

A photograph of a window with a reflection of a woman's face. The window is framed by dark wood and has a white sill. To the left, there is a dense covering of green ivy. In the foreground, there are some red flowers. The text 'Love thy Neighbor' is overlaid in yellow. A logo for 'WAES MAEL' is in the bottom right corner.

# Love thy Neighbor

**WAES  
MAEL**

I AM NOT UTTERING A FINAL PRONOUNCEMENT NOR EXPRESSING AN ESTABLISHED DOCTRINE, BUT I AM RESEARCHING TO THE LIMIT OF MY ABILITY, I AM DISCUSSING THE MEANING OF THE SCRIPTURES AND I DO NOT CLAIM TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT MEANING WHOLLY OR PERFECTLY, ON MANY POINTS I HAVE A PRELIMINARY IDEA.

ALL BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS ARE TAKEN FROM THE AV “KING JAMES VERSION”

*Love Thy Neighbor as thyself*

You have seen how, through the parable of the good Samaritan, that The Master introduced the spiritual truth that Christians must choose The Christ as their

neighbor, because only The Christ can save them.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” Joh 14:6.

Before He came, “love thy neighbour as thyself” had a different meaning in Judaism. In Judaism the word neighbor was used to describe people you knew who were the children of Abraham, and who had the same beliefs and purity rituals as you. The Mosaic law in its simple form reads thus:

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, so thou shalt not bear sin on his account. And thy hand shall not avenge

thee; and thou shalt not be angry with the children of thy people; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord.” Le 19:11-18. BLXX

Now this was not only a moral obligation; it was a law that had to be obeyed in order to avoid criticism. This law was interpreted by the Pharisees so the people would know how to avoid breaking the neighbor law. In the OT, there are more than a hundred examples of who is a neighbor and who would be covered by this law.

For example:

“If thou at all take thy neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:” Ex 22:26.

“When thou comest into thy neighbour’s vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour’s standing corn.” De 23:24 -25 (23:25-26 Torah - a workers right to eat).

“If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man’s house; if the thief be found, let him pay double. If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour’s goods.

For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.

If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it: Then shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good. And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof. If it be torn in pieces, then let him bring it for

witness, and he shall not make good that which was torn.

And if a man borrow ought of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good. But if the owner thereof be with it, he shall not make it good: if it be an hired thing, it came for his hire.” Ex 22:7 -15.

“Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.” Le 19:13.

The law of course was specific to *Israel* - (those who are the descendants of Jacob). Just as US laws do not apply to people who live in other countries, this law did

not apply to Gentiles<sup>1</sup>. Gentiles were not neighbours.

Only other Israelites were neighbours - in fact only those Israelites who were observant of the cleanliness laws would be considered neighbours. Non-neighbours were called “goi/Gentile”, and were given none of the consideration shown to fellow Israelites.

The rabbis interpreted the law to mean that “Gentile” could be cheated, robbed, and so on. For example: it was considered wrong to rob a Gentile; but if found out,

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<sup>1</sup> Gentiles is a latin translation of the Hebrew Ta Ethne, people of other tribes than the twelve.



the stolen goods did not have to be returned, because the law did not protect Gentile, only “neighbours”. Today Orthodox Jews consider “Goyim” to be the equivalent of cattle, not human-beings, and not descended from Adam and Eve.

### gentiles (etymology)

This word in our English Bible was a translation of the Hebrew word “Gentile” גוי.

The first time a word similar to “*gentiles*” appeared in any Bible was when St. Jerome translated the original Aramaic/Hebrew in c. A.D. 350. He applied Latin *Gentilis* meaning “of the same family or clan”, to translate Gk. *ethnikos*, from *ta ethne* “the nations,” which translated Heb. *ha Goyim* “the (non-Jewish) nations.”

The phrase *ha Goyim*, and *ta ethne* always meant a Nation, and at least during the O.T. times, applied to those Nations surrounding the Hebrews. *Ha Goyim* were Asia, Syria,

Aram, Egypt, into which many of the Judean tribes and other Israelites were dispersed.

*L. Gentiles* is translated: - **nation** 374 times, **heathen** (people/tribe/nation) 143 times, **Gentiles** 93 times (with 73 of those occurrences in Paul's writings). In the Torah *ha Goyim* was never applied to Greek or Roman nations.

A Josephus

Now, if this Mosaic law “love thy neighbor) was quoted in the NT, it was assumed by listeners to be referencing the laws in Torah. But the Master meant something different (which is why the lawyer who knew all ‘the neighbor laws’ asked Him the question - who is my neighbor. Read the Good Samaritan article on [hwylcom.org](http://hwylcom.org) ).

Another question: was “love your neighbour as thyself” an actual law, or only a moral directive in Judaism.

In Matthew, “*love your neighbor*” is being treated as a Mosaic law like “*thou shalt do no murder.*”

“And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, **keep the commandments.** He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**”  
Mt 19:17 -20.

James also treated it as a law:

“If ye fulfil **the royal law** according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:” Jas 2:8.

The royal law means “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” and here is equated by James with the “love thy neighbour ...” law. In the earliest records that we have from first century Christianity, the Didache (A.D. 70) or “Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,” states that the royal law and the love thy neighbour law had different meanings and were treated as separate commandments.

