



**YLJC J101**

# **JUDAISM AND ANTI-RACISM**

**Study pack**



**GKW 15.04.20**

## GENOCIDE

*Joshua 9:3-27*

The inhabitants of Gibeon had heard what Joshua did to Jericho and to Ai. And they on their part acted with cunning and provisioned themselves and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys and worn-out and cracked and trussed-up wineskins, and worn-out and patched sandals on their feet and worn-out cloaks upon them, and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua at the Gilgal camp and said to him and to the men of Israel, “We have come from a faraway land, now seal a pact with us.”

And the men of Israel said to the Gibeonites, who were of the Hivvite people, “Perhaps you dwell in our midst, so how can we seal a pact with you?” And they said to Joshua, “We are your servants.” And Joshua said to them, “From where are you and from where do you come?”

And they said to them, “From a very faraway land, your servants have come through the fame of the Eternal One your God, for we have heard the report of God and all that took place in Egypt. And our elders and all the inhabitants of our land said to us, saying, ‘Take in your hand provisions for the way and go to them and say to them, We are your

וַיֵּשְׁבִי גִבְעוֹן שָׁמְעוּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ  
לִירִיחוֹ וְלָעִי: וַיַּעֲשׂוּ גַם הֵמָּה בַּעֲרֻמָּה וַיִּלְכוּ  
וַיִּצְטִירוּ וַיִּקְחוּ שָׁקִים בָּלִים לַחֲמוּרֵיהֶם  
וְנֹאדוֹת יַיִן בָּלִים וּמִבְּקָעִים וּמִצָּרְרִים:  
וַנַּעֲלוֹת בָּלוֹת וּמִטְּלָאוֹת בְּרַגְלֵיהֶם  
וּשְׁלֵמוֹת בָּלוֹת עֲלֵיהֶם וְכֹל לֶחֶם צִידָם יָבֵשׁ  
הָיָה נִקְדָּיִם: וַיִּלְכוּ אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל הַמַּחֲנֶה  
הַגִּלְגָּל וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו וְאֵל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה בָּאנוּ וְעַתָּה כְּרַתוּ לָנוּ בְרִית:  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל הַחַיִּי אוּלַי  
בְּקִרְבִי אַתָּה יוֹשֵׁב וְאִיךָ אַכְרוֹת אֶכְרַת לָךְ  
בְּרִית: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֲנַחְנוּ  
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ מִי אַתֶּם וּמֵאֵין  
תָּבֹאוּ: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מֵאֶרֶץ רְחוֹקָה מָאֹד  
בָּאוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ לְשֵׁם יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי שָׁמַעְנוּ  
שָׁמְעוּ וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה בְּמִצְרַיִם ...  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ זְקִינֵינוּ וְכָל יֹשְׁבֵי אֶרְצֵנוּ  
לֵאמֹר קָחוּ בְיָדְכֶם צִידָה לְדָרוֹךְ וּלְכוּ

servants, and now seal a pact with us.’ This bread of ours we took still warm as provisions from our homes on the day we went out toward you, and now, look, it is dry and has turned mouldy. And these wineskins that we filled were new, and now they are cracked, and these cloaks of ours and our sandals have worn out from the very long way.”

And the Israelites accepted this, given the state of their provisions, and they did not inquire of God. And Joshua made peace with them, and sealed a pact with them to preserve their lives, and the chieftains of the community made a vow to them.

And it happened at the end of three days after they had sealed the pact with them, that they heard that they were neighbours and were dwelling in their midst. But the Israelites did not strike them down, for the chieftains of the community had made a vow to them in the name of the Eternal God of Israel, and all the community complained against the chieftains.

And all the chieftains said to the whole community, “We have made a vow to them in the name of the Eternal One, God of Israel, and now we cannot touch them. This let us do to them, letting them live, that there be no fury against us for the vow we made to them.” And the chieftains said of

