaks of "newfangled notions, lately sprung up, which your fathers esteemed not;" when I consider all this, I think you and I had rather continue to take our "requirements for moral instruction" from Moses and the Prophets than from the eloquent preacher of Brooklyn [Henry Ward Beecher]. But as that reverend gentleman takes a lead among those who most loudly and most vehemently denounce slaveholding as a sin, I wished to convince myself whether he had any Scripture warranty for so doing; and whether such denunciation was one of those "requirements for moral instruction" advanced by the New Testament. I have accordingly examined the various books of Christian Scripture, and find that they afford the reverend gentleman and his compeers no authority whatever for his and their declamations. The New Testament nowhere, directly or indirectly, condemns slaveholding, which, indeed, is proved by the universal practice of all Christian nations during many centuries. Receiving slavery as one of the conditions of society, the New Testament nowhere interferes with or contradicts the slave code of Moses; it even preserves a letter written by one of the most eminent Christian teachers to a slaveowner on sending back to him his runaway slave. And when we next refer to the history and "requirements" of our own sacred

Scriptures, we find that on the most solemn occasion therein recorded, when G-d gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai—

There where His finger scorched, the tablet shone;

There where His shadow on his people shone His glory, shrouded in its garb of fire, Himself no eye might see and not expire.

Even on that most solemn and most holy occasion, slaveholding is not only recognized and sanctioned as an integral part of the social structure, when it is commanded that the Sabbath of the L-rd is to bring rest to *Avdecha ve'Amasecha*, "Your male slave and thy female slave" (Exod. xx. 10; Deut. v. 14). But the property in slaves is placed under the same protection as any other species of lawful property, when it is said, "You shall not covet thy neighbor's house, or his field, or his male slave, or his female slave, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that belongs to your neighbor" (Ibid. xx. 17; v.21). That the male slave and the female slave here spoken of do not designate the Hebrew bondman, but the heathen slave, I shall presently show you. That the Ten Commandments are the word of G-d, and as such, of the very highest authority, is acknowledged by Christians as well as by Jews. **I would therefore ask the reverend gentleman of Brooklyn and his compeers—How dare you, in the face of the sanction and protection afforded to slave property in the Ten Commandments—how dare you denounce slaveholding as a sin?** When you remember that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job—the men with whom the Almighty conversed, with whose names he emphatically connects his own most holy name, and to whom He vouchsafed to give the character of "perfect, upright, fearing G-d and eschewing evil" (Job i. 8)—that all these men were slaveholders, does it not strike you that you are guilty of something very little short of blasphemy? And if you answer me, "Oh, in their time slaveholding was lawful, but now it has become a sin," I in my turn ask you, "When and by what authority you draw the line?" Tell us the precise time when slaveholding ceased to be permitted, and became sinful?" When we remember the mischief which this inventing a new sin, not known in the Bible, is causing; how it has exasperated the feelings of the South, and alarmed the conscience of the North, to a degree that men who should be brothers are on the point of embroiling their hands in each other's blood, are we not entitled to ask the reverend preacher of Brooklyn, "What right have you to insult and exasperate thousands of G-d-fearing, law-abiding citizens, whose moral worth and patriotism, whose purity of conscience and of life, are fully equal to your own? What right have you to place yonder grey-headed philanthropist on a level with a murderer, or yonder mother of a family on a line with an adulteress, or yonder honorable and honest man in one rank with a thief, and all this solely because they exercise a right which your own fathers and progenitors, during many generations, held and exercised without reproach or compunction. You profess to frame your "moral instruction of the race" according to the "requirements" of the New Testament—but tell us where and by whom it was said, "Whosoever shall say to his neighbor, *rakah* (worthless

sinner), shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of the judgment." **My friends, I find, and I am sorry to find, that I am delivering a pro-slavery discourse. I am no friend to slavery in the abstract, and still less friendly to the practical working of slavery. But I stand here as a teacher in Israel; not to place before you my own feelings and opinions, but to propound to you the word of G-d, the Bible view of slavery.** With a due sense of my responsibility, I must state to you the truth and nothing but the truth, however unpalatable or unpopular that truth may be....

