

The New Writings of Rav Ashlag: One Precept Part 2

Meir Yeshurun 11/16/2009

The issue of the precepts [regarding the relationship] between a person and his friend

As far as this custom is concerned - one should not have second thought [question] about the words of the Sages. We should hold on to them as much as possible, with all of our might.

And yet, after the outbreak of the War, people's patience has become weak and especially the young lost the power to control themselves and have become completely rebellious.

It has become totally impossible to instill in them the habit of studying the Torah and following the precepts.

And moreover, [even] the whole issue of “**not** for its own sake”, which the [spiritual] work of the masses is based on, is completely not the custom in these days because respect for the Torah has completely fallen.

Therefore I have come out with this call to the young Israelites to return to the [spiritual] work [that was given] by God and to the faith in Him in a minimal fashion.

Because we do not require of them immediate total acceptance of the Torah and the precepts, but that each and every one would at any rate accept one precept.

As the Sages have said: "Chabbakuk came and summed them all in one: A righteous person lives by his faith."

And even though [it is said in Tractate sanhedrin, 98: "Anyone who says: 'I will fulfill all the precepts of the Torah except for one' is considered as if he burnt the whole torah to ashes...,"

it is referring to those who have become perfected and are now performing the precepts for its own sake.

But before reaching that perfection – when the whole issue of this work is nothing but an exercise to be trained by it to do so for its own sake – then the loss is not so great between him who fulfills it in whole or in part.

And therefore I say that the first and only precept that would be a safer choice for one who wishes to achieve “for its own sake” is not to take the work upon himself except for the minimum requirements to live;

That is, to say exactly to the point of only providing one's own survival. And the rest of the time one should be working for the public, to help the depressed and the ill, and every creature in the world that needs rescue or simply some benefit.

Serving people according to the precepts of the

Creator: This precept has two virtues:

one is that every young person will understand what he is doing, because this work is agreed upon and approved by people from all over the world;

and the second is that it is possible that this precept is a better instrument to bring us to keep the Torah and the precepts for its own sake, than performing all the 613 precepts if they are done because of self love.

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Since the preparation is in itself part of the goal, in preparing oneself to work for other people, he acts for others and for their benefit and not for his own,

and then he would slowly and gradually be prepared to fulfill the precepts of the Creator according to the desired condition, i.e. for the sake of the Creator and not for oneself.

Ultimately, of course, the motivation should be to fulfill the precepts of the Creator.