לְקַרְאֲתָם וְאָמַרְתֶּם אֲלֵיהֶם עַבְדֵיכֶם  
אֲנַחְנוּ וְעַתָּה כְּרַתוּ לָנוּ בְרִית׃ זֶה לַחֲמֵנו  
חֶם הַצֹּטִיָּדָנוּ אֹתוֹ מִבִּתְּיָנוּ בַּיּוֹם צִאֲתָנוּ  
לָלֶכֶת אֵלֵיכֶם וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה יָבֵשׁ וְהָיָה  
נִקְדָּים׃ וְאֵלֶּה נֹאדוֹת הַיַּיִן אֲשֶׁר מִלְּאָנוּ  
חֲדָשִׁים וְהִנֵּה הִתְבַּקְּעוּ וְאֵלֶּה שְׁלֵמוֹתֵינוּ  
וַנַּעֲלִינוּ בָּלוּ מֵרַב הַדֶּרֶךְ מְאֹד׃ וַיִּקְחוּ  
הָאֲנָשִׁים מִצִּידָם וְאֵת פִּי יִקְוֹק לֹא שָׁאָלוּ׃  
וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ שְׁלוֹם וַיִּכְרַת לָהֶם בְּרִית  
לְחַיּוֹתָם וַיִּשְׁבְּעוּ לָהֶם נְשִׂאֵי הָעֵדָה׃ וַיְהִי  
מִקְצֵה שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים אַחֲרֵי אֲשֶׁר כְּרַתוּ לָהֶם  
בְּרִית וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ כִּי קָרְבִים הֵם אֵלָיו וּבִקְרָבוֹ  
הֵם יֹשְׁבִים ... וְלֹא הִכּוּם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי  
נִשְׁבְּעוּ לָהֶם נְשִׂאֵי הָעֵדָה בִּיקְוֹק אֱלֹהֵי  
יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלְנוּ כָּל הָעֵדָה עַל הַנְּשִׂאִים׃  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל הַנְּשִׂאִים אֶל כָּל הָעֵדָה אֲנַחְנוּ  
נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ לָהֶם בִּיקְוֹק אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַתָּה  
לֹא נוּכַל לְנַגֵּעַ בָּהֶם׃ זֹאת נַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם  
וְהַחִיָּה אוֹתָם וְלֹא יְהִיָּה עֲלֵינוּ קֶצֶף עַל  
הַשְּׁבוּעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְנוּ לָהֶם׃ וַיֹּאמְרוּ

them, “Let them live, and they will be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the whole community, as the chieftains have said of them.”

And Joshua called to them and spoke to them, saying, “Why did you deceive us, saying, ‘We are very far away from you,’ when you dwell in our midst? And now, you are cursed, and no slave or hewer of wood or drawer of water for the house of my God will cease to be among you.” And they answered Joshua and said, “For it was indeed told to your servants that the Eternal One your God had charged Moses to give all the land to you and to destroy the inhabitants of the land before you. And we were very afraid for our lives because of you, and so we did this thing. And now, here we are in your hand. What is good and what is right in your eyes to do to us, do.”

And Joshua did thus to them and saved them from the hand of the Israelites, and they did not kill them. And on that day Joshua made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the community and for God’s altar to this day, at the place God was to choose.

אֲלֵיהֶם הַנְּשִׂאִים יַחֲיוּ וַיְהִיו חֹטְבֵי עֵצִים  
וְשֹׂאֲבֵי מַיִם לְכָל הָעֵדָה כַּאֲשֶׁר דָּבְרוּ לָהֶם  
הַנְּשִׂאִים: וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיִּדְבֹּר  
אֲלֵיהֶם לֵאמֹר לָמָּה רַמִּיתֶם אֶתְנוּ לֵאמֹר  
רְחוּקִים אָנַחְנוּ מִכֶּם מְאֹד וְאַתֶּם בְּקִרְבָּנוּ  
יֹשְׁבִים: וְעַתָּה אֲרוּרִים אַתֶּם וְלֹא יִכְרַת  
מִכֶּם עֶבֶד וְחֹטְבֵי עֵצִים וְשֹׂאֲבֵי מַיִם לְבֵית  
אֱלֹהֵי: וַיַּעֲנוּ אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וַיֹּאמְרוּ כִּי הִגִּד  
הַגִּד לְעַבְדֶּיךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְקֹוֹק אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
אֶת מֹשֶׁה עֶבְדוֹ לְתַת לָכֶם אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ  
וּלְהַשְׁמִיד אֶת כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ מִפְּנֵיכֶם  
וַנִּירָא מְאֹד לְנַפְשֹׁתֵינוּ מִפְּנֵיכֶם וַנַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת  
הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה: וְעַתָּה הִנְנוּ בְיָדְךָ כַּטּוֹב וְכַיָּשָׁר  
בְּעֵינֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת לָנוּ עֲשֵׂה: וַיַּעַשׂ לָהֶם כֵּן  
וַיִּצַּל אוֹתָם מִיַּד בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא הָרְגוּם:  
וַיִּתְּנֵם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא חֹטְבֵי עֵצִים  
וְשֹׂאֲבֵי מַיִם לְעֵדָה וּלְמִזְבֵּחַ יְקֹוֹק עַד הַיּוֹם  
הַזֶּה אֶל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחָר:



### *Numbers Rabbah 8:4*

When the Gibeonites said to Joshua, “Come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us!”, Joshua thought at first: “Shall we trouble our community for the sake of these aliens?”

However, the Holy One, ever to be blessed, said to him, “Joshua, if you estrange those that are distant you will ultimately estrange also those who are near. Go, look at the roots from which you yourself have sprung! Are you not descended from aliens?” – for we are told that Joshua was descended from Joseph, who married the daughter of an Egyptian priest.

