



Paradigms of Friendship: What Philosophers and Rabbis Can Teach Us

Rabbi Eliezer Diamond, PhD

Dr. Eliezer Diamond is the Rabbi Judah Nadich Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at The Jewish Theological Seminary. He teaches courses in rabbinic literature and introductory, intermediate, and advanced Talmud studies. Dr. Diamond is the author of a chapter on the rabbinic period in the Schocken Guide to Jewish Books, and entries in the Reader's Guide to Judaism and The Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception. He is the author of *Holy Men and Hunger Artists: Fasting and Asceticism in Rabbinic Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2003). The book provides a thorough reassessment of the role that asceticism plays in rabbinic Judaism, suggesting that asceticism is more pervasive than is generally thought. Dr. Diamond has written on prayer, asceticism, and issues of environmental law and ethics. He is currently editing a commentary on Yerushalmi Pesahim written by the late Professor Louis Ginzberg, as well as a book on prayer. The prayer volume will address the problem of cognitive dissonance for the contemporary worshipper and will offer readings of traditional liturgy that use midrashic methodology to find meaning and relevance in these prayers for the modern Jew. Dr. Diamond has taught in a variety of settings, including Stern College, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, the 92nd Street Y, and several Ramah camps. Dr. Diamond was ordained at the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University and received his doctorate in Talmud from JTS.

A. Mishnah Avot 1.6

<p>Joshua ben Perahiah and Nittai the Arbelite received [the oral tradition] from them. Joshua ben Perahiah used to say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) appoint for thyself a teacher, B) and acquire for thyself a companion, C) and judge all men with the scale weighted in his favor. 	<p>יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה וְנִיטַי הָאֲרֵבֶלִי קִבְּלוּ מֵהֶם. יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרַחְיָה אָמַר, עֲשֵׂה לְךָ רֵב, וְקַנֵּה לְךָ חֵבֵר, וְהָיָדְךָ אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת:</p>
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B. Maimonides' Mishnah Commentary

<p>And there are three types of friends:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a friend for benefit, 2. a friend for enjoyment a 3. a friend for virtue. <p>Indeed, a friend for benefit is like the friendship of two [business] partners and the friendship of a king and his retinue.</p> <p>[W]hereas the friendship for enjoyment is of two types –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the friend for pleasure b. the friend for confidence. <p>Indeed, the friend for pleasure is like the friendship of males and females and similar to it.</p> <p>[W]hereas the friend for confidence is when a man has a friend to whom he can confide his soul. He will not keep [anything] from him - not in action and not in speech. And he will make him know all of his affairs - the good ones and the disgraceful - without fearing from him that any loss will come to him with all of this, not from him and not from another. As when a person has such a level of confidence in a man, he finds great enjoyment in his words and in his great friendship.</p> <p>And a friend for virtue is when the desire of both of them and their intention is for one thing, and that is the good. And each one wants to be helped by his friend in reaching this good for both of them together. And this is the friend which he commanded to acquire; and it is</p>	<p>והחברים - שלושה מינים: חבר תועלת, וחבר נחת, וחבר מעלה.</p> <p>אמנם חבר התועלת, הרי הוא כחברות שני השותפים, וחברות המלך וחייליו.</p> <p>ואמנם חבר הנחת, הרי הוא שני מינים: חבר הנאה, וחבר בטחון. אמנם חבר ההנאה, הרי הוא כחברות הזכרים לנקבות וכיוצא בה. ואמנם חבר הבטחון, הרי הוא שיהיה לאדם חבר שתבטח נפשו בו, לא ישמר ממנו לא במעשה ולא בדיבור, ויגלה לו כל עניניו, הנאה מהם והמגונה, מבלי חשש ממנו ששיגהו בכל זה חסרון, לא אצלו ולא אצל זולתו. כי אם יגיע לנפש בטחון באיש עד לזה השעור - תמצא רוב נחת בשיחתו ובחברותו.</p> <p>אוהב המעלה, הוא שתהיה תאות שניהם וכוונתם למטרה אחת, והיא: הטוב, וירצה כל אחד להעזר בחברו בהגיע הטוב ההוא לשניהם יחד. וזה הוא החבר אשר ציוה לקנותו, והוא כחברות הרב לתלמיד והתלמיד לרב.</p>
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like the love of the master for the student and of the student for the master.	
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C. Malachi 2:14

