

Jewish Texts and Scriptures that support the 'Framework to Guide Decision Making'

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1. Each Person is a someone not a something: [Dignity and value of people]

And God created man in His image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27)

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in His image did God make man (Genesis 9:6)

Rav Tanchuma said; one who demeans his fellow human being it is as if he has demeaned God, since the human is created in God's image (Bereshit Rabbah 24:7)

Rabbi Akiva used to say: Beloved is man for he was created in the image of God. As a gesture of special love, it was made known to him that he was created in the image of God, as it is said, "For in the image of God he made man." (Avot 3:18)

Human dignity is so important that its preservation takes precedence over heeding a negative commandment of the Torah (Talmud Megillah 3b)

On another occasion it happened that a certain non-Jew came before Shammai and said to him, "I will convert to Judaism, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot." Shammai chased him away with the builder's tool that was in his hand. He came before Hillel and said to him, "Convert me." Hillel said to him, "What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbour: that is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary; go and learn it." (Talmud Shabbat 31a)

"Man wishes to be confirmed in his being by man, and wishes to have a presence in the being of the other....

Secretly and bashfully he watches for a YES which allows him to be and which can come to him only from one human person to another. (Martin Buber "I and Thou")

"Feelings dwell in man; but man dwells in his love. That is no metaphor, but the actual truth. Love does not cling to the I in such a way as to have the Thou only for its " content," its object; but love is between I and Thou. The man who does not know this, with his very being know this, does not know love; even though he ascribes to it the feelings he lives through, experiences, enjoys, and expresses." (Martin Buber "I and Thou")

The epiphany of the Absolutely Other is a face by which the Other Challenges and commends me through his nakedness, through his destitution. He challenges me from his humility and from his height...The absolutely Other is the human Other. And the putting into question of the Same by the Other is a summons to respond...Hence, to be I signifies not being able to escape this responsibility (Emmanuel Levinas, "Transcendence and Height")

2. Delivering value by serving society: [The common good]

And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the LORD am your God. (Leviticus 23:22)

At the end of three years you shall bring forth all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall lay it up inside your gates... and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are inside your gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do. (Deuteronomy 14: 28-29)

Rav said, "For four things, property-owners' possessions are expropriated by the Romans: For withholding employees' wages, and for stealing employees' wages, and for casting off the yoke from their neck and putting it on their fellows, and for arrogance. And arrogance is equal to them all." But about the poor it is written, "The meek shall inherit the earth, and rejoice in great peace" (Psalm 37:11). (Talmud Suka 29b)

Our masters taught: One should not clear stones out of one's own domain and throw them into the public domain. There is a story of a man who was clearing stones out of his own domain and throwing them into the public domain. A pious man, seeing him, said to him, "Wretch, why do you remove stones from a domain that is not yours to a domain that is yours?" The man just laughed at him. After a time, the man needed to sell his field, and, walking on that very public domain, he stumbled over the stones he had thrown. (Talmud Bava Kamma 50b)

A man in a boat began to drill a hole under his seat. His fellow passengers protested. "What concern is it of yours?" he responded. "I am making a hole under my seat, not yours." They replied: "That is so, but when the water comes in-it will sink the whole boat and we will all drown." (Leviticus Rabbah 4:6)

Goodness of heart - [falls] between meanness and excessive kindness. (And because these virtues do not have a name in our language - it is necessary to explain them and to explain what the philosophers wanted: A good heart - this is called to one for whom all his intentions are to improve the state of man with his body, his wisdom and his money to the maximum of his ability but without causing any harm or contempt. This is the middle path. (Maimonides Eight Chapters, Chapter 4)

Jeremiah says concerning these four perfections: "Thus says the Lord: Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glories, glory in this- in his earnest devotion to Me. For I the Lord act with kindness, justice and equity in the world; for in these I delight." (Jer 9:22-23) (Maimonides Guide for the Perplexed 3:54)

3. Other people matter: [Solidarity]

Have we not all one Parent? Did not one God create us? Why do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors? (Malachi 2:10)

Hillel says, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?" (Ethics of the Fathers, 1:14)

Rabbi Judah HaNassi would say: "Which is the right path for one to choose for oneself? Whatever is harmonious for the one who does it, and harmonious for humankind." (Ethics of the Fathers 2:1)