There were...slaves among the Hebrews, whose general condition was analogous to that of their Southern fellow sufferers. That was the heathen slave, who was to be ... "a possession...an inheritance to the owner's children..." (Lev. xxv. 44-46) Over these heathen slaves the owner's property was absolute; he could put them to hard labor, to the utmost extent of their physical strength; he could inflict on them any degree of chastisement short of injury to life and limb. If his heathen slave ran away or strayed from home, every Israelite was bound to bring or send him back, as...with any other portion of his neighbor's property (Deut. xxii. 3)...While thus the owner possessed full right over and security for his property, the exercise of that power was confined within certain limits which he could not outstep. His female slave was not to be the tool or castaway toy of his sensuality, nor could he sell her, but was bound to "let her go free," "because he had humbled her" (Deut. xxi. 14). His male slave was protected against excessive punishment; for if the master in any way mutilated his slave, even to knock a single tooth out of his head, the slave became free (Exod. xxi. 26, 27). And while thus two of the worst passions of human nature, lust and cruelty, were kept under due restraint, the third bad passion, cupidity, was not permitted free scope; for the law of G-d secured to the slave his Sabbaths and days of rest; while public opinion, which in a country so densely peopled as Palestine must have been all-powerful, would not allow any slave-owner to impose heavier tasks on his slaves, or to feed them worse than his neighbors did. This, indeed, is the great distinction which the Bible view of slavery derives from its divine source. The slave is a *person* in whom the dignity of human nature is to be respected; *he has rights*. Whereas, the heathen view of slavery which prevailed at Rome, and which, I am sorry to say, is adopted in the South, reduces the slave to a *thing*, and a thing can have no rights... If our Northern fellow-citizens...would not insist on being "righteous overmuch," or denouncing "sin" which the Bible knows not...And if our Southern fellow-citizens would adopt the Bible view of slavery...then "G-d would see their works and that they turned from the evil of their ways," ...Therefore let us pray.

## 19. David Einhorn, Response to “The Bible View of Slavery”

*Translated from German by Mrs. Kaufmann Kohler in “Sinai,” Vol. VI, p. 2-22, 1861*

We have before this had occasion to admire Dr. Raphall's originality, but never would we have credited him with such originality as is displayed in the carefully prepared address delivered on the 4th of January (1861) and published in the New York, "Herald," in which he positively claims that slavery is sanctioned in the Bible. The sermons we read that were delivered by Christian clergymen, even in the Southern states on this Day of Penitence and Prayer, disapproved of and apologized for slavery...**The question simply is: Is Slavery a moral evil or not? And it took Dr. Raphall, a Jewish preacher, to concoct the deplorable farce in the name of divine authority, to proclaim the justification, the moral blamelessness of servitude, and to lay down the law to Christian preachers of opposite convictions.** The Jew, a descendant of the race that offers daily praises to God for deliverance out of the house of bondage in Egypt, and even today suffers under the yoke of slavery in most places of the old world, crying out to God, undertook to designate slavery as a perfectly sinless institution, sanctioned by God. And the impudent persons who will not believe this, are met with fanatical zeal, with a sort of moral indignation (!!!)...

...**The question exclusively to be decided, is whether Scripture merely tolerates this institution as an evil not to be disregarded, and therefore infuses in its legislation a mild spirit gradually to lead to its dissolution, or whether it favors, approves of and justifies and sanctions it in its moral aspect?** Hah!—we hear Mr. Raphall exclaim—there you have the rationalists! Not our own ideas but the word of God must rule, and I am too pious to attempt to interpret these words. Whatever the Bible concedes, is morally good, and I dare not consider it a sin with my sophistry!—Very well! Then we beg Mr. Raphall to instruct us about the following: According to Deuter. 21, 15-17, it is directed: A man possessing two wives...Can we conceive of a more decided recognition of polygamy or at least of bigamy?...Is the *justification* of an institution, the immorality of which Dr. Raphall will scarcely deny, and whose propagation Rabbenu Gershom sought to check through a ban, not here affirmed in the most positive manner?

...I am no politician and do not meddle in politics. **But to proclaim slavery in the name of Judaism to be a God-sanctioned institution—the Jewish-religious press must raise objections to this, if it does not want itself and Judaism branded forever.** Had a Christian clergyman in Europe delivered the Raphall address—the Jewish-orthodox as well as Jewish-reform press would have been set going to call the wrath of heaven and earth upon such falsehoods, to denounce such disgrace, and חילול השם. And are we in America to ignore this mischief done by a *Jewish* preacher? Only such Jews, who prize the dollar more highly than their God and their religion, can demand or even approve of this!

## 20. Sifre Numbers 99

על אודות האשה הכושית. מגיד הכתוב שכל מי שהוא רואה אותה – היה מודה בנויה. וכן הוא אומר (בראשית יא) אבי מלכה ואבי יסכה, אלא שהכל סוכים ביופיה, שנאמר (בראשית י"ב: ט"ו) ויראו אותה שרי פרעה ויהללו אותה אל פרעה. ר' אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר: צפורה צפו וראו מה נאה האשה: הכושית. וכי היתה? אלא מדיינית היתה, שנאמר שמות ב ולכהן מדין שבע בנות, ומה ת"ל כושית? – מה כושי משונה בעורו, כך צפורה משונה בנויה יותר מכל הנשים. כיוצא בו אתה אומר (תהלים ז) שגיון לדוד אשר שר לה' על דברי כוש בן ימיני. וכי כושי היה? אלא מה כושי משונה בעורו, אף שאול משונה במראיו, שנאמר שמואל א ט משכמו ומעלה גבוה מכל העם. כיוצא בו אתה אומר (עמוס ט) הלא כבני כושים אתם לי בני ישראל. וכי כושים היו? אלא כושי משונה בעורו – אף ישראל משונים במצוות יותר מכל אומות העולם. כיוצא בו אתה אומר (ירמיהו ל"ח: ז') וישמע עבד מלך הכושי איש סריס. וכי כושי היה? אלא מה כושי משונה בעורו, כך היה ברוך בן נריה משונה במעשיו יותר מכל בני פלטרין של מלך: כי אשה כושית לקח. למה נאמר? לפי שהוא אומר על אודות הכושית, אלא מה ת"ל כושית לקח? יש לך נוחה ביופיה ולא במעשיה, במעשיה ולא ביופיה, כמו שנאמר (משלי יא) נזם זהב באף חזיר אשה יפה וסרת טעם. זאת – נאה, נוחה בנויה – ונוחה במעשיה. לכך נאמר אשה כושית לקח:

