



Welcome the stranger.  
Protect the refugee.

## Refugee Torah (Abridged)

### Genesis 18:1-8

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה בְּאֵלֵי מַמְרֵא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל כְּחֹם הַיּוֹם : וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה שְׁלֹשָׁה אַנְשִׁים נֹצְבִים עָלָיו וַיֵּרָא וַיֵּרָץ לִקְרַאתָם מִפֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ אַרְצָה : וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי אֲסֹנָא מָצָאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֵלֶיךָ תֵּעָבֵר מֵעַל עַבְדְּךָ : יִקְחֶנָּה מֵעֵט־מַיִם וְרַחֲצוּ רַגְלֵיכֶם וְהִשְׁעֵנוּ תַּחַת הָעֵץ : וְאִקְחָה פֶתֶלֶחַם וְסַעֲדוּ לְבַבְכֶם אַחַר תֵּעָבְרוּ כִּי־עַל־כֵּן עִבְרַתְם עַל־עַבְדְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֹּן תַּעֲשֶׂה כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ : וַיִּמְהַר אַבְרָהָם הָאֹהֶלָה אֶל־שָׂרָה וַיֹּאמֶר מִהָרִי שְׁלֹשׁ סְאִים קָמַח סֹלֶת לֹשִׁי וְעָשִׂי עֲגוֹת : וְאֶל־הַבָּקָר רֹץ אַבְרָהָם וַיִּקַּח בְּרֹבֶבֶקַר בֶּדֶד וְטוֹב וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הַנֶּזֶר וַיִּמְהַר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתוֹ : וַיִּקַּח חֲמֻצָה וְחֹלֵב וּבָרֶהֱבֶקַר אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּתֵּן לִפְנֵיהֶם וְהוּא עֹמֵד עֲלֵיהֶם תַּחַת הָעֵץ וַיֹּאכְלוּ :

God appeared to [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of the tent at about the hottest time of the day. Looking up he saw: lo—three men standing opposite him! Seeing [them], he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them, and, bowing down to the ground, he said, “My lords, if I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought; then wash your feet and recline under a tree, and let me bring a bit of bread and you can restore yourselves. Then you can go on—now that you have come across your servant.” And they responded: “Very well, do as you propose.”

Abraham then hurried toward the tent, to Sarah, and said, “Hurry, knead three measures of wheat flour and bake some [bread-]cakes!” Abraham then ran to the herd and took a young calf, tender and sound, and gave it to the servant lad, who quickly prepared it. He took sour milk and [sweet] milk and the calf he had prepared and set [it all] before them; and as he stood over them under the tree, they ate.

### Hofetz Hayim, Ahavat Hesed 3:2

גם נוכל ללמוד משם, דיחנך אדם גם בניו למצוה זו, כמו שכתוב “ויתן אל הנער” וכפירוש רש”י שזה קאי על ישמעאל לחנכו במצות.

Additionally, we can learn [from the account of Avraham’s hospitality] that one must educate one’s children to do this mitzvah. As it is written, “And he gave [the meat] to the youth [to prepare for the guests]” (Bereishit 18:7). Rashi explains that this refers to Avraham’s son, Yishmael, whom Avraham was training to perform mitzvot.

## Exodus 22:20

וְגֵר לֹא-תוֹנֶה וְלֹא תִלְחָצֶנּוּ כִּי-גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם :

You shall not wrong nor oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

## Mekhilta d'Rabbi Yishmael Mishpatim, Massechet Nizikin, Parasha 18

לא תונה ולא תלחצנו כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים - לא תוננו בדברים ולא תלחצנו בממון.