Rabbi Eliezer said, "Other people's dignity should be as precious to you as your own." (Ethics of the Fathers 2:10)

Rabbi Yose says “let your fellow’s property be as dear to you as your own” (Ethics of the Fathers, 2:12)

Rabbi Haninah ben Dosa says “In one in whom people delight, God delight. In one in whom people do not delight God does not delight” (Ethics of the Fathers 3:13)

One who says “what is mine is mine, and what is yours is yours,” is an average person, though some say this is a Sodom type (Ethics of the Fathers 5:13)

On another occasion it happened that a certain non-Jew came before Shammai and said to him, “I will convert to Judaism, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot.” Shammai chased him away with the builder's tool that was in his hand. He came before Hillel and said to him, "Convert me." Hillel said to him, “What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary; go and learn it.” (Talmud Shabbat 31a)

Our Rabbis taught this [in a Bereita]: The pious ones of old used to hide their splinters of wood and shards of glass and bury them [because they could cause damage] three handbreadths beneath the surface of their fields so that they would not impede the progress of the plow. Rav Sheshet used to throw them in a fire. Rava threw them into the river. Rabbi Judah said: a person who wants to be pious should attend to matters of liability (Talmud Bava Kama 30a)

One may not dig a cistern close to the cistern of another, nor a trench, nor a vault, nor a water channel, nor a washer-man's pool, unless it is three tefachim distant from the wall of the other, and he must plaster it with lime. One must place olive peat, dung, salt, lime and rocks three tefachim away from the wall of one's neighbour, and he must plaster it with lime. Seeds, the plough and urine must be three tefachim away from the wall. (Mishnah Bava Batra 2:1)

One who pours water into the public domain, and another was injured by it, is liable for his injury. One who conceals a thorn, and glass, and makes his fence out of thorns, or his fence fell into the public domain, and others were injured by them, is liable for their injury.(Mishna Bava kama 3:2)

We learnt elsewhere: If a spark which flies from the anvil goes forth and causes damage, he [the smith] is liable. If a camel laden with flax passes through a street, and the flax overflows into a shop, catches fire at the shopkeeper’s lamp, and sets the building alight, the camel owner is liable; but if the shopkeeper placed the light outside, the shopkeeper is liable. (Talmud Shabbat 21b)

Ten things were said in Jerusalem: One cannot make [large] ovens in the city...because of smoke. (Talmud Bava Kama 82b)

R. Abba said in the name of R. Simeon ben Lakish: the person who lends money [to a poor person] is greater than the person who gives charity; and the one who throws money into a common purse [to form a partnership with the poor person] is greater than both. (Talmud Shabbat 63.a)

There are eight degrees of tzedakah, each higher than the next. The highest degree, exceeded by none, is that of the person who assists a poor person by providing him with a gift or a loan or by accepting him into a business partnership or by helping him find employment – in a word, by putting him where he can dispense with other people’s aid. With reference to such aid, it is said, “You shall strengthen him, be he a stranger or a settler, he shall live with you” (Leviticus 25:35), which means strengthen him in such a manner that his falling into want is prevented. (Maimonides Laws of Gifts to the Poor 10:7)

We are commanded to love and care for our fellow as we love and care for ourselves. We should treasure our fellow and their possessions as we treasure our own. Whatever I wish for myself, I wish also for my

fellow; and whatever I dislike for myself, I should also not want to befall them (Maimonides, Book of Commandments; Positive Command 206)

Most people are not outright thieves, taking their neighbors' property and putting it in their own premises. However, in their business dealing most of them get a taste of stealing whenever they permit themselves to make an unfair profit at the expense of someone else, claiming that such a profit has nothing to do with stealing. It is not merely the obvious and explicit theft with which we have to concern ourselves, but any unlawful transfer of wealth from one individual to another that may occur in everyday economic activities. (Moses Hayim Luzzato, Mesilat Yesharim chapter 21)

4. Freedom with Responsibility : [Subsidiarity]

Judaism does not entirely share the view of Catholic Social teaching on this issue. Judaism sits somewhere between Calvinist thought as interpreted by Weber (which asserts the role of the entrepreneur at the expenses of the worker/employee) and CST that sees works as a source of moral and personal achievement. Jewish sources seem to be mostly concerned with avoiding indenture and servitude (see sources below.) It is also deeply concerned with fair treatment of employees by their employers with regard to working conditions and wages but the notion of the intrinsic freedom of an employee to share in the risk of decision making is not a Jewish concept.