Didache 1:2 Now the path of life is this -- first, thou shalt love the God who made thee, thy neighbour as thyself, and all things

that thou wouldest not should be done unto thee, do not thou unto another (the “Royal law”).

Here neighbour is different to “another.” The “love thy neighbor” law applies to neighbour. To anyone else the law did not strictly apply, and for those people, the “Royal law” was suggested as proper behavior. Note that in the Didache the royal law is stated in a negative way. James said, if you treat those people who are outside the circle of “observant Jews”<sup>2</sup> **as if they were neighbours**, you would do well.

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<sup>2</sup> the term “Jews” was not in use before the 14th century - I use it here because the KJV uses this term when it really means Hebrews.

Pharisees called one another Chaberim, that is, neighbours. The greatest difference between a Chaber or Neighbour and one of the People of the Land (as the Pharisees called people who did not obey the same strictness) was that the Pharisees obeyed the ceremonial traditions about cleanness.

Note that “neighbours” in Torah is defined as people that you interact with, people who’s name was known to you. Neighbours were not people who were outside the community - people that you didn’t know.

Let’s look at some of the OT reference to neighbour. The words highlighted are translations of the

Hebrew word for *neighbour*. You can see that relatives, friends, companions and lovers are classed as neighbors to Jews.

and they said one to **another**, let us make brick; when we are absent one from **another**; he and his **friend** Hirah; by the hand of his **friend**; And they sat before him...and the men marvelled one at **another**; wherefore smitest thou thy **fellow**?; let every man borrow of his **neighbour**, and every woman of her **neighbour** of silver and jewels and gold; Moses..and his father-in law asked each **other** of their welfare; I judge between one and **another**, and I do make them know the statutes of God; Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy **neighbour**; thou shalt not covet

thy **neighbour's** house, thou shalt not covet thy **neighbour's** wife, nor his... nor anything that is thy **neighbour's**; but if a man come upon his **neighbour** to slay him with guile; if one man's ox hurt another's... they should sell the live ox and divide the money; if a man shall deliver unto his **neighbour** money or stuff to keep; and if a man borrow ought of his **neighbour**; every man his **companion**; The Lord spake to Moses face to face as a man speaketh unto his **friend**; Thy **neighbour** ... shall not abide with thee all night until the morning; he that commiteth adultery with the **neighbour's** wife; neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy **neighbour**; killed his **neighbour** unawares that hated him not in times past; or thy friend which is thine own soul;



every friend that lendeth unto his **neighbour** shall release; a man goeth into the wood with his **neighbour** to hew wood; you shall stone him..for he

they shall teach no more every man his **neighbour**; they kissed one **another**; to his **friends**;

I will take thine wives and give them unto thy **neighbour**; but Amnon had a **friend**; Absalom said to Hushai, is this thy kindness to thy **friend**? If any trespass against his **neighbour** and an oath be laid upon him and cause him to swear; nor of his **friends**; four leprous men...said to one **another**; Hushai was... the King's **companion**; If a man sin against his **neighbour** and an oath be laid upon him and cause him to swear; everyone helped to destroy **another**; feasting...and sending

portions one to **another**; to him that is afflicted pity [should be shewed] from his **friend**; ye dig [a pit] for your friend; My **friends** scorn me; He that speaketh flattery to [his] **friends**; I am ... a **companion** to owls; when he prayed for his **friends**; speak peace to their neighbours; **Lover** and **friend** hast thou put far from me; for my brethren and **companions** sake; Devise not evil against thy **neighbour** seeing he dwelleth securely by thee; into the hand of thy **friend**, make sure thy **friend**; the righteous is more excellent than his **neighbour**; **the poor is hated even of his own neighbour**; a **friend** loveth at all times: A man that hath **friends** must show himself friendly; Be not a witness against thy **neighbour** without cause; Debate thy cause with thy

**neighbour** himself; withdraw thy foot from thy **neighbour's** house lest he be weary of thee and hate thee; he that blesseth his **friend** with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him; a man sharpeneth the countenance of his **friend**; a man that flattereth his **neighbour**; her husband; the neighbour (07934) and his **friend** (07453) shall perish; woe he..that uses his **neighbour's** service without wages;

The word neighbour seems to have been limited to the people of Israel. These laws didn't apply to non-Israelites, only to *the children of God* (remember this statement.)

If our neighbor is to be only The Christ who “saves” us, as Jesus taught, what is our relationship with non-Christians? We are required to behave towards them according to the Royal Law - do unto others etc.

Once you have accepted The Christ as your neighbour, the *Holy Spirit* goes to work infusing virtue into your spirit. If you respond to these graces, you will begin a life of virtue and will act like The Master, and you will love everyone who loves The Father. The Master was neighbor to all who chose Him as their neighbor - you will also respond this way when you have His virtues within you. You will do the Will of The Father, and

not your own will. The Christ will be doing the work through you. It will be The Christ who is neighbor to your friends who also choose to follow Him. You will be His voice, and you will follow your conscience, and you will be guided by The Holy Ghost. You will be doing The Father's Will, and not following anyone else. And you must love your neighbor **as** yourself. That is love Christ **as** yourself. Not as **much** as you love yourself, for Jesus said:

If any man come to me, and **hate** not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and **his own life** also, he cannot be my disciple.”

Luke 14:26

When you begin to love The Christ as yourself, you will go about your business as The Father would want, and others will notice. And you should tell them how it happened.

WAESHAEL

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