"... **Because of the Cushite woman**": Scripture hereby apprises us that whoever beheld her attested to her beauty. And thus is it written (Bereshit 11:29) "... the father of Milkah and the father of Yiskah": Yiskah is Sarah: Why was she called "Yiskah"? For all gazed upon ("sochim") her beauty, as it is written (Ibid. 12:15) "And Pharaoh's officers saw her and praised her to Pharaoh." R. Eliezer the son of R. Yossi Haglili said: "Tzipporah" (Moses' wife) — Why was she called "Tzipporah"? "Tzfu ur'uh" ("Look and see") how beautiful this woman is! "the Cushite (Ethiopian) woman": Now was she an Ethiopian? Wasn't she a Midianite, viz. (Shemot 2:16) "And the priest of Midian had seven daughters, etc." What is the intent of "Cushite"? Just as a Cushite is exceptional in his skin, so Tzipporah was exceptional in her beauty — more so than all the women. Similarly, (Psalms 7:1) "A Shiggayon of David, which he sang to the L-rd concerning Cush (Saul), a Benjaminite." Now was he a Cushite? (The intent is:) Just as a Cushite is exceptional in his skin, so Saul was exceptional in his appearance, as it is written of him (I Samuel 9:2) "... from his shoulder and upwards, taller than all of the people." Similarly, (Amos 9:7) "Are you not like Cushites to Me, O children of Israel?" Now were they Cushites? (The intent is:) Just as a Cushite is exceptional in his skin, so, is an Israelite exceptional in mitzvoth. Similarly, (Jeremiah 32:7) "And Eved-melech the Cushite heard": Now was he a Cushite? Was he not Baruch? But, just as a Cushite is exceptional in his skin, so, was Baruch ben Neriah exceptional in his deeds, more so than any of the others in the king's palace. (Bamidbar, Ibid.) "for he had taken a Cushite woman": Why is this written? Is it not written (immediately before) "about the Cushite woman that he had taken"? — There are those who are beautiful in appearance, but not in deed; in deed, but not in appearance, viz. (Proverbs 11:22) "Like a golden ring in the snout of a pig is a beautiful woman lacking in sense. Tzipporah was beautiful in both — wherefore it is written "about the Cushite woman that he had taken, for he had taken a Cushite woman."

21. Rothschild Mahzor, Florence, 1492



22. Venice Haggadah, 1609



7. *Incantatori e negromanti*, xilografia dalla Haggadah di Pasqua, Venezia, Giovanni De Gara, 1609.

### III. Yes to Slaves, No to Slavery: The Torah's System for the Gradual Eradication of Slavery

#### The Democratic Impulse: A Legacy of Exile (Nietzsche's Slave Morality)

##### A. Justice for the Vulnerable

##### 23. Exodus 22:20–23

**כ** וְגַר לֹא־תוֹנֶה וְלֹא תִלְחָצֶנּוּ כִּי־גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם : **20** You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

**כא** כָּל־אִלְמָנָה וְיָתוּם לֹא תַעֲנוּן : **21** You shall not ill-treat any widow or orphan.

**כב** אִם־עָנָה תַעֲנֶנּה אִתּוֹ כִּי אִם־צָעַק יִצְעַק אֵלַי שְׁמַע אֲשָׁמַע צַעֲקוֹתָו : **22** If you do mistreat them, I will heed their outcry as soon as they cry out to Me,

**כג** וְחָרָה אַפִּי וְהִרְגֹתִי אֶתְכֶם בַּחֶרֶב וְהָיוּ נְשֵׁיכֶם אִלְמָנוֹת וּבְנֵיכֶם יִתְּמִים : (פ) **23** and My anger shall blaze forth and I will put you to the sword, and your own wives shall become widows and your children orphans.

##### 24. Deuteronomy 5:6–7

**ו** אֲנִכִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים : **6** I the LORD am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage:

**ז** לֹא יִהְיֶה־לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עִלְפָּנַי : **7** You shall have no other gods beside Me.