But you ask, "Because of what?" Because GOD is a witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have broken faith, though she is your partner and covenanted spouse.	<p>וְאָמַרְתֶּם עַל־מָה עַל כִּי־יִקְוֶה הָעֵיד בְּיָדְךָ וּבֵין אִשְׁתְּךָ וְעוֹרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אִתָּהּ בְּגִדְתָהּ כִּי וְהִיא חֲבֻרְתְּךָ וְאִשְׁתְּ בְרִיתְךָ:</p>
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D. From the sixth of the seven wedding blessings

Cause the beloved friends to rejoice	שמח תשמח רעים אהובים
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E. The Fathers according to R. Nathan Version B ch. 18

Another interpretation: "Two are better than one" (Ecclesiastes 9:9): this is a husband and his wife.	דבר אחר "טובים השנים מן האחד" זו איש ואשתו:
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F. The Fathers According to R. Nathan ch. 8

<p><i>And acquire for yourself a friend.</i> How so? This teaches that a person should acquire a friend for himself who will eat with him, and drink with him, and study Scripture and Mishnah with him, and go to sleep with him, and tell him all his secrets, both secrets of the Torah and secrets of the ways of the world. For when they sit and engage in Torah together, and one of them makes a mistake in the law, or the division of chapters, or declares an impure thing pure, or a pure thing impure, [or a forbidden thing permitted or a permitted thing forbidden, then his friend will correct him. And how do we know] that when his friend corrects him and studies with him, that they will have great reward from their studies? For it says (Ecclesiastes 4:9), "The two are better than the one, for they have great reward from their efforts."</p>	<p>וקנה לך חבר כיצד מלמד שיקנה האדם חבר לעצמו שיאכל עמו וישתה עמו ויקרא עמו וישנה עמו וישן עמו ויגלה לו כל סתוריו סתר תורה וסתר דרך ארץ שכשיושבין ועוסקין בתורה וטעה א' מהם הלכה או ראש הפרק או שיאמר על טמא טהור או על טהור טמא [ועל אסור מותר ועל מותר אסור חבירו מחזירו. ומניין] שכשחבירו מחזירו וקורא עמו שיש להם שכר טוב בעמלן שנא' (קהלת י') טובים השנים מן הא' אשר יש להם שכר טוב בעמלם:</p>
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G. Mishnah Avot 5, 16

<p>All love that depends on something, [when the] thing ceases, [the] love ceases; and [all love] that does not depend on anything, will never cease. What is an example of love that depended on something? Such was the love of Amnon for Tamar. And what is an example of love that did not depend on anything? Such was the love of David and Jonathan.</p>	<p>כל אהבה שהיא תלויה בדבר, בטל דבר, בטלה אהבה. ושאִינה תלויה בדבר, אינה בטלה לעולם. איזו היא אהבה התלויה בדבר, זו אהבת אמנון ותמר. ושאִינה תלויה בדבר, זו אהבת דוד ויהונתן:</p>
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H. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Human Dispositions, 6.7

<p>It is a mitzvah for a person who sees that his fellow Jew has sinned or is following an improper path [to attempt] to correct his behavior and to inform him that he is causing himself a loss by his evil deeds as [Leviticus 19:17] states: "You shall surely admonish your colleague."</p>	<p>הרואה חבירו שחטא או שהלך בדרך לא טובה מצוה להחזירו למוטב ולהודיעו שהוא חוטא על עצמו במעשיו הרעים שְׁנַאֲמַר (ויקרא י"ז) "הוֹכַח תּוֹכִיחַ אֶת עַמִּיתְךָ".</p>
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I. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Human Dispositions, 6.8

