

Loving the Stranger-Sojourner (*Ger*):

The Torah's Moral Revolution Then and Now

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1. רש"י שמות כב:כ

כָּל לְשׁוֹן גֵּר אָדָם שְׂלֵא נִוְלַד בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְיָנָה, אֲלֵא בְּאֶרֶץ אֲחֵרָה לְגִוּר שָׁם

1. Rashi, Shemot 22:20

Wherever the word *ger* occurs in Scriptures it signifies a person who was not born in that land, but has rather come from another country to sojourn there.

2. שמות כג:ט

⁹וְגֵר לֹא תִלְחָץ וְאֶתֶם יִדְעֶתֶם אֶת נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר כִּי גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

2. 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.

3. ויקרא יט:לג-לד

³³וְכִי יִגֹּר אִתְּךָ גֵּר בְּאֶרְצְכֶם לֹא תוֹנוּ אֹתוֹ: ³⁴כְּאֶזְרַח מִכֶּם יִהְיֶה לְכֶם הַגֵּר הַגֵּר אִתְּכֶם וְאַהֲבַתְּ לּוֹ כְּמוֹךָ כִּי גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

3. 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 native-born; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I the Lord am your God.



4. דְּבָרִים י:טז-יז

¹⁷כִּי יי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הוּא אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲדֹנָי הָאֲדֹנִים הָאֵל הַגָּדֹל הַגִּבֹּר וְהַנּוֹרָא אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִשָּׂא פָנָיִם וְלֹא יִקַּח שֹׁחַד: ¹⁸עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפּוּט יְתוּם וְאַל־מַנְה וְאַהֲבֵה גֵר לְתֵת לוֹ לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה: ¹⁹וְאַהֲבַתְּם אֶת הַגֵּר כִּי גֵרִים הָיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

4. 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.

5. שמות א':ח-ט'

⁸וַיִּקְרָא מֶלֶךְ-חֲדָשׁ עַל-מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדַע אֶת-יוֹסֵף: ⁹וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-עַמּוֹ הַזֶּה עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב וְעַצוּם מְמֹנּוּ:

5. Exodus 1:8-9

⁸A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. ⁹And he said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us."

6. בראשית יב:י-כ

¹⁰וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ וַיֵּרֵד אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִם לְגֹזֵר שָׁם כִּי-כָבֵד הָרַעַב הָרָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ: ¹¹וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לְבֹא מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה-נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יִפְת־מְרָאָה אָתָּה: ¹²וְהִיא כִּי-יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרַיִם וְאָמְרוּ אִשְׁתּוֹ זֹאת וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֹתָךְ יַחִיו: ¹³אָמְרִי-נָא אַחֹתִי אָתָּה לְמַעַן יִיטִב-לִי בְעַבְדוֹתָ וְחַיְתָה נְפֹשִׁי בְּגִלְגָּלָה: ¹⁴וַיְהִי כִּבּוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרַיִם וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם אֶת-הָאִשָּׁה כִּי-יִפָּהּ הוּא מְאֹד: ¹⁵וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתָהּ שָׂרַי פְּרַעֲה וַיְהַלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל-פְּרַעֲה וַתִּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פְּרַעֲה: ¹⁶וְלֹא-אַבְרָם הִיטִיב בְּעַבְדוֹתָהּ וַיְהִי-לָהּ צָאן-וּבִקְרָה וְחַמְלִים וְעַבְדִּים וּשְׂפֹחֹת וְאֹתְנוֹת וְגַמְלִים: ¹⁷וַיִּנְגַע יְהוָה אֶת-פְּרַעֲה נְגָעִים גְּדֹלִים וְאֹת-בֵּיתוֹ עַל-דִּבְרֵי שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ אַבְרָם: ¹⁸וַיִּקְרָא פְּרַעֲה לְאַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר מַה-זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי לָמָּה לֹא-הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי כִּי אִשְׁתְּךָ הוּא: ¹⁹לָמָּה אָמַרְתָּ אַחֹתִי הוּא וְאָקַח אֹתָהּ לִי לְאִשָּׁה וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אִשְׁתְּךָ קַח וְלֵךְ: ²⁰וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו פְּרַעֲה אֲנָשִׁים וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת-אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ:

6. 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, donkeys, male and female slaves, jennies, and camels. ¹⁷But GOD 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 some men in charge of him, and they sent him off with his wife and all that he possessed.

