

Who (in your opinion) is a hero amongst heroes? Why?

<p><u>Avot deRabbi Natan 23</u> <u>(6th Cen. CE)</u> Who is the hero amongst heroes? The person who conquers his/her inclination. And some say, whoever makes an enemy into a friend.</p>	<p><u>אדר"ן נ"א כג (לח ע"א)</u> איזו גיבור שבגבורים? זה שכובש את יצרו... יש אומרים מי שעושה שונאו אוהבו.</p>
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What does it mean to be a "rodef shalom" according to R. Chaim?

<p><u>Rav Chaim of Volozhin, Sefer Ruach Chayim on Avot 1:12 (1749-1821)</u> And this that is said "seek peace" (Ps 34:15) means that you should want there to be peace between you, and even if in your opinion he sinned against you, nevertheless "pursue it" – you should be the rodef shalom (pursuer of peace), and not to hope that your fellow reconcile you (first).</p>	<p><u>ר' חיים מולז'וין, ספר רוח חיים על אבות, וילנא, תרי"ט, משנה א"יב</u> וזה שנאמר "בקש שלום" (תהלים לד:טו) היינו שיהיה רצונך שיהיה שלום ביניכם, ואף שבדעתך שהוא חטא נגדך, עם כל זה "ורדפהו" (שם) – הוי אתה הרודף שלום ולא להוחיל עד שחבירך יפייסך.</p>
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-Havruta-

I. The Question:

The following question was posed to the Maharil (Rabbi Yaacov ben Moshe Molan):

<p><u>Responsa of Maharil # 193, #197</u> <u>Rabbi Yaacov ben Moshe Molan</u> <u>(1360-1427, Magenza)</u> [Question] Someone who hates his fellow person, is he obligated to visit him (when he is sick), or is he permitted to do so, or perhaps it is forbidden since it will look like he is rejoicing in his time of calamity?</p>	<p><u>שו"ת מהרי"ל ס' קצ"ג,</u> <u>קצ"ז</u> <u>רבי יעקב בן משה מולין</u> מי ששונא חבירו אם חייב לבקרו או רשות או שמא איסור איכא [יש] דנראה כשמח לאידו?</p>
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If you were the Maharil, what would you respond? Should someone go and visit their 'enemy' at a moment of hardship (sick, or in mourning)? Write a rabbinic 'responsa' based upon the following rabbinic texts (p. 3-4), conflict resolution theory (p. 4-5), as well as your own personal life experience, especially with regards to conflicts on campus:

II. Background Sources for your “rabbinic responsa”

Study in havruta the following rabbinic sources that may be relevant in helping you formulate your opinion on this question.

1. Rejoicing at the calamity of an enemy:

Proverbs 17, 5

He that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished.

משלי יז:ה

שִׂמַח לְאִיד, לֹא יִנְקָה.

Avot deRabbi Natan A, 29

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar said in the name of Rabbi Meir:

Do not appease your friend at his time of anger.

Do not comfort him in his time of mourning.

Do not ‘ask him’ at a time of his oath.

And do not come to his house in a time of his calamity.

And do not try and see him at a time of his ruin/hardship.

אבות דרבי נתן נוסחא א פ' כט

רבי שמעון בן אלעזר אומר משום רבי מאיר:

אל תרצה את חברך בשעת כעסו

ואל תנחמה בשעת אבלו

ואל תשאל לו בשעת נדרו

ואל תבא לביתו ביום אידו

ואל תשתדל לראותו בשעת קלקלתו.

When and why would you apply these texts?

2. Unilateral help to an enemy

Exodus 23:5

If thou see the donkey of a person who hates you lying under its burden, you shall not forbear to pass by him; you shall surely release it with him.

שמות פרק כג

(ה) כי תראה חמור שונאך רובץ תחת משאו

וחדלת מעזוב לו עזוב תעזוב עמו.

Midrash Psalms 99:4 (9th Cen. CE)

R. Alexandri said...A person goes out to the road and sees his fellow's donkey collapsing under its burden. He goes and gives him a hand and helps him load it up and unload it, and they go into an inn. And he (the donkey owner) says (to himself). "So and So loves me, and I thought he hated me."