*You shall not wrong or oppress the ger (stranger), for you were gerim (strangers) in the land of Egypt (Exodus 22:20). You shall not wrong with words, and you shall not oppress financially.*

## Numbers 15:14-16

וְכִי-יָגוּר אִתְּכֶם גֵּר אֹדֹם אֲשֶׁר-בְּתוֹכְכֶם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם וְעָשָׂה אִשָּׁה רִיחֵיחַ לַיהוָה בְּאֶשֶׁר תַּעֲשׂוּ בָּנוּ יַעֲשֶׂה : הַקֹּהֵל תִּקַּח אֶחָת לָכֶם וְלַגֵּר הַגֵּר תִּקַּח עִוָּלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם כְּכֶם בְּגֵר יִהְיֶה לְפָנַי יְהוָה : תוֹרַת אֶחָת וּמִשְׁפַּט אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְלַגֵּר הַגֵּר אִתְּכֶם :

And, when, throughout the ages, a stranger who has taken up residence with you, or one who lives among you, would present an offering by fire of pleasing odor to Adonai – as you do, so shall it be done by the rest of the congregation. There shall be one law for you and for the resident stranger; it shall be a law for all time throughout the ages. You and the stranger shall be alike before Adonai; the same ritual and the same rule shall apply to you and to the stranger who resides among you.

## Leviticus 19:34

כְּאִזְרַח מִמֶּנִּי יִהְיֶה לָכֶם הַגֵּר | הַגֵּר אִתְּכֶם וְאַהֲבַת לֹא כְמוֹד כִּי-גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם :

The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I Adonai am your God.

## Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, “Refugee crisis: ‘Love the stranger because you were once strangers’ calls us now,” on [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

I used to think that the most important line in the Bible was “Love your neighbor as yourself”. Then I realized that it is easy to love your neighbor because he or she is usually quite like yourself. What is hard is to love the stranger, one whose color, culture or creed is different from yours. That is why the command, “Love the stranger because you were once strangers”, resonates so often throughout the Bible. It is summoning us now.

## Deuteronomy 26:5-9

וְעַנִּיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרַמְלִי אֲבִי וַיֵּרַד מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיִּגֵּר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מֵעֶט וַיְהִי־  
שָׁם לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עֲצוּם וְרַב : וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה : וַנִּצְעַק אֶל־  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלָנוּ וַיִּרְא אֶת־עֲנִינֵנוּ וְאֶת־עֲמָלָנוּ וְאֶת־לַחֲצָנוּ : וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ  
יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה וּבְמַרְא גָּדֹל וּבְאֹתוֹת וּבְמִפְתֵּיִם : וַיְבִאֵנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם  
הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן־לָנוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶרֶץ זָבֵת חֶלֶב וּדְבַשׁ :

You shall then recite as follows before Adonai your God: “My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to Adonai, the God of our ancestors, and Adonai heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. Adonai freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents, bringing us to this place and giving us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

## Psalms 39:13

Hear my prayer, God. Give ear to my cry,  
Do not disregard my tears.  
For I am a stranger with you,  
A temporary dweller, like all my ancestors.

שְׁמַע־הַתְּפִלָּתִי | יְהוָה וּשְׁוַעֲתִי | הֶאֱזִינָה  
אֶל־דְּמִעָתִי אֶל־תְּחִרְשׁ  
כִּי גֵר אֲנִי עִמָּךְ תּוֹשֵׁב כְּכָל־אֲבוֹתַי :

## Passover Haggadah

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא דִּי אֲכָלוּ אֲבֹהֵתָנָא בְּאַרְעָא דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכַפִּין יִיתִי וַיִּיכַל, כָּל דְּצָרָךְ יִיתִי וַיִּפְסַח.

This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Whoever is hungry, let them come and eat; whoever is in need, let them come and conduct the Seder of Passover.

### Hofetz Haim Ahavat Hesed 3:2

כתבו הספרים הקדושים: כשיבואו אורחים לביתו של אדם יקבלם בסבר פנים יפות, וישים מיד לפניהם לאכול כי אולי העני רעב ומתבייש לשאול. ויתן להם בפנים צהובות ולא בפנים זועפות. ואף אם יש לו בלבו דבר דאגה יכסנה בפניהם...

וינחמם בדברים, ובזה יהיה להם למשיב נפש. ואל יספר לפניהם תלאותיו כי ישבר את רוחם בחשבם שבשבילם אומרו, וכמעט שמאבד שכרו עבור זה.

ובשעת האוכל יראה עצמו כמצטער על שאינו יכול להשיג ליתן יותר, שנאמר ותפק לרעב נפשך. רצונו לומר רצון טוב.