7. בראשית יט:א-ט

¹וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁנֵי הַמַּלְאָכִים סוּדָמָה בְּעֶרְבַּ וְלוֹט יָשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־סוּדָם וַיֵּרְאוּ לוֹט וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אֲפָיִם אָרְצָה:
²וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא־אֲדֹנָי סוּרוּ נָא אֶל־בַּיִת עֲבַדְכֶם וְלִינוּ וְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁכַּמְתֶּם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם לְדַרְכְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ
 כִּי בְרַחוּב נָלִין: ³וַיִּפְצַר־בָּם מְאֹד וַיִּסְרוּ אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם מִשְׁתֶּה וּמִצּוֹת אָפֶה וַיֹּאכְלוּ:
⁴וְטָרַם וַיִּשְׁכַּב וַאֲנָשֵׁי הָעִיר אֲנָשֵׁי סוּדָם נִסְבּוּ עַל־הַבַּיִת מִנְעֵר וְעַד־זָקֵן כָּל־הָעָם מִקְּצָה: ⁵וַיִּקְרָאוּ אֶל־לוֹט
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אַיֵּה הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־בָּאוּ אֵלֶיךָ הַלַּיְלָה הוֹצִיָאֵם אֵלֵינוּ וְנִדְעָה אֹתָם: ⁶וַיֵּצֵא אֲלֵהֶם לוֹט הַפְּתָחָה
 וְהִדָּלַת סֹגֵר אַחֲרָיו: ⁷וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־גַּאֲחֵי תִרְעוּ: ⁸הִנֵּה־נָא לִי שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ אִישׁ אוֹצִיָאָה־נָא אֶתְהֶן
 אֵלֵיכֶם וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶן כְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֵיכֶם רַק לֹא־תַעֲשׂוּן הָאֵל אֶל־תַּעֲשׂוּן דְּבַר כִּי־עַל־כֵּן בָּאוּ בְּצַל קִרְתִּי: ⁹וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 גֹּשְׁ־הָלָאָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ הָאֶחָד בְּא־לְגוֹר וַיִּשְׁפֹּט שְׁפוֹט עֵתָה נִרְעֵ לָךְ מֵהֶם וַיִּפְצְרוּ בְּאִישׁ בְּלוֹט מְאֹד וַיִּגְשׂוּ לְשֹׁבֵר
 הַדָּלַת:

7. Genesis 19:1-9

¹The two angels arrived in Sodom in the evening, as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to greet them and, bowing low with his face to the ground, ²he said, "Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant's house to spend the night, and bathe your feet; then you may be on your way early." But they said, "No, we will spend the night in the square." ³But he urged them strongly, so they turned his way and entered his house. He prepared a feast for them and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

⁴They had not yet lain down, when the townsmen, the men of Sodom—young and old, the whole entire body—gathered about the house. ⁵And they shouted to Lot and said to him, "Where are the ones who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may be intimate with them." ⁶So Lot went out to them to the entrance, shut the door behind him, 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 the others, 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 man—against Lot—and moved forward to break the door.

8. שמות כב:כא-כג

²¹כל-אלמנה ויתום לא תענון. ²²אם-ענה תענה אתו—כי אם-צעק יצעק אלי שמע אשמע צעקתו. ²³וחרה אפי והרגתי אתכם בחרב; והיו נשיכם אלמנות ובניכם יתמים.

8. 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.

9. דברים כג:טז-יז

¹⁵לא-תסגיר עבד אל-אדניו אשר-ינצל אליה מעם אדניו. ¹⁶עמך ישב בקרבך במקום אשר-יבחר באחד שעריה—בטוב לו לא תוננו.

9. 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.

10. ויקרא כה:כג

והארץ לא תמכר לצמיתת כלי הארץ כי-גרים ותושבים אתם עמדי:

10. Leviticus 25:23

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

11. דברים יז:יח-יט

¹⁸והיה כשבתו על כסא ממלכתו וכתב לו את-משנה התורה הזאת על-ספר מלפני הכהנים הלויים: ¹⁹והיתה עמו וקרא בו כל-ימי חייו למען ילמד ליראה את-יהוה אלהיו לשמר את-כל-דברי התורה הזאת ואת-החקים האלה לעשתם:

11. Devarim 17:18-19



¹⁸When he is seated on his royal throne, he shall have a copy of this Teaching written for him on a scroll by the levitical priests. ¹⁹Let it remain with him and let him read in it all his life, so that he may learn to revere the ETERNAL his God, to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching as well as these laws.