Immediately, they begin to speak with one another and peace enters between them. Who caused this that they should make peace and become loved ones? By the fact that he kept what is written in Scripture "If you see the ass of him that hates you lying under its burden" (Exodus 23:5). This is what is written "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." (Prov. 3:17).

מדרש תהלים מזמור צט פס' ד' (עמ' ריב:א)

'אתה כוננתה מישרים.' (תהלים צט:ד).

א' ר' אלכסנדרו....

אדם יוצא לדרך וראה חמורו של חברו רובץ

תחת משאו. הולך ונותן לו יד ומסייעו לטעון

ולפרוק והן כננסין לפונדק. ואתו אמ'. "כך פל"

אוה' לי ואני הייתי סבור שהיה שונאי." מיד

מדברין זה עם זה ונכנס השלום ביניהם. מי גרם

לזה שיעשו שלום ויעשו אוהבין? על ידי ששמר

את שכת' בתור' "כי תראה חמור שונאך רובץ"

וג'. (שמות כג:ה). הה"ד דרכיה דרכי נועם וכל

נתיבותיה שלום' (משלי ג:יז). 'משפט וצדקה

ביעקב אתה עשית.' (תהלים צט:ד). 'אלה

המשפטים אשר תשים לפניהם.' (שמות כא:א)."

What contributed in turning enemies into friends according to this text?

<p><u>Mechilta deRashbi, Exodus 23:5 (3rd Cen)</u> "If you see the donkey of him who hates you." (Exodus 23:5). If you subdued your evil inclination to make your enemy into your friend. I promise you, that I will make your enemy into your friend. As it says, "When a man's ways pleases Hashem, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Prov. 16:7)</p>	<p><u>מכילתא דרשב"י (ע"פ מנורת המאור, מהדורת ענלאו חלק ד עמ' 304)</u> "כי תראה חמור שונאך וגו'" (שמות כג:ה). אם כפפת את יצרך לעשות שונאך אהובך, מבטיחך אני שאעשה שונאך אהובך, דכת' ברצות ה' דרכי איש גם אויביו ישלים אתו (משלי טז:ז).</p>
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How does helping an enemy with their donkey transform enemies into friends according to the above rabbinic source?

<p><u>Babylonian Talmud, Baba Metzia 32b</u> Come and hear: If a friend requires unloading (a donkey), and an enemy loading, one's [first] obligation is towards his enemy, in order to subdue his evil inclinations.</p>	<p><u>בבלי בבא מציעא לב ע"ב</u> תא שמע: אוהב לפרוק ושונא לטעון – מצוה לשונא, לכוף את יצרו.</p>
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Why is it important to help one's enemy before helping a friend? How may this impact the relationship with the enemy and with the friend?

3. Conflict Resolution Theory:

Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon* (2000). p. 77-79

Conflict Analysis and Resolution in Relation to Religious Ethics

There are many other traditions including the Hebrew biblical commitment to aiding an enemy and its expansion by rabbinic texts to suggest that the law in Exodus 23:5 is designed as a conflict resolution device: "When you see the ass of your enemy lying under its burden, and would refrain from raising it, you must nevertheless raise it with him." Helping the enemy with a burden would change his opinion of you.¹ It is a classic example of a strategy involving unilateral gestures, which cause cognitive dissonance in the enemy, which, in turn is specifically designed to cause a rethinking of the cognitive structure of self and enemy.

This is directly relevant to one of the key themes of conflict analysis theory. Human beings are content with and even enjoy moderate levels of cognitive dissonance. It stimulates intellectual and emotional growth and is actually enjoyable for the curious mind. But, at a certain juncture, especially in the midst of conflict, the world begins to overwhelm the senses and the emotions. This is when members of combating communities need to simplify the universe. The conflict must become a cosmic battle of good and evil, and it is vital, for the sake of emotional consistency, that there is nothing redeeming in one's enemy.