##### 25. Deuteronomy 10:17–19

**יז** כִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְאֲדֹנָי הָאֲדֹנָיִם הָאֵל הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִשָּׂא פָּנָיִם וְלֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד : **17** For 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,

**יח** עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט יָתוּם וְאִלְמָנָה וְאֹהֵב גֵּר לָתֵת לוֹ לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה : **18** but upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing.—

**יט** וְאַהֲבַתְּם אֶת-הַגֵּר כִּי-גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם: **19** You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

## B. The Eradication of Slavery

### 26. Exodus 21:26–27

**כו** וְכִי-יִכֶּה אִישׁ אֶת-עֵינֵי עַבְדּוֹ אוֹ-אֶת-עֵינֵי אִמְתּוֹ וְשִׁחַתָּה לַחֲפָשִׁי יִשְׁלַחֲנוּ תַחַת עֵינָיו: (ס)  
**26** When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let him go free on account of his eye.

**כז** וְאִם-יִשֹּׁן עַבְדּוֹ אוֹ-יִשֹּׁן אִמְתּוֹ יִפִּיל לַחֲפָשִׁי יִשְׁלַחֲנוּ תַחַת שָׁנָיו: (פ)  
**27** If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let him go free on account of his tooth.

### 27. Deuteronomy 23:16–17

**טז** לֹא-תִסְגֵּר עֶבֶד אֶל-אֲדֹנָיו אֲשֶׁר-יִנְצַל אֵלָיךָ מֵעַם אֲדֹנָיו:  
**16** You shall not turn over to his master a slave who seeks refuge with you from his master.

**יז** עִמָּךְ יֵשֵׁב בְּקִרְבְּךָ בְּמִקּוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר בְּאֶחָד מֵעָרֶיךָ בְּטוֹב לּוֹ לֹא תוֹנְנֵנוּ: (ס)  
**17** He 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.

### 28. Leviticus 25:39–43

**לט** וְכִי-יָמוּד אָחִיךָ עִמָּךְ וְנִמְכַר-לָךְ לֹא-תַעֲבֹד בּוֹ עֲבָדִת עֶבֶד:  
**39** If your kinsman under you continues in straits and must give himself over to you, do not subject him to the treatment of a slave.

**מ** כְּשֹׂכֵר כְּתוּשָׁב יִהְיֶה עִמָּךְ עַד-שְׁנַת הַיְבֻל יַעֲבֹד עִמָּךְ:  
**40** He shall remain with you as a hired or bound laborer; he shall serve with you only until the jubilee year.

**מא** וְיָצָא מֵעִמָּךְ הוּא וּבָנָיו עִמּוֹ וְשָׁב אֶל-מִשְׁפַּחְתּוֹ וְאֶל-אֲחֻזַּת אֲבֹתָיו יָשׁוּב:  
**41** Then he and his children with him shall be free of your authority; he shall go back to his family and return to his ancestral holding.—



**42** For they are My servants, whom I freed from the land of Egypt; they may not give themselves over into servitude.—  
**מב כי־עבדי הם אשר־הוצאתי אתם מארץ מצרים לא ימכרו ממכרת עבד:**

**43** You shall not rule over him ruthlessly; you shall fear your God.  
**מג לא־תַרְדֵּה בוּ בַפֶּרֶךְ וַיִּרְאֵת מֵאֱלֹהֶיךָ:**

## 29. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Slavery 8:10–11

י עבד שברח מחוצה לארץ לארץ אין מחזירין לו לעבדות ועליו נאמר (דברים כג טו) "לא תסגיר עבד אל אדניו". ואומר לרבו שיכתב לו גט שחרור ויכתב לו שטר חוב בדמיו עד שתשיג ידו ויתן לו. ואם לא רצה האדון לשחררו מפקיעין בית דין שעבודו מעליו וילך לו :

**10** When a slave flees from the diaspora to Eretz Yisrael, he should not be returned to slavery. Concerning such a person, the Torah (Deuteronomy 23:16) states: "Do not return a slave to his master." His master is told to compose a bill of release for him, and he writes a promissory note for his master for his worth, which the master holds until the freed slave earns that money and gives it to him. If the master does not desire to free him, the court invalidates his ownership of him, and the slave is free to go on his way.

יא עבד זה שברח לארץ הרי הוא גר צדק והוסיף לו הכתוב אזהרה אחרת למי שמאנה אותו מפני שהוא שפל רוח יותר מן הגר וצנה עליו הכתוב שִׁנְאָמַר (דברים כג יז) "עמך יושב בקרבך" (דברים כג יז) "באחד שעריך" (דברים כג יז) "בטוב לו לא תוננו". זו אף הונית דברים. נמצאת למד שהמאנה את הגר הזה עובר בשלשה לאוין משום (ויקרא כה יז) "ולא תונו איש את עמיתו" ומשום (שמות כב כ) "וגר לא תונה" ומשום לא תוננו. וכן עובר משום (שמות כב כ) "ולא תלחצנו" כמו שבארנו בענין הוניה :

**11** This slave who fled to Eretz Yisrael is a righteous gentile. Scripture adds a specific warning for anyone who would desire to deride him, for he is even more humble-spirited than a convert. Therefore, Scripture (Deuteronomy 23:17) issues a command with regard to him: "He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in one of your cities that he desires. You shall not abuse him." Abusing him refers even to verbal derision. Thus, a person who derides this convert transgresses three negative commandments: "A person should not abuse his colleague" (Leviticus 25:14), "Do not abuse a convert" (Exodus 22:20), and "You shall not abuse him." He also transgresses the commandment: "Do not oppress him" (Exodus, Ibid.), as explained with regard to the laws of ona'ah.