איתא בזוהר ויקהל על הפסוק הלוא פרוס לרעב לחמך שצריך בעל הבית לחתוך חתיכות לחם לפני האורח כדי שלא יבוש ולא יכלם. וכל שכן שלא יביט בפניו כשהוא אוכל, כדי שלא יתבייש.

When guests come to one's home, one should receive them with a cheerful face and immediately set food before them, for perhaps this poor person is hungry but would be too embarrassed to ask for food. One should provide for them cheerfully, and not with a sour face. Even if the host is worried about something, he should hide this from the guests...

One should speak with them pleasantly so that they will be comfortable. The host should not discuss his troubles with them, for fear of upsetting them lest they think that they are the cause of these troubles, as the host loses money by hosting them.

At mealtime, the host should express regret that he is not able to provide more, as it is said, "Offer your soul to the hungry" (Isa. 58:7)—that is, show goodwill.

The Zohar explains the verse "Surely, you should break your bread for the hungry" (Isa. 58:7) as meaning that the host should cut pieces of bread in front of the guests, so that the guests will not feel embarrassed to do so. Even more so, one should not look at the guest while he is eating so as not to embarrass the guest.

### Mishnah Pesachim 10:5

בכל דור ודור חיב אדם לראות את עצמו כאלו הוא יצא ממצרים.

In every generation, a person is obligated to see themselves as though they came forth from Egypt.

### Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, *Festival of Freedom: Essays on Pesach and the Haggadah*

The standard text reads, "In each generation, one is duty-bound, *lirot et atzmo*, to consider himself, as if he had been delivered from Egypt bondage." Instead of the reflexive verb *lirot et atzmo*, signifying an inner experience, Maimonides substitutes the verb, *l'harot et atzmo*, to *demonstrate*, to *behave* in a manner manifesting the experience of finding liberty after having been enslaved for a long time.

### Mishnah Avot 1:5

יוסי בן יוחנן איש ירושלים אומר, יהי ביתך פתוח לרווחה, ויהיו עניים בני ביתך.

Yosi ben Yochanan, a man of Jerusalem, said: "May your house be open wide, and may the poor be members of your household."

### Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 127a

א"ר יוחנן גדולה הכנסת אורחין כהשכמת בית המדרש. . . . ורב דימי מנהרדעא אמר יותר מהשכמת בית המדרש. . . . אמר רב יהודה אמר רב גדולה הכנסת אורחין מהקבלת פני שכינה. . . . ששה דברים אדם אוכל פירותיהן בעולם הזה והקרן קיימת לו לעולם הבא ואלו הן הכנסת אורחין וביקור חולים ועיון תפלה והשכמת בית המדרש והמגדל בניו לתלמוד תורה והדן את חברו לכף זכות.

Rav Yochanan said: Hospitality to guests is as 'great' as early attendance at the House of Study. . . . Rav Dimi of Nehardea said: It is 'greater' than early attendance at the House of Study....Rav Judah said in Rav's name: Hospitality to guests is greater than welcoming the presence of the *Shechinah* (God).... There are six things, the fruit of which humans eat in this world, while the principal remains for them in the world to come: welcoming guests, visiting the sick, meditation in prayer, early attendance for study, rearing one's children to the study of Torah, and judging one's neighbor in the scale of merit.

### Maimonides' Mishneh Torah Hilchot Deot 6:4

אהבת הגר שבא ונכנס תחת כנפי השכינה שתי מצות עשה אחת מפני שהוא בכלל ריעים ואחת מפני שהוא גר והתורה אמרה ואהבתם את הגר צוה על אהבת הגר כמו שצוה על אהבת עצמו שנאמר ואהבת את ה' אלהיך הקב"ה עצמו אוהב גרים שנאמר ואוהב גר.

The love of the stranger who has entered beneath the wings of the Divine presence is enjoined by two Biblical commandments: One because he is considered to be within the category of "reyim" (a friend) and one because he is a stranger, and the Torah states: "And you shall love the stranger..." The Holy One commanded that we should love the stranger just as God commanded that we should love the Divine, as it is written: And you shall love Adonai your God. The Holy One loves the stranger, as it is written: And God loves the stranger.