Biblical Judaism, buttressed by rabbinic amplification, made the case that a way to jolt the combatants out of what Mack called "the enemy system" is by mandating that there must be gestures of aid sharing even with the enemy. Proverbs 25:21-22 cryptically suggests, and the rabbis amplify, the psychological strategy of breaking the enemy system cognition, thus allowing for the possibility of negotiation and even reconciliation to take place.

¹ Kimelman, R. (1968). Non-Violence in the Talmud. *Judaism* 17 pp. 316-334.

Toward a Jewish Ethic of Conflict Prevention and Resolution

... A Jewish conflict resolution theory, applied to individuals as well as to large groups, would have to include strategies of this psychological sort – authentic gestures of aid to an enemy or an enemy group – in order to fulfill the letter and spirit of this Exodus law. For large groups in conflict, this would have to entail extensive gestures by many individuals to members of the enemy group. Furthermore, they could not be perfunctory gestures, if they are to fulfill the rabbinic amplification of this biblical law. They have to be sufficiently authentic and clever that they truly cause the enemy to experience real cognitive dissonance, a real questioning of previously held assumptions. This by all accounts of conflict resolution theory takes a great deal of work. Thus, the *mitzvah*, the divinely taught good deed, of *redifat shalom* would entail an extensive understanding of the attitudes and feelings of the enemy, in addition to a good working knowledge of psychology and conflict resolution practice....I would argue that the *mitzvah* of Exodus 23:5, the *mitzvah* of conflict resolution, if it were to be taken seriously in the discourse of Jewish ethics, would have to entail years of training and a good working knowledge of general conflict resolution theory and practice.

Exodus 23:5 is also an expression of a unique conflict resolution strategy of shared activity, which humanizes the enemy, removing his status as an objectified embodiment of evil. You work with the enemy on some shared project, in this case helping a distressed animal, which, in their times, meant also helping the enemy with the transportation system for his livelihood. This method of building human relationships has a deep resonance in Jewish culture, with the latter's emphasis much more on behavior and less on dialogue as a solution to human problems. The rabbinic relationship –building process is far more attuned to doing things and sharing things, both as moral acts in and of themselves and as symbolic acts that convey to the enemy a conciliatory intention that is not merely words but something that has been concretized as deed.

This speaks to another critical conflict resolution tool: trust building. It may very well be that deep in Jewish tradition and cultural responses to the world is the perception or intuition that actions are the only things to be trusted and, therefore, are the only real tools of peacemaking. This has enormous ramifications in terms of the development of Jewish thinking, culture, and even the halakha itself, as the subject of conflict resolution is hermeneutically engaged in the years to come. It also has important ramifications for those who would attempt to engage in peacemaking with significant portions of the Jewish community.²

According to Gopin, what are the various conflict resolution tools being used by the above Biblical and rabbinic models in transforming enemies into friends?

² For further reading see Marc Gopin, "Jewish Peacebuilding"
http://www.gmu.edu/depts/crdoc/docs/j_and_p-2.html

