



2020 THEME
**HUMAN
DIGNITY**
כבוד הבריות

Human Dignity 101

Source Sheet by Rabbi Batsheva Appel

Text 1: Genesis 1:26-27

(כו) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם
בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וַיְרַדּוּ בְדִגְתַּת הַיָּם
וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ
וּבְכָל-הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ: (כז)
וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ
בְּצַלְם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה
בָּרָא אֹתָם:

(26) And God said, “Let us make humanity in our image, after our likeness. They shall rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things that creep on earth.” (27) And God created the human in the Divine image, in the image of God, God created him; male and female God created them.

Text 2: Genesis 5:1-2

(א) זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בָּרָא
אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בְּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה
אֹתוֹ: (ב) זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָאם וַיִּבְרָךְ
אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-נַשְׂמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם
הַבְּרָאָם: (ס)

(1) This is the record of Adam’s line.— When God created the human, God made him in the likeness of God; (2) male and female God created them. And when they were created, God blessed them and called them Adam.—

Text 3: Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

(ה) ...לְפִיכָךְ נִבְרָא אָדָם יְחִידִי,
לְלִמְדָה, שְׂכָל הַמְּאֻבָּד נִפְשׁ אַחַת,
מֵעֵלָה עָלָיו הַפְּתוּב כְּאִלוֹ אֶבֶד עוֹלָם
מְלֵא. וְכָל הַמְּקִיִּים נִפְשׁ אַחַת, מֵעֵלָה
עָלָיו הַפְּתוּב כְּאִלוֹ קִיִּים עוֹלָם מְלֵא.
וּמִפְּנֵי שְׁלוֹם הַבְּרִיּוֹת, שְׂלֵא יֹאמֶר
אָדָם לַחֲבֵרוֹ אֶבֶא גְדוֹל מֵאַבְיָה. וְשְׂלֵא

The court tells the witnesses: **Therefore, Adam** the first man **was created alone, to teach you that** with regard to **anyone who destroys one soul from the people, the verse ascribes them** blame as if they **destroyed an entire world**, as Adam was one person, from whom the population of an entire world came forth. **And** conversely, **anyone who sustains one soul from the people, the verse ascribes**

יהו מינין אומרים, הרבה רשיות
 בשמים. ולהגיד גדלתו של הקדוש
 ברוך הוא, שאדם טובע כמה מטבעות
 בחותם אחד וכלן דומין זה לזה, ומלך
 מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא טבע
 כל אדם בחותמו של אדם הראשון
 ואין אחד מהן דומה לחברו. לפיכך
 כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר, בשבילי
 נברא העולם....

them credit as if they sustained an entire world. The mishnah cites another reason Adam the first man was created alone: **And** this was done **due to** the importance of maintaining **peace among people, so that one person will not say to another: My parent, i.e., progenitor, is greater than your parent. And** it was also so that the heretics who believe in multiple gods **will not say: There are many authorities in Heaven,** and each created a different person. **And** this serves to tell of the greatness of the **Holy One of Blessing, as when a person stamps several coins with one seal, they are all similar to each other. But the supreme Sovereign of Sovereigns, the Holy One of Blessing, stamped all people with the seal of Adam the first human, as all of them are his offspring, and not one of them is similar to another. Therefore,** since all humanity descends from one person, **each and every person is obligated to say: The world was created for me,** as one person can be the source of all humanity, and recognize the significance of his actions.

Text 4: Bereishit Rabbah 24:7

(ז) רבי תנחומא בשם רבי אלעזר
 ורבי מנחם בשם רב אמר כל
 האמניות אדם הראשון למד, מאי
 טעמיה (ישעיה מד, יא): וחרשים
 הנה מאדם, מאדם הראשון. רבנן
 אמרין אפלו סרגולו של ספר, אדם
 הראשון למדו, שנאמר (בראשית ה,
 א): זה ספר, הוא וסרגולו. (בראשית
 ה, א): ביום ברא אלקים אדם, הדא

(7) Rabbi Tanchuma said in the name of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Menachem in the name of Rav said... Ben Azzai said: "These are the generations of Adam" is a great principle in the Torah. Rabbi Akiva said: This is a great principle of the Torah: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). 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 Tanchuma said, if you act thus, realize who it is that you are willing