בשעה שאמרו הגבעונים (יהושע י) עלה  
אלינו מהרה והושיעה לנו ועזרנו באותה  
שעה אמר יהושע וכי בשביל הגרים הללו  
אנו מטריחים על הצבור א"ל הקב"ה  
יהושע אם תרחיק את הרחוקי סופך  
לרחק את הקרובי צא ולמד מהיכן הוא  
מטעך לא מן הגרי' שנא' (בראשי' מו)  
ויולד ליוסף בארץ מצרים וגו' וכת'  
למטה אפרים הושע בן נון

## SLAVES

### *Rashi to Leviticus 25:44*

Should you say, “If it is the case that I have no power to oppress my Israelite workers, then who will serve me?” you should answer, “From other nations” – they will be your slaves.

אם תאמר אם כן ... בעבדי איני  
מושל ... אלא מי ישמשני: מאת הגוים  
- הם יהיו לך לעבדים:

### *Malbim to Deuteronomy 24:7*

Know that, where we say one is permitted to treat another as a slave, this only means that they will not be punished by the beit din. However, is it not certain that they will be severely punished – in every generation – according to the law of the land? There is a hint [in this verse] of the slave trade which is known to bring slaves from the land of Kush in the continent of Africa: its cruel leaders lead the slaves a very long way, feeding them poor food, clothing them badly and keeping them under guard until eventually they are infected by extremely virulent diseases.

דע שבמקום שאמרנו שהוא פטור הוא רק שאין  
עונשם מסור לב"ד אבל הלא בודאי ענוש יענש  
בכל דור לפי משפט הארץ, יש רמז בכאן למסחר  
עבדים ... שידוע שמביאים את העבדים מארץ  
כוש שבחלק אפריקא, ומוליכים אותם מרחק רב  
בהנהגה אכזריה למאד במזון רע, ובמלבושים  
רעים ומשימים עליהם משמר עד שעי"ז ילקו  
בצרעת ממארת המתדבקת למאד.

## INTERMARRIAGE

*Deuteronomy 23:8-9*

You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your kinsman. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a stranger in his land. Children born to them may be admitted into the congregation of the Eternal One in the third generation.

*t.Kiddushin 5:4*

Rabbi Yehuda told a story: Benjamin, an Egyptian who had converted to Judaism, had a friend from among the students of Rabbi Akiva. Benjamin said, "I am an Egyptian convert, and I married an Egyptian convert. Behold, I will have my son marry an Egyptian convert in order that my grandson will be permitted to marry into the Israelite community, for it is written in Deuteronomy: 'From the third generation they may enter into the community of God.'" Rabbi Akiva said to him, "Benjamin! You have got the law wrong! Since Sennacherib the Assyrian came up and mixed up all the nations, the Ammonites and the Moabites are not where we would expect to find them, and the Egyptians and the Edomites are not where we would expect to find them. Rather, an Ammonite marries an Egyptian, and an Egyptian marries an Ammonite, and anyone marries anyone from all the families of the earth, and anyone from all the families of the earth marries anyone."

לֹא תִתְעַב אֲדָמִי כִּי אֶחָיִךְ הוּא לֹא  
תִתְעַב מִצְרִי כִּי גֵר הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרְצוֹ: בְּנִים  
אֲשֶׁר יוֹלְדוּ לָהֶם דּוֹר שְׁלִישִׁי יָבֹא לָהֶם  
בְּקֶהֱל יִהְיֶה:

אמ' ר' יהודה בנימן גר מצרי היה לו חבר  
מתלמידי ר' עקיבא אמ' אני גר מצרי  
ונשאתי אשה גיורת מצרית הריני הולך  
להשיא לבני אשה בת גיורת מצרית כדי  
שיהא בן בני מותר לבא בקהל שנ' דור  
שלישי יבא להם בקהל ה' אמ' לו ר' עקיבא  
בנימין טעית הלכה משעלה סנחריב ובלבל  
את כל האומות לא עמונים ומואבים  
במקומן ולא מצרים ואדומים במקומן אלא  
עמוני נושא מצרית ומצרי נושא עמונית  
ואחד מכל אילו נושא אחד מכל משפחות  
האדמה ואחד מכל משפחות האדמה  
נושא את כל אילו

## **CONCLUSION: RACISM AND ANTI-RACISM IN JUDAISM**

*Elon J in 'Neiman v Central Elections Committee' EA 2/84 (Israeli Supreme Court)*

A basic element in Judaism is the idea that humanity was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). The Torah so opens, and from this concept the halachah derives certain fundamental principles regarding the value of every human being, their equality and their entitlement to love.

According to Rabbi Akiva, the supreme value in human relations is love of one's fellow; and according to Ben Azai, the supreme and preferred value is the equality of all humanity, since everyone was created in the image of God. And these two values – equality and love of one's fellow – came together as one at the hands of the Jewish nation, together forming a cornerstone of Judaism throughout its generations and history.

A series of basic Jewish precepts are grounded in the Torah in the historical memory of the nation, in its suffering as a minority under the rule of others: “For you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:30; 22:20; 29:9 and so on). Furthermore, “You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a stranger in their land” (Deuteronomy 23:8). Racism, which has brought so much suffering to humankind, even to this very day, is alien to Judaism, and has been categorically rejected by it.