-Save for Class-

III. Responses to the Question:

<p><u>Responsa of Maharil # 193, #197</u> <u>Rabbi Yaacov ben Moshe Molan</u> <u>(1360-1427, Magenza)</u></p> <p>[Answer] (If the person) is amongst those who it is forbidden to hate, however the human evil inclination forced him to hate him, the opposite is the case, it is even more of a mitzvah to visit him than other people, as it is proven in the Talmud (Baba Metzia 32b) "If a friend requires unloading, and an enemy loading, one's [first] obligation is towards his enemy, in order to subdue his evil inclinations."</p>	<p><u>שו"ת מהרי"ל ס' קצ"ג, קצ"ז</u> <u>רבי יעקב בן משה מולין</u></p> <p>מאותן שאסור לשנוא אותם, אלא יצר הרע של הבריות תקפה לשנאותו, אדרבה מצוה טפי [יותר] לבקרו מאינש אחרני [מאנשים אחרים] כדמוכח באלו מציאות (בבלי בבא מציעא לב ע"ב) דאפילו טעינת שונא קודם לפריקת אוהב אף על גב דצער בעלי חיים דאורייתא משום דלכוף יצרו עדיף.</p>
<p><u>Rama (R. Moshe Isserles, Poland 1520-1572. Shulchan Oruch Yoreh Deah 335:2)</u></p> <p>There are some who hold that one's enemy can go and visit the sick (who hates him). And it seems to me, rather he should not go and visit him, and he should not comfort him when he is in mourning, for he is his enemy. So that he (the sick person) does not think him (the visitor) is rejoicing in his tragedy and it only (causes) him suffering. This is what it seems to me.</p>	<p><u>שולחן ערוך יורה דעה סימן שלה סעיף ב</u></p> <p>הגה: י"א דשונא יכול לילך לבקר חולה (מהרי"ל קצ"ז), ה'. ולא נראה לי, אלא לא יבקר חולה, ולא ינחם האבל שהוא שונאו, שלא יחשב ששמח לאידו, ואינו לו אלא צער, כן נראה לי (ש"ס פ' כ"ג).</p>
<p><u>Shach (R. Shabti Cohen, Poland 1621-1662. Yoreh Deah 335:2)</u></p> <p>However, everything is according to what the hatred is over, and according to the enemies.</p>	<p><u>ש"ך יו"ד סימן שלה ס"ק ב</u></p> <p>ומיהו הכל לפי מה שהוא השנאה ולפי מה שהם השונאים:</p>
<p><u>Aruch HaShulchan (R. Yichiel Epstein, Belarus 1829-1908. Yoreh Deah 335:6)</u></p> <p>And so if the enemy sends (to the sick person) beforehand, expressing that he would like to visit him and to comfort him (after a loved one passed away), and he gives him permission, he is allowed, and all the more so, by this peace is made between them. Therefore, there are some who have written that now the custom is that one's enemy goes (to visit), for this brings about peace between them.</p>	<p><u>ערוך השולחן יורה דעה סימן שלה סימן ו</u></p> <p>וכן אם השונא שולח לו מקודם שרוצה לבקר או לנחמו והוא נותן לו רשות, מותר ואדרבא מצד זה נעשה שלום ביניהם. ולכן יש שכתבו שעכשיו נוהגין שהולך השונא דמביא לידי שלום.</p>
<p><u>R. Yehudah Ayish</u> <u>(1688-1760, Algeria)</u></p> <p>It is worthy for an enemy to go visit his enemy. For if the visitor was insulted, through the visit there will be peace between them, and it is possible that the sick person will ask forgiveness from him, for he sees that even though he (the visitor) was insulted, he lowered himself to come visit and ask mercy for him. And even if the sick person was the one insulted, nevertheless the visit will be like asking forgiveness, and in general it will lead to bringing peace, and one mitzvah leads to another.</p>	<p><u>ר' יהודה בן יצחק עיאש, שו"ת שבט יהודה, ליוורנו, תקמ"ג.</u></p> <p>עוד דמטעם אחר ראוי שהשונא ילך לבקר שונאו. דאם המבקר נעלב הרי על ידי הביקור יהיה שלום ביניהם ואפשר שהחולה יבקש מחילה ממנו שהרי רואה שאף שנעלב הוסיף להכניע עצמו לבוא לבקר ולבקש רחמים, ואף אם החולה היה נעלב מ"מ הביקור הזה הוי כבקשת מחילה ולפי הרוב יבואו לידי הבאת שלום ומצוה גוררת מצוה.</p>

IV. Personal Reflections:

1. Have you ever succeeded in turning an enemy into a friend? What happened? What did you do?
2. Have you ever found yourself holding back from taking the initiative to pursue peace with someone, feeling that they should be the one to do so first? What do you think may have happened had you been the one to take the initiative? Are there times when it really is not appropriate to initiate?
3. Can you think of examples of one country offering humanitarian aid to an enemy country? How did this impact their relationship?

"Israeli humanitarian groups determined to send relief to Iranian quake Victims", January 4, 2004

<http://israel21c.org/social-action-2/israeli-humanitarian-groups-determined-to-send-relief-to-iranian-quake-victims/>



Victims in Iranian Earthquake, 2004

"Fire disaster: World offers help, Turkey sends planes"

Dec. 3, 2010,

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3993450,00.html>



Turkish planes fire fighting in Israeli forest fire, 2010