<p>At first, a person who admonishes a colleague should not speak to him harshly until he becomes embarrassed as [Leviticus 19:17] states: "[You should]... not bear a sin because of him." This is what our Sages said: Should you rebuke him to the point that his face changes [color]? The Torah states: "[You should]... not bear a sin because of him." From this, [we learn that] it is forbidden for a person to embarrass a [fellow] Jew. How much more so [is it forbidden to embarrass him] in public.</p>	<p>המוכיח את חבירו תחלה לא ידבר לו קשות עד שיכלימו שְׁנַאֲמַר (ויקרא י"ז) "ולא תשא עליו חטא". כָּךְ אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים יְכוּל אֶתְּה מוֹכִיחוּ וּפְנִי מִשְׁתַּנּוֹת תִּלְמִד לומר ולא תשא עליו חטא. מִכָּאן שְׁאִסוּר לְאַדָּם לְהַכְלִים אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכֵן שָׁנְנוּ בְּרַבִּים.</p>
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J. Cicero, *How to Be a Friend*, Section 98

Therefore, such a friendship [that is, one based on flattery and insincerity] is nothing, since one person refuses to hear the truth, while the other is eager to lie.

K. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Human Dispositions, 6.3

Each man is commanded to love each and every one of Israel as himself as [Leviticus 19:18] states: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Therefore, one should speak the praises of [others] and show concern for their money just as he is concerned with his own money and seeks his own honor.

Whoever gains honor through the degradation of a colleague does not have a share in the world to come.

מִצְוָה עַל כָּל אָדָם לְאַהֲבֹת אֶת כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל כְּגֹפּוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (וַיִּקְרָא יְיָ ייח) "וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹךָ". לְפִיכָךְ צָרִיךְ לִסְפֹּר בְּשִׁבְחוֹ וּלְחַוֵּס עַל מְמוֹנֹת כְּאִשְׁרֵי הוּא חָס עַל מְמוֹן עַצְמוֹ וְרוֹצֵה בְּכַבּוֹד עַצְמוֹ. וְהִמְתַּכְּבֵּד בְּקִלּוֹן חֲבֵרוֹ אֵין לוֹ חֶלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא:

L. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4.5

And this serves to tell of the greatness of the Holy One, Blessed be He, as when a person stamps several coins with one seal, they are all similar to each other. But the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, stamped all people with the seal of Adam the first man, 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.

...ולהגיד גדולתו של הקדוש ברוך הוא שאדם טובע כמה מטבעות בחותם אחד וכולן דומין זה לזה ומלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא טבע כל אדם בחותמו של אדם הראשון ואין אחד מהן דומה לחבירו לפיכך כל אחד ואחד חייב לומר בשבילי נברא העולם

M. Maimonides' Mishnah Commentary (continued)

And he said, "**acquire for yourself a friend**". He said it with an expression of acquisition and he did not say, "Make for yourself a friend," or "Befriend others." The intention of this is that a person must acquire a friend for himself, so that all of his deeds and all of his matters be refined through him, as they said (Taanit 23a), "Either a friend or death." And if he does not find him, he must make efforts for it with all his heart, and even if he must lead him to his friendship, until he becomes a friend. And [then] he must never let off from following [his friend's] will, until his friendship is firmed up. [It is] as the masters of ethics say, "When you love, do not love according to your traits; but

ואמרו "וקנה לך חבר" - הוציאו בלשון קנייה, ולא אמר: עשה לך חבר, או: התחבר לחברים, וכיוצא בזה, והכוונה שראוי לאדם שיקנה לעצמו חבר על כל פנים, כדי שייתקנו בו כל עניניו, כמו שאמרו: "אי חברא אי מיתותא", ואם לא מצאו - צריך להשתדל בו, ואפילו ימשכהו לחברות תחילה עד שיהיה חבר, ולא יסור מלכת אחר רצונו, עד שיחזק חברותו, כמו שיאמרו אנשי המוסר: כאשר תתחבר, אל תתחבר לפי מידותיך, אלא התחבר לפי מידות חברך. וכאשר יסמוך כל אחד משני

rather love according to the trait of your friend." And when each of the friends has the intention to fulfill the will of his friend, the intention of both of them will be one without a doubt. And how good is the statement of Aristotle, "The friend is one."