Freedom with responsibility does exist in Jewish thought in areas other than business such as parenting and education. In such cases there is a strong emphasis on developing a child/pupil's character by giving them the freedom to develop in their own unique way.

The only way Subsidiarity- as understood by CST – can be linked to the running of a business in Jewish thought would be through demonstrating that it leads to greater efficiency and profit. Since management bears a responsibility to the shareholders it must do all it can within a moral and legal framework to enhance their return and if Subsidiarity is shown to help than it must be applied. While the outcome of such thinking leads to the same practical place as CST the route is decidedly different, so much so that the outcome might no longer be considered the same thing.

The Lord said to Moses Go to Pharaoh and say to him, thus says the Lord: Let my people go so that they may serve me (Exodus 7:26)

“For the Children of Israel are servants for me.’ They are my servants, and not servants of servants.” (Talmud Bava Metzia 10a)

5. Building trust and trusted relationships : [Reciprocity]

You shall not falsify measures of length, weight, or capacity. You shall have an honest balance, honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin (Leviticus 19:35-36)

You shall not defraud your neighbour, nor rob him; the wages of he who is hired shall not remain with you all night until the morning (Leviticus 19:13)

Ha! One who builds one's house with unfairness and one's upper chambers with injustice, who makes their fellow work without pay and does not give them their wages, who thinks: I will build me a vast palace with spacious upper chambers, provided with windows, paneled in cedar, painted with vermilion! Do you think you are more a king because you compete in cedar? Your ancestors ate and drank and

dispensed justice and equity -- then all went well with them. They upheld the rights of the poor and needy -- then all was well. That is truly heeding Me -- declares the LORD.(Jeremiah 22:13-17)

Psalm of David. God, who may sojourn in Your tent, who may dwell on Your holy mountain? One who lives without blame, who does what is just, and in whose heart acknowledges the truth; whose tongue is not given to evil; who has never done harm to their fellow, or borne reproach for their acts toward their neighbour; for whom a contemptible individual is abhorrent, but who honours those who fear God; who stands by their oath even to their own hurt; who has never lent money at interest, or accepted a bribe against the innocent. One who acts thus shall never be shaken. (Psalms 15:1-5)

Do not say to your fellow, "Come back again; I'll give [your wages] to you tomorrow." when you have it with you. (Proverbs 3:28)

As it has been taught: If someone hired artisans and they misled the employer, or the employer misled them, they have nothing but resentment against each other. In what case are these things said? When they [the workers] did not go [to work]. But if ass drivers went and did not find produce, or if workers went and found the field while it was waterlogged, the employer gives them their wages in full. (Talmud Bava Metzia 76b)

Rav said, On account of four things is the property of householders confiscated by the state treasury: On account of those who defer payment of the laborer's hire; on account of those who withhold the hired laborer's wages; on account of those who remove the yoke from off their necks and place it on the necks of their fellows, and on account of arrogance. And the sin of arrogance is equivalent to all (the others) whereas of the humble it is written, But the humble shall inherit the land, and delight in the abundance of peace (Psalms 37) (Talmud Sukah 29b)

A worker is not entitled to work [elsewhere] at night and then hire himself out in the daytime, nor may he fast or mortify his flesh, nor feed his own food to his children, as these weaken him and render him unable to do the work of the employer properly (as the Rambam wrote). In the same way as an employer is not allowed to steal the wage of his employees nor delay their payment, so too the worker is not allowed to idle away his time, a little here and a little there, until his whole day is fraudulent. (Tur Code of Jewish Law Choshen Mishpat 337:13)

6. Valuing diversity and building bridges : [Plurality]

Ben Zoma said: Who is one that is wise? One who learns from every person, as it is said: From all my teachers have I gained understanding.(Psalm 119:99) (ethics of the Fathers 4:1)

Ben Azzai says "Despise no one and disdain nothing, for there is no one who does not have his hour and there is nothing that does not have its place (Ethics of the Fathers 4:3)