מְסִיעָא לְהֵיא דְאָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן
עֲזַרְיָה שְׁלֵשׁ פְּלָאִים נַעֲשׂוּ בְּאוֹתוֹ
הַיּוֹם, בּוֹ בְּיוֹם נִבְרָאוֹ, בּוֹ בְּיוֹם
נִשְׁמָשׁוּ, בּוֹ בְּיוֹם הוֹצִיאֵנוּ תּוֹלְדוֹת. בֶּן
עֲזַאִי אָמַר זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדוֹת אָדָם, זֶה
כָּלֵל גְּדוֹל בְּתוֹרָה, רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אָמַר
(וּיקרא יט, יח): וְאֶהְבֶּתָּ לְרַעְיָה כְּמוֹהִי,
זֶה כָּלֵל גְּדוֹל בְּתוֹרָה, שְׁלֵא תֵאמַר
הוֹאִיל וְנִתְבַּיְתִי יִתְבַּזֶּה חֲבֵרֵי עַמִּי,
הוֹאִיל וְנִתְקַלְלִתִּי יִתְקַלְלֵנוּ חֲבֵרֵי עַמִּי.
אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחוּמָא אִם עָשִׂיתָ בֶּן דַּע
לְמִי אַתָּה מְבַזֶּה בְּדַמוֹת אֱלֹקִים עָשָׂה
אוֹתוֹ.

to have humiliated - "the one who was made in the likeness of God." Rabbi Tanchuma says, "If you do so, you should know who are you scorning — 'in the likeness of God, God created him.'"

Text 5: Rabbi Deborah Waxman
Remarks at the 2016 LGBT Health Forum

The teaching that we are created in the image of God demands equal rights for all people. Even more, it invites a liberatory embrace that works toward the wholeness, health, and joy of each of God's creations. As an expressly religious teaching, this approach situates each and every individual within the community of other human beings. Jewishly, this approach values the individual, yet Judaism isn't a religion of individual confession or existence. One cannot be Jewish alone. To fulfill the most central acts of our religion and culture--to pray essential prayers, to marry, to mourn, we must come together in community. Collectivity is also a central way we understand ourselves. So the assertion of this text, that every individual is created in the image of God, is also a charge to the community to make space for all these distinctive individuals. In asserting the holiness of each life, there is an insistence that the community nourish each of these lives. If to be human is to know ourselves most deeply in relationship--with each other and with the Source of all Creation--then our communal organizations must accommodate this diversity and celebrate the image of the divine--not in our sameness but in our distinctiveness, including--even because of--our queerness. Being our full, whole, healthy selves--this is God's will and this is a blessing.

Text 6: Rabbi Lawrence Troster

“Created in the Image of God: Humanity and Divinity in the Age of Environmentalism”

The Hebrew term for "image" (*tzelem*) has a cognate word in Old Akkadian and Old Babylonian that throws significant light upon the original nuance of the term used in Genesis. The cognate word (*tzalmu*) can mean a statue, a bodily shape, a figurine, or a relief drawing. The term sometimes refers to a statue or an image of the king, which is placed in a captured city or elsewhere in the kingdom as an extension of the king's presence and the king's law. In other words, it is as if the king were present wherever the king's *tzalmu* is placed. The king rules wherever his *tzalmu* stands. Seen in this light, humanity is the *tzalmu* of God. Wherever humans are, the presence of God is reflected. This cannot be said of any other creature. Indeed, the command to multiply and spread over the earth is none other than a desire to spread the presence of God and to actualize God's power throughout creation, rather than a desire for mere numerical increase. It is as if God could not function in the world without humanity...this is certainly in accord with the Rabbinic idea of human beings as “partners of God in the work of Creation...”

Text 7: Rabbi David Freidenreich

A Prayer for Human Rights

Our God and God of our ancestors, do we not all share one parent? Did not one God create us all? And you have bestowed your dignity upon flesh and blood! It is well known and obvious in Your sight that whoever can protest against wrongdoing in this world and does not protest is held accountable for what happens in the world. May it be Your will, therefore, that we act to protect human rights and human dignity. Help us to perceive the Divine Presence in every one of your creations, so that we may find favor and good will in the eyes of God and one another.

Barukh Atah Adonay, our God, ruler of time and space, who fashioned the first human being in the divine image and endowed every descendant with human rights —for one who disgraces another person brings disgrace to the likeness of God.

Barukh Atah Adonay, creator of humanity and human rights.

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