### 30. Jerusalem Talmud Rosh Hashana 3:5

ואתייה כהיא דא"ר שמואל בר רב יצחק [שמות ו יג] וידבר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן ויצום אל בני ישראל על מה ציום על פרשת שילוח עבדים. ואתיא כהיא דא"ר הילא לא נענשו ישראל אלא על פרשת שילוח עבדים הדא הוא דכתיב [ירמי' לד יד] מקץ שבע שנים תשלחו איש את אחיו העברי וגו'.

(That freeing slaves is dependent on human action) came as Rabbi Shmuel bar Rav Yitzhak said: "God spoke to Moses and to Aaron and commanded them for the Children of Israel..." On what did God command them? On the passage of freeing slaves. It came as Rabbi Hila: Israel was only punished on the passage of freeing slaves, as it is written: "In the seventh year each of you must let go any fellow Hebrew..."

### 31. Korban HaEdah, Commentary to Jerusalem Talmud Rosh Hashanah 3:5

**ואתיא.** הא דאר"ש כהא דא"ר הילא לא נענשו ישראל שגלו מן הארץ אלא ע"פ שילוח עבדים ולמה דוקא על שילוח עבדים לפי שהיא היתה מצוה ראשונה להם במצרים ובשבילה נגאלו ממצרים :

**הה"ד מקץ שבע שנים וגו'.** לעיל מיניה כתיב כה אמר ה' אלקי ישראל אנכי כרתי ברית את אבותיכם ביום הוציאתי אותם מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים לאמור מקץ שבע שנים תשלחו איש את אחיו העברי וגו' וקשיא היכן כרת ברית שעיי"כ יהיו נגאלים אלא כדאמר ר"ש ויצום אל בני ישראל :

**It came.** What Rabbi Shmuel said was like what Rabbi Hila taught, that Israel was not punished because they left the land but because of freeing slaves, and why particularly freeing slaves? Since it was the first commandment for them in Egypt and because of it they were redeemed from Egypt.

**As it is written: "In the seventh year..."** Above it is written: "Thus said the LORD, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage, saying: In the seventh year each of you must let go any fellow Hebrew..." A difficulty: where do we find that a covenant was made by which they would be redeemed? It is as Rabbi Shmuel said (regarding) "and commanded them for the Children of Israel."

32. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Slaves 9:8

מתר לעבד בעבד כנעני בפרך. ואף על פי שהדין כך מדת חסידות ודרכי חכמה שיהיה אדם רחמן ורודף צדק ולא יכביד עלו על עבדו ולא יצר לו וינאכילהו וינשקהו מכל מאכל ומכל משקה. חכמים הראשונים היו נותניו לעבד מכל תבשיל ותבשיל שהיו אוכלין. ומקדימין מזון הבהמות והעבדים לסעודת עצמן. הרי הוא אומר (תהילים קכג ב) "כעני עבדים אל יד אדונייהם כעני שפחה אל יד גברתה". וכן לא יבזהו ביד ולא בדברים. לעבדות מסרן הכתוב לא לבושה. ולא ירבה עליו צעקה וכעס אלא ידבר עמו בנחת וישמע טענותיו. וכן מפרש בדרכי איוב הטובים שהשתבח בהן (איוב לא יג) "אם אמאס משפט עבדי ואמתי ברבם עמדי" (איוב לא טו) "הלא בבטן עשני עשהו ויכננו ברחם אחד". ואין האכזריות והעזות מצויה אלא בעכו"ם עובדי עבודה זרה אבל זרעו של אברהם אבינו והם ישראל שהשפיע להם הקדוש ברוך הוא טובת התורה וצוה אותם בחקים ומשפטים צדיקים רחמנים הם על הכל. וכן במדותיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא שצוננו להדמות בהם הוא אומר (תהילים קמה ט) "ורחמיו על כל מעשיו". וכל המרחם מרחמין עליו שנקאמר (דברים יג יח) "ונתן לך רחמים ורחמך והרבך":

