

# Eternal Dimensions of Human Equality and Diversity

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## משנה סנהדרין ד'ה'

(ה) פִּיֹּצֵד מֵאִמִּין אֶת הָעֵדִים עַל יְדֵי נִפְשׁוֹת, הֵיוּ מִכְנִיסִין אוֹתָן וּמֵאִמִּין עֲלֵיהֶן. שָׁמָּה תֹאמְרוּ מֵאֲמֵד, וּמִשְׁמוּעָה, עַד מִפִּי עֵד וּמִפִּי אָדָם נֶאֱמָן שְׁמֵעָנוּ, אוֹ שָׁמָּה אִי אַתֶּם יוֹדְעִין שְׁסוּפָנוּ לְבִדֵּק אֶתְכֶם בְּדִרְיָשָׁה וּבַחֲקִירָה. הֵיוּ יוֹדְעִין שֶׁלֹּא כְּדִינִי מִמוֹנוֹת דִּינִי נִפְשׁוֹת. דִּינִי מִמוֹנוֹת, אָדָם נוֹתֵן מָמוֹן וּמִתְפַּפֵּר לוֹ. דִּינִי נִפְשׁוֹת, דָּמוֹ וְדָם זִרְעֵיֹתָיו תְּלוּיִין בּוֹ עַד סוֹף הָעוֹלָם, שָׁכֵן מְצִינוֹ בְּקֶלֶן שֶׁהֵרֵג אֶת אָחִיו, שֶׁנֹּאמַר (בְּרֵאשִׁית ד) דְּמִי אָחִיךָ צַעֲקִים, אֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר דָּם אָחִיךָ אֲלֵא דְּמִי אָחִיךָ, דָּמוֹ וְדָם זִרְעֵיֹתָיו. דָּבָר אַחֵר, דְּמִי אָחִיךָ, שֶׁהָיָה דָּמוֹ מִשְׁלָךְ עַל הָעֵצִים וְעַל הָאֲבָנִים. לְפִיכָךְ נִבְרָא אָדָם יַחֲדִי, לְלִמְדָה, שֶׁכָּל הַמֵּאבֵּד נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב כָּאֵלּוֹ אֶבֶד עוֹלָם מָלֵא. וְכָל הַמְקִיִּים נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל, מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב כָּאֵלּוֹ קָיָם עוֹלָם מָלֵא. וּמִפְּנֵי שְׁלוֹם הַבְּרִיּוֹת, שֶׁלֹּא יֹאמַר אָדָם לַחֲבֵרוֹ אֲבֵא גָדוֹל מֵאַבְיָךְ. וְשֶׁלֹּא יִהְיֶה מִיָּנִין אוֹמְרִים, הִרְבֵּה רִשְׁיֹת בְּשָׂמַיִם. וְלִהְיֹת גְּדֻלָּתוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, שֶׁאָדָם טוֹבֵעַ כְּמָה מִטְּבָעוֹת בְּחוֹתָם אֶחָד וְכָלֵן דּוֹמִין זֶה לָזֶה, וּמִלָּךְ מַלְכֵי הַמְּלָכִים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא טָבֵעַ כָּל אָדָם בְּחוֹתָמוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הִרְאִשׁוֹן וְאֵין אֶחָד מֵהֶן דּוֹמָה לַחֲבֵרוֹ. לְפִיכָךְ כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד חַיֵּב לוֹמַר, בְּשִׁבְלִי נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. וְשָׁמָּה תֹאמְרוּ מֶה לָּנוּ וְלַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת, וְהֵלֵא כְּכֹר נֶאֱמַר (ויקרא ה) וְהוּא עֵד אוֹ כָּאֵה אוֹ יָדַע אִם לֹא יֵגִיד וְגו'. וְשָׁמָּה תֹאמְרוּ מֶה לָּנוּ לְחוּב בְּדָמוֹ שֶׁל זֶה, וְהֵלֵא כְּכֹר נֶאֱמַר (משלי יא) וּבִאֲבֹד רִשְׁעִים רָנָה:

### Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5

(5) **How does the court intimidate the witnesses in giving testimony for cases of capital law? They would bring the witnesses in and intimidate them** by saying to them: **Perhaps what you say in your testimony is based on conjecture, or perhaps it is based on a rumor,** perhaps it is **testimony based on hearsay**, e.g., you heard a witness testify to this in a different court, **or perhaps it is based on the statement of a trusted person. Perhaps you do not know that ultimately we examine you with inquiry and interrogation,** and if you are lying, your lie will be discovered. The court tells them: **You should know that cases of capital law are not like cases of monetary law. In cases of monetary law, a person who testifies falsely, causing money to be given to the wrong party, can give the money to the proper owner and his sin is atoned for. In cases of capital law, if one testifies falsely, the blood of the accused and the blood of his offspring that he did not merit to produce are**

**ascribed to the witness's testimony until eternity.** The proof for this is **as we found with Cain, who killed his brother, as it is stated** concerning him: "The voice of **your brother's blood [demei]** cries out to Me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). The verse **does not state: Your brother's blood [dam]**, in the singular, **but** rather: "**Your brother's blood [demei]**," in the plural. This serves to teach that the loss of both **his brother's blood and the blood of his brother's offspring** are ascribed to Cain. The mishna notes: **Alternatively**, the phrase "**your brother's blood [demei]**," written in the plural, teaches that **that his blood** was not gathered in one place but was **splattered on the trees and on the stones**. The court tells the witnesses: **Therefore, Adam the first man was created alone, to teach you that** with regard to **anyone who destroys one soul from the Jewish people**, i.e., kills one Jew, **the verse ascribes him blame as if he destroyed an entire world**, as Adam was one person, from whom the population of an entire world came forth. **And conversely, anyone who sustains one soul from the Jewish people, the verse ascribes him credit as if he sustained an entire world.** The mishna cites another reason Adam the first man was created alone: **And this was done due to the importance of maintaining peace among people, so that one person will not say to another: My father**, i.e., progenitor, **is greater than your father.** **And** it was also **so that the heretics who believe in multiple gods will not say: There are many authorities in Heaven**, and each created a different person. **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. The court says to the witnesses: **And perhaps you will say: Why would we want this trouble?** Perhaps it would be better not to testify at all. **But** be aware, as **is it not already stated: "And he being a witness, whether he has seen or known, if he does not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity"** (Leviticus 5:1)? It is a transgression not to testify when one can do so. **And perhaps you will say: Why would we want to be responsible for the blood of this person?** **But** be aware, as **is it not already stated: "When the wicked perish, there is song"** (Proverbs 11:10)?