To declare the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be God, for one stamps out many coins with one die, and they are all alike, but the King, the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be God, stamped each person with the seal of Adam, and not one of them is like his or her fellow. Therefore each and every one is obliged to say, "For my sake the world was created." (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5)

Our Rabbis taught: One who sees a crowd, is to say, Blessed is the One who discerns secrets, for their minds are not similar to each other, and their faces are not similar to each other. Ben Zoma once saw a crowd on one of the steps of the Temple Mount. He said, Blessed is the One who discerns secrets, and

blessed is the One who has created all these to serve me. For he used to say: What labors the first person had to carry out before he obtained bread to eat! (Talmud Brachot 58a)

Ben 'Azzai said: "This is the book of the descendants of Adam' is a great principle of the Torah." R. Akiva said: "'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Leviticus 19:18) is a great principle, so that you must not say, "Since I have been put to shame, let my neighbour be put to shame, since I have been cursed, let my neighbour be cursed." R. Tanhuma said: "If you do so, know whom you put to shame, for 'In the image of God did God make him'" (Genesis 1:27).(Genesis Rabbah 24:7)

A society and a family are like a pile of stones. If you remove one stone, the pile will collapse. If you add a stone to it, it will stand. (Genesis Rabbah 100:7)

Adam (man) is an expression of love, brotherliness and friendship (Leviticus Rabbah 2:8)

As no part of the date palm is useless--the dates for food, the branches (lulav) for praise, the fronds for covering (a sukkah), the fibers for ropes, the leaves for sieves, the planed trunks as rafters for the roof of a home--so too no part of Israel is useless. Some have mastery of the Bible, some have mastery over the Mishnah, some have mastery over Midrash, some are doers of good deeds, some are givers of Tzedakah, etc. (Numbers Rabbah 3:1)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that when a person walks on the road, he is preceded by a company of angels who proclaim: "Make way for the image of the Holy Blessed One!" (Midrash Tehilim 17:8)

Thus water, after having penetrated the soil, is collected in the clouds and seas; light, after having permeated the earth and brought forth the plants -these children of light- is yet concentrated in the sun, the moon and the stars; the seed, after germination in the ground, is taken from the earth to become the ripened fruit, so that the earth will have to receive in order to give again. Thus one immense bond of love, of giving and receiving, unites all beings.(Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, The Nineteen Letters pp 33-34)

7. Stewardship of people, values and resources: [Sustainability]

Choose a life that you may live, you and your children (Deuteronomy 30:19)

That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, neither shall you reap the aftergrowth or harvest the untrimmed vines, for it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you: you may only eat the growth direct from the field. In this year of jubilee, each of you shall return to his holding. When you sell property to your neighbour, or buy any from your neighbour, you shall not wrong one another. (Leviticus 25: 11-24)

"And you hold [your fellow]" - Do not let your fellow slip down until they fall completely, for then it will be difficult to raise them; rather, strengthen your fellow as they begin to fall. To what is this comparable? To a burden upon an donkey. While it is still on the donkey, one person can hold it and set it in place. If it falls to the earth, even five people cannot set it back. (Rashi Leviticus 25:35)

"Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai had five [primary] disciples...He said to them: Go out and discern which is the proper way to which a man should cling. Rabbi Shimon says: One who considers the outcome of a deed." (Mishnah Avot 2:8)

He [Alexander the Great] asked them [the Jewish sages of the south], "Who is called a 'wise man'?" They responded to him, "The person who sees the consequence of their action." (Talmud Tamid 32a)

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One day he [Honi the Circle Drawer] was journeying on the road and he saw a man planting a carob tree; he asked him, How long does it take [for this tree] to bear fruit? The man replied: Seventy years. He then further asked him: Are you certain that you will live another seventy years? The man replied: I found [ready grown] carob trees in the world; as my forefathers planted these for me so I too plant these for my children. (Talmud Ta'anit 23a)

Everything bestowed upon you – mind, body, fellow man, material goods, other creatures, every talent and every power – all are merely means to action, to further and to safeguard everything. With love and with justice! (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch The Nineteen Letters pp 56)

"Human beings must cherish the world, said the Baal Shem. To deprecate, to deride it was presumption. Creation, all of creation, was pervaded with dignity and purpose and embodied God's meaning. (A.J. Heschel, A Passion for Truth pp 24)