

## **DA20. Not Being Envious, Jealous, or Covetous of Our Neighbor.**

*We are not to be envious, jealous, or covetous of our neighbor.*

This precept is derived from His Word (blessed is He):

### **Key New Testament Scriptures**

#### Romans 7:7

*Therefore, what are we to say? That the Torah is sinful? Heaven forbid! Rather, the function of the Torah was that without it, I would not have known what sin is. For example, I would not have become conscious of what greed is if the Torah had not said, "Thou shalt not covet."*

#### Romans 13:9

*For the commandments, "Don't commit adultery," "Don't murder," "Don't steal," "Don't covet," and any others are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

#### Romans 13:13

*Let us live properly, as people do in the daytime- not partying and getting drunk, not engaging in sexual immorality and other excesses, not quarrelling and being jealous.*

#### Galatians 5:19-21

*And it is perfectly evident what the old nature does. It expresses itself in sexual immorality, impurity and indecency; involvement with the occult and with drugs; in feuding, fighting, becoming jealous and getting angry; in selfish ambition, factionalism, intrigue and envy; in drunkenness, orgies and things like these. I warn you now as I have warned you before: those who do such things will have no share in the Kingdom of God!*

#### Galatians 5:26

*Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

#### James 3:14-16

*But if you harbor in your hearts bitter jealousy and selfish ambition, don't boast and attack the truth with lies! This wisdom is not the kind that comes down from above; on the contrary, it is worldly, unspiritual, demonic. For where there are jealousy and selfish ambition, there will be disharmony and every foul practice.*

#### 1 Peter 2:1

*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, of all deceit, hypocrisy and envy, and of all the ways there are of speaking against people;*

### **Additional New Testament Scriptures**

#### Mark 7:21-23

#### Luke 12:15

Acts 20:33-35

Romans 1:29, 13:8-9

2 Corinthians 9:5, 12:20-21

Ephesians 5:3, 5

Colossians 3:5

1 Timothy 6:3-4

### **Related New Testament Mitzvot**

DA38 Not Engaging in Rivalry

DA39 Not Being Vengeful

DA45 Not Sinning Against Our Brother or Neighbor

DA48 Not Harboring Bitterness Against Our Neighbor

DA49 Not Harboring Malice or Being Spiteful to Our Neighbor

DA79 Not Hating Our Brother

### **Supportive Tanakh Scriptures**

Exodus 20:14(17)

*Do not covet your neighbor's house; do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

Deuteronomy 5:18(21)

*Do not covet your neighbor's wife; do not covet your neighbor's house, his field, his male or female slave, his ox, his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

Proverbs 21:26

*.. he covets greedily all day long; but a righteous person gives without holding back.*

Micah 2:1-2

*Woe to those who think up evil and plan wickedness as they lie in bed. When morning comes, they do it, since they have it in their power. They covet fields and seize them; they take over houses as well, doing violence to both owner and house, to people and their inherited land.*

### **Comment**

Envy, jealousy, and covetousness are in some ways the same and in some ways different. All three are the result of dissatisfaction, are triggered by comparing ourselves with others, and are desirous of things that others have that we do not. Typical of such things are physical appearance, status, wealth, possessions, abilities, relationships, privileges, one's spouse, and many others. The way in which envy and jealousy are different is the "loudness" with which they are expressed. Envy is more of a quiet discontentment that begrudgingly craves something possessed by another, whereas jealousy fears or resents losing something to another that we believe belongs to us. Covetousness is jealousy carried a step further. It is contemplating owning or taking possession of something that belongs to another and resenting the person who possesses what we want.

The wrongfulness of taking (or even thinking of taking) something that belongs to another is intuitive and a violation of *Torah* but why, we may ask, does Scripture command us against envy, jealousy, and covetousness even when we do not bring harm to another? It is because we are to believe with conviction that God has given us that which He wants us to have, and we are therefore to be content with what we have. The Apostle Sha'ul is clear about it in Philippians 4:11 where he wrote: *“Not that I am saying this to call attention to any need of mine; since, as far as I am concerned, I have learned to be content regardless of circumstances.”* And in Hebrews 13:5, he also wrote: *“Keep your lives free from the love of money; and be satisfied with what you have; for God himself has said, “I will never fail you or abandon you.”* Dissatisfaction that results in envy or jealousy is therefore dissatisfaction with God who is the giver of what we have, which is, of course, wrong and a sin.

### **Related Mitzvot in Volumes 1 & 2**

M09 Coveting or Planning to Acquire Another's Property