It is permissible to work a heathen slave relentlessly. Even though it is lawful, the quality of benevolence and the paths of wisdom demand of a human being to be merciful and striving for justice. One should not press his heavy yoke on his slave and torment him, but should give him to eat and drink of everything. The sages of old were in the habit of sharing with the slave every dish they ate, and they fed the cattle as well as the slaves before they themselves sat down to eat. Is it not said: "As the eyes of slaves to the hand of their master, as the eyes of slaves to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a female servant to the hand of her mistress" (Psalms 123:2)? Nor should a master disgrace his servant by hand or by words; the biblical law surrendered them to servitude, but not to disgrace (Niddah 47a). He should not madly scream at his servant, but speak to him gently and listen to his complaints. So it is also explained in the good paths of Job, in which he prided himself: "If I did despise the cause of my manservant, or of my maidservant, when they contended with me...Did not He that made me in the womb make him? And did not One fashion us in the womb" (Job 31:13, 15)? Cruelty is frequently to be found only among heathen who worship idols. The progeny of our father Abraham, however, the people of Israel upon whom God bestowed the goodness of the Torah, commanding them to keep the laws of goodness, are merciful toward all creatures. So too, in speaking of the divine attributes, which he has commanded us to imitate, the psalmist says: "His mercy is over all his works" (Psalm 145:9). Whoever is merciful will receive mercy, as it is written: "He will be merciful and compassionate to you and multiply you" (Deuteronomy 13:18).

**33. Deuteronomy 5:12–15**

**יב** שְׁמֹר אֶת־יְוָם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקֹדֶשׁוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ | **12** Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you.

**יג** שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל־מְלֶאכֶתֶךָ׃ **13** Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

**יד** וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת | לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה כָּל־מְלֶאכֶה אֲתָה וּבִנְךָ־וּבִתֶּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתֶךָ וְשׁוֹרֶךָ וַחֲמֹרֶךָ וְכָל־בְּהֵמֹתֶיךָ וְגֵרֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ עַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ׃ **14** but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do.

**טו** וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי־עַבְדַּד הָיִיתָ | בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצִיאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִשָּׁם בְּיָד חַזָּקָה וּבְיָרֵעַ נְטוּיָה עַל־כֵּן צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־יְוָם הַשַּׁבָּת׃ (ס) **15** Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the LORD your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

**34. Exodus 23:12**

**יב** שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּבְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשְׁבֹּת לְמַעַן יָנוּחַ שׁוֹרֶךָ וַחֲמֹרֶךָ וַיִּנְפֹּשׂ בָּרֶ־אִמָּתֶךָ וְהִגֵּר׃ **12** Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor, in order that your ox and your ass may rest, and that your bondman and the stranger may be refreshed.

**35. Exodus 6:13**

**יג** וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּצִיֵם אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶל־פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לְהוֹצִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם׃ (ס) **13** So the LORD spoke to both Moses and Aaron in regard to the Israelites and Pharaoh king of Egypt, instructing them to deliver the Israelites from the land of Egypt.

36. Exodus 12:29–36

- כט** וַיְהִי אֶל־בְּחֻצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיַּהֲרֹג ה' כָּל־בְּכוֹרֵי  
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם...  
**ל** וַיָּקָם פַּרְעֹה לַיְלָה...  
**לא** וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וְלְאַהֲרֹן לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ  
צֵאוּ מִתּוֹךְ עַמִּי גַם־אַתֶּם גַּם־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְכוּ  
עַבְדוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כְּדַבַּרְכֶּם :  
**לב** גַּם־צֹאנֵיכֶם גַּם־בָּקָרְכֶם קַחֻ כַּאֲשֶׁר  
דִּבַּרְתֶּם וּלְכוּ וּבְרַכְתֶּם גַּם־אֵתִי :  
**לג** וַתַּחֲזֹק מִצְרַיִם עַל־הָעָם לְמַהֵר לְשַׁלְּחָם  
מִרְהָאָרֶץ כִּי אָמְרוּ כָלֵנוּ מוֹתִים : ...  
**לה** וּבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשׂוּ כְּדַבַּר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּשְׁאַלוּ  
מִמִּצְרַיִם כֶּל־יָכֶסֶף וְכָלִי זָהָב וְשִׁמְלֹת :  
**לו** וַיַּהֲרֹג נָתַן אֶת־חַן הָעָם בְּעֵינֵי מִצְרַיִם  
וַיִּשְׁאַלוּם וַיַּנְצִלוּ אֶת־מִצְרַיִם : (ס)
- 29** In the middle of the night the LORD struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt...
- 30** And Pharaoh arose in the night...
- 31** He summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, “Up, depart from among my people, you and the Israelites with you! Go, worship the LORD as you said!
- 32** Take also your flocks and your herds, as you said, and begone! And may you bring a blessing upon me also!”
- 33** The Egyptians urged the people on, impatient to have them leave the country, for they said, “We shall all be dead.” ...
- 35** The Israelites had done Moses’ bidding and borrowed from the Egyptians objects of silver and gold, and clothing.
- 36** And the LORD had disposed the Egyptians favorably toward the people, and they let them have their request; thus they stripped the Egyptians.

