

# Jewish Ethics

## The Life-Elevating Wisdom of Pirkei Avot

### *introduction*

#### *Chasid*

One who wishes to become a chasid should study Ethics of the Fathers.  
(*Talmud, Bava Kama 30a*)

#### *Law vs. Ethic*

Law: One may not slander, insult or curse one’s fellow (Leviticus 19:14, 17)  
Ethic: Receive every man with a pleasant countenance (Ethics 1:15)

Law: Lend material support to the needy (Leviticus 25:35)  
Ethic: Let the poor be members of your household (Ethics 1:5)

Law: One may give tzedakah for the merit of healing (Talmud, Pesachim 8a)  
Ethic: Do not be as slaves who serve... for the sake of reward (Ethics 1:3)

#### *Avot*

*“Lifnim mishurat hadin”*

### *kol yisrael*

#### *Unbreakable*

A Jew, although he has transgressed, is a Jew.  
(*Talmud, Sanhedrin 44a*)

### **1:1**

#### *So You Want to Be a Torah Scholar?*

1. Humility
2. Devotion
3. Investment
4. Awe
5. Application

***Perpetuating Torah***

1. Patience
2. Love
3. Integrity

***timeline***

<b>Leader</b>	<b>Era (B.C.E.)</b>
Moses	1313-1273
Joshua	1273-1245
Elders	1245-931
Prophets	931-313
Great Assembly	391-361
Mishnah	188 C.E.

**1:2*****Cardinal Sins***

- Adultery
- Idolatry
- Murder

**1:3*****Motive***

Always occupy yourself with Torah and mitzvot even not for its sake, since as a result of [fulfillment] *not* for its sake you will attain [fulfillment] *for* its sake.

*(Talmud, Sotah 47a)*

**1:4*****Accountability***

A full cup cannot receive.

*(Talmud, Berachot 40a)*

**1:5**

**Love**

A man must certainly love his wife as if she were his own flesh.

*(Talmud, Yevamot 62b)*

**1:6**

**Lost Cause?**

One who sins and causes others to sin is not given a chance to repent.

*(Talmud, Sanhedrin 107b)*

Yet if he persists, his repentance is accepted.

*(Tanya, ch. 25)*

**No Judgment**

Do not judge your fellow until you are in his place.

*(Ethics 2:4)*

**Greater Strength, Greater Challenge**

Whoever is greater than his fellow, his inclination (for evil) is also greater.

*(Talmud, Sukkah 52a)*

**1:9**

**Witnesses**

You have seen all that G-d did before you in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and his servants, and to all his land...

*(Deuteronomy 29:1)*

**1:12**

**Unconditional Love**

Love your fellow as yourself.

*(Leviticus 19:18)*

Love for a fellow means to love the completely wicked as one loves the completely righteous.

*(Maggid of Mezritch)*

**1:14**

***Grab a Mitzvah***

Our world is a banquet—grab and eat, grab and drink.

*(Talmud, Eruvin 54a)*