החברים על זה הציווי, תהיה כוונת כל אחד מהם להשלים רצון חברו, ותהיה כוונת שניהם דבר אחד בלא ספק. ומה טוב מאמר אריסטו: "החבר - אחר שהוא אתה".

N. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book 9 Paragraph 1

Differences arise when the friends do not obtain what they desire, but something else; for not to get what you want is almost the same as not to get anything at all.

O. Cicero, How to Be a Friend, Section 75

Often important tasks compel us to be apart from our friends. Anyone who tries to prevent you from following through on a great opportunity because he can't manage his own sorrow at your absence is weak and unmanly by nature – and that is precisely what causes him to be unreasonable in friendship.

P. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book 9 Section 1

As was said at the outset, differences between friends most frequently arise when the nature of their friendship is not what they think it is. When therefore a man has made a mistake and has fancied that he was loved for his character, without there having been anything in his friend's behavior to warrant the assumption, he has only himself to blame.

Q. Mishneh Torah, Laws of Human Dispositions, Chapter 7.4

There are certain matters which are considered "the dust of *lashon horah*." What is implied? [For example, a person says:] "Who will tell so and so to continue acting as he does now," or "Do not talk about so and so; I do not want to say what happened," or the like. Similarly, it is also considered the "dust of *lashon horah*" when someone speaks favorably about a colleague in the presence of his enemies, for this will surely prompt them to speak disparagingly about him. In this regard, King Solomon said [Proverbs 27:14]: "One who greets his colleague early in the morning, in a loud voice, curses him," for his positive [act] will bring him negative [repercussions]. Similarly, [to be condemned is] a person who relates

ויש דברים שהם אבק לשון הרע. כיצד. מי יאמר לפלוני שיהיה כמות שהוא עתה. או שיאמר שתקו מפלוני איני רוצה להודיע מה ארע ומה היה. וכיצא בדברים האלו. וכל המספר בטובת חברו בפני שונאיו הרי זה אבק לשון הרע שזה גורם להם שישפירו בגנותו. ועל זה הענין אמר שלמה (משלי כז יד) "מברך רעהו בקול גדול בבקר השפים קללה תחשב לו". שמתוך טובתו בא לידי רעתו. וכן המספר בלשון הרע דרך שחוק ודרך קלות ראש פלומר שאינו מדבר בשנאה. הוא ששלמה אמר בחכמתו (משלי כו יח) "כמתלהלה הינה זקים חצים ומות" (משלי כו יט) "ואמר הלא משחק

lashon horah in frivolity and jest, as if he were not speaking with hatred. This was also mentioned by Solomon in his wisdom [Proverbs 26:18-19]: "As a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death and says: 'I am only joking.'"

[Also, to be condemned is] someone who speaks *lashon horah* about a colleague slyly, pretending to be innocently telling a story without knowing that it is harmful. When he is reproved, he excuses himself by saying: "I did not know that the story was harmful or that so and so was involved."

אָנִי. וְכֵן הַמְסַפֵּר לְשׁוֹן הַרַע דְּרָךְ רַמְאוֹת
וְהוּא שֵׁיִסְפֵּר לְתַמּוֹ כְּאֵלּוֹ אִינוֹ יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁדִּבֶּר
זֶה שֶׁדִּבֶּר לְשׁוֹן הַרַע הוּא אֶלּא כְּשֶׁמִּמְחִין בּוֹ
אוֹמֵר אִינִי יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁדִּבֶּר זֶה לְשׁוֹן הַרַע אִו
שָׂאֵלוֹ מַעֲשִׂיו שֶׁל פְּלוֹנִי:

R. Cicero, *How to Be a Friend*, Section 77

But if, as more commonly happens between friends, there is a change in character or interests or political views...we must take care that those who were once our friends do not become our enemies. For nothing is more disgraceful than to wage war against someone you once loved.