#### IV. The Jewish Case for Reparations

##### 37. Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 91a

שוב פעם אחת באו בני מצרים לדון עם ישראל לפני אלכסנדרוס מוקדון אמרו לו הרי הוא אומר (שמות יב, לו) וה' נתן את חן העם בעיני מצרים וישאילום תנו לנו כסף וזהב שנטלתם ממנו

The Gemara relates: On **another occasion, the people of Egypt came to judgment with the Jewish people before Alexander of Macedon.** The Egyptian people said to Alexander: **It says in the Torah: "And the Lord gave the people favor in the eyes of Egypt, and they lent them" (Exodus 12:36). Give us the silver and gold that you took from us;** you claimed that you were borrowing it and you never returned it.

אמר גביהא בן פסיסא לחכמים תנו לי רשות ואלך ואדון עמהן לפני אלכסנדרוס אם ינצחוני אמרו להם הדיוט שבנו נצחתם ואם אני אנצח אותם אמרו להם תורת משה רבינו נצחתכם נתנו לו רשות והלך ודן עמהן

**Geviha ben Pesisa said to the Sages: Give me permission and I will go and deliberate with them before Alexander of Macedon. If they will defeat me, say to them: You have defeated an ordinary person from among us, and until you overcome our Sages, it is no victory. And if I will defeat them, say to them: The Torah of Moses, our teacher, defeated you, and attribute no significance to me. The Sages gave him permission, and he went and deliberated with them.**

אמר להן מהיכן אתם מביאין ראייה אמרו לו מן התורה אמר להן אף אני לא אביא לכם ראייה אלא מן התורה שנאמר (שמות יב, מ) ומושב בני ישראל אשר ישבו במצרים שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה תנו לנו שכר עבודה של ששים ריבוא ששיעבדתם במצרים שלשים שנה וארבע מאות שנה

**Geviha ben Pesisa said to them: From where are you citing proof that you are entitled to the silver and gold? They said to him: From the Torah. Geviha ben Pesisa said to them: I too will cite proof to you only from the Torah, as it is stated: "And the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years" (Exodus 12:40), during which they were enslaved to Egypt, engaged in hard manual labor. Give us the wages for the work performed by the 600,000 men above the age of twenty (see Exodus 12:37) whom you enslaved in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years.**

אמר להן אלכסנדרוס מוקדון החזירו לו תשובה אמרו לו תנו לנו זמן שלשה ימים נתן להם זמן בדקו ולא מצאו תשובה מיד הניחו שדותיהן כשהן זרועות וכרמיהן כשהן נטועות וברחו ואותה שנה שביעית היתה

**Alexander of Macedon said to the people of Egypt: Provide** Geviha ben Pesisa with a response to his claims. **They said to him: Give us time;** give us **three days** to consider the matter. The emperor **gave them** the requested **time** and **they examined** the matter **and did not find a response** to the claims. **Immediately, they abandoned their fields when they were sown and their vineyards when they were planted, and fled.** The Gemara adds: **And that year was a Sabbatical Year.**

### 38. Deuteronomy 15:12–14

יב כִּי־יִמָּכַר לְךָ אֶחָיִךְ הָעִבְרָי אוֹ הָעִבְרָיָה וַעֲבַדְתָּ שָׁשׁ שָׁנִים וּבַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית תְּשַׁלְּחֵנּוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ : 12 If a fellow Hebrew, man or woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall set him free.

יג וְכִי־תִשְׁלַחְנּוּ חֲפָשִׁי מֵעִמָּךְ לֹא תִשְׁלַחְנּוּ רִיקָם : 13 When you set him free, do not let him go empty-handed:

יד הַעֲנִיֵּק תַעֲנִיֵּק לוֹ מִצֹּאֲנֶךָ וּמִגִּרְנֶךָ וּמִקִּבְּךָ אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַכְתָּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִתֵּן־לוֹ : 14 Furnish him out of the flock, threshing floor, and vat, with which the LORD your God has blessed you.

### 39. Rabbeinu Bahya, Commentary to Exodus 11:2

**וישאלו איש מאת רעהו** – אין שאלה זו כשאלה האמורה בכלים שהיא שאלה על מנת להחזיר, אלא צוה שישאלו מהם במתנה, והקב"ה יתן להם חן בעיני המצריים ויתנו להם, ואין זה גנבת דעת שיצוה בה הקב"ה ח"ו, אבל היה הדבר מותר להם, שהרי העבודה שעשו להם אין לה ערך ואין לשכר המלאכה ולשויה סוף ותכלית והלא דין תורה הוא בעבד שעבד את אדניו שבע שנים שהוא חייב בהענקה שנאמר (דברים ט"ו) וכי תשלחנו חפשי מעמך לא תשלחנו ריקם העניק תעניק לו מצאנך ומגרנך ומיקבך על אחת כמה וכמה המצריים שהיתה אצלם עבודת ישראל של רד"ו שנים.

