

## The Heart of a Servant

By Matthew Day

*So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

*(Matthew 7:12 ESV)*

Once there was a gentile who came before Shammai, and said to him: "Convert me on the condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot. Shammai pushed him aside with the measuring stick he was holding. The same fellow came before Hillel, and Hillel converted him, saying: That which is despicable to you, do not do to your fellow, this is the whole Torah, and the rest is commentary, go and learn it."

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What Yeshua taught here in Matthew was nothing new. It is actually a very Jewish concept. In fact, it goes all the way back to Abraham.

In Genesis 18, three men appear before Abraham. Traditionally, this is the third day after Abraham was circumcised. There is also evidence that this may be the same day. Either way, Abraham would be in pain at this time. Yet, look at what he does. He runs to the men and offers them a little bit of food. Then he runs and prepares a feast! He took in the strangers and was kind to them. He fulfilled the commandment to care for the stranger that enters your gates. What Abraham did not at first realize was that these men were more than men (notice it does not mention the LORD until after Abraham goes to fetch food for them).

Two of these men went down to Sodom. The men of Sodom did not take the men in. They did not feed them or offer shelter. They did not show kindness to them. On the contrary, they sought to defile the men. What they did not realize was that these men were really messengers of the Most High.

Yeshua does what I believe to be a midrash on this passage in Matthew 25. This is the passage where the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats based on their kindness. Abraham and his children are the sheep. They show kindness to strangers. They feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and come to those in prison. They fulfill the whole of Torah. And when they do these things, though they do not know it, they do it for Yeshua just as Abraham unknowingly served YHVH. To them belongs the Kingdom.

The men of Sodom are the goats. The goats do not feed the hungry or take in the stranger. They despise those who come to them for help. And in so doing, they despise Yeshua just as the men of Sodom despised the angels who came to Lot. And just as Sodom was destroyed by fire, so too will the goats be destroyed by fire.

If you move on in the story of Abraham you come Rebekah in Genesis 22. Abraham's servant was sent to find a wife for Isaac. What did Abraham's servant pray for? He prayed for a woman with a servant's heart—someone who would go beyond what was asked of her. So it is when Yeshua comes for His bride. He is looking for a people with the heart of a servant. This is the whole of Torah.

2 Chronicles 7:14 says that if we humble ourselves and pray and turn from wickedness, then will He restore us. What does it mean to humble yourselves? Read Isaiah 58. Deny yourself. Give of yourself to the homeless, the hungry, the naked, the oppressed. Make room for the stranger among you. Be a servant.

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