"let them each ask from their fellow Egyptian male, etc." This "request" was not similar to a man or a woman asking his or her respective neighbour for some tool on the understanding that after he or she has finished using it it would be returned it to its owner. Here God's instructions were to ask for the respective items as outright gifts. It was understood that God would make the Egyptians feel well disposed toward the Israelites so that they would willingly comply with their requests for such gifts. The last thing God had in mind was that the Israelites, at the very moment when their redemption was at hand, would leave behind the impression that they had fooled their neighbours and pretended that they would give back the items in question. According to Jewish law whenever a servant is released from service after he has toiled for the agreed period of time, he is entitled to receive a stake from his erstwhile master to enable him to start his economic independence. This is spelled out in Deut. 15, 13-14: "but when you send him away free, you shall not send him away empty-handed. Furnish him out of your flocks, your threshing floor, and vat, with which the Lord has blessed you." If this law applies to treatment of a fellow Jewish servant whose wages the master has paid six years in advance, how much more so were the Jewish slaves in Egypt entitled to receive some silver trinkets in compensation for over 200 years of slavery for which no wages had ever been paid.



**40. Isaiah 66:18–19**

**יח** וְאַנְכִי מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וּמַחְשְׁבֹתֵיהֶם בְּאֵה לְקַבֵּץ  
אֶת־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְשָׁנוֹת וּבָאוּ וַרְאוּ אֶת־  
כְּבוֹדִי : 18 For I [know] their deeds and purposes. [The  
time] has come to gather all the nations and  
tongues; they shall come and behold My glory.

**יט** וְשִׁמְתִי בָהֶם אוֹת וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי מֵהֶם |  
פְּלִיטִים אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם תַּרְשִׁישׁ פּוּל וְלוּד מְשֻׁכֵי  
קֶשֶׁת תַּבַּל וַיָּוֹן הַאֲיִים הַרְחֻקִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־  
שָׁמְעוּ אֶת־שִׁמְעִי וְלֹא־רָאוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי וְהִגִּידוּ  
אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי בְּגוֹיִם : 19 I will set a sign among them, and send from  
them survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Pul,  
and Lud—that draw the bow—to Tubal, Javan,  
and the distant coasts, that have never heard My  
fame nor beheld My glory. They shall declare My  
glory among these nations.

**41. Midrash Vayikra, Ginzei Schechter**

אמי ישעיה לעתיד לבוא בא גרמני ומחזיק בידו שלכושי [וכושי] בא ומחזיק בידו שלגרמני ונשלח  
ידו שלזה על ידו שלזה

Isaiah said: In the messianic period he who is light-skinned [*germani*] will take hold of the hand of him who is dark-skinned [*kushi*] and the dark-skinned will take hold of the hand of the light-skinned and arm in arm they will walk together.

**42. Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings and Wars 12:5**

וּבְאוֹתוֹ הַזְּמַן לֹא יִהְיֶה שָׁם לֹא רָעַב וְלֹא מַלְחָמָה. וְלֹא קִנְיָה וְתַחְרוּת. שֶׁהַטּוֹבָה תִּהְיֶה מְשַׁפֵּעַת  
הַרְבֵּה. וְכָל הַמַּעֲדָנִים מְצוּיִין כְּעָפָר. וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עֶסֶק כָּל הָעוֹלָם אֶלָּא לְדַעַת אֶת ה' בְּלִבָּד. וּלְפִיכָּד  
יִהְיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל חֻכְמִים גְּדוֹלִים וְיִוֹדְעִים דְּבָרִים הַסְּתוּמִים וְיִשְׁיִגּוּ דַעַת בּוֹרְאָם כְּפִי כַח הָאָדָם. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר  
(ישעיה יא, ט) "כִּי מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ דַּעַת אֶת ה' כַּמִּים לַיָּם מְכֻסִּים":

At that time there will be no famines and no wars, no envy and no competition. For the Good will be very pervasive. All the delicacies will be as readily available as is dust. The world will only be engaged in knowing G-d. Then, there will be very wise people who will understand the deep, sealed matters. They will then achieve knowledge of the Creator to as high a degree as humanly possible, as it says, "For the Earth shall be filled of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

#### **43. Jewish Multiracial Network, “Kaddish for Black Lives”**

Creator of life, source of compassion. Your breath remains the source of our spirit, even as too many of us cry out that we cannot breathe. Lovingly created in your image, the color of our bodies has imperiled our lives.

Black lives are commodified yet devalued, imitated but feared, exhibited but not seen.

Black lives have been pursued by hatred, abandoned by indifference and betrayed by complacency.

Black lives have been lost to the violence of the vigilante, the cruelty of the marketplace and the silence of the comfortable.

We understand that Black lives are sacred, inherently valuable, and irreplaceable.

We know that to oppress the body of the human is to break the heart of the divine.

We yearn for the day when the bent will stand straight.

We pray that the hearts of our country will soften to the pain endured for centuries.

We will do the work to bind up the wounds, to heal the shattered hearts, to break the yoke of oppression.

As the beauty of the heavens is revealed to us each day, may each day reveal to us the beauty of our common humanity. Amen.