



#### FINAL 4 – WHICH OF THE TEXTS BELOW BELONGS IN OUR OMER MADNESS CHAMPIONSHIP?

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#### Final Four NEW Study Questions for both texts:

- If you could add one commandment or change one, what would it be, and why?
- Does the emphasis of Torah change in different lands, times, and situations?
- If you had a safe deposit box with no space limits and secure for all time, what would you put in it?
- What ethics or family teachings do you want to pass down to the children and grandchildren in the next generation?

#### Babylonian Talmud Makkot 3b-24a

The Holy One, blessed be God, desired to make Israel worthy, therefore God gave them the Law [to study] and many commandments [to do]; for it is said, Adonai was pleased, for Israel's righteousness' sake, to make the Law great and glorious (Isaiah 42:21). [...]

Rabbi Simlai when preaching said: Six hundred and thirteen *mitzvot*/precepts were communicated to Moses, three hundred and sixty-five negative precepts ("thou shalt not"s...), corresponding to the number of solar days [in the year], and two hundred and forty-eight positive precepts ("thou shalt"s...), corresponding to the number of the members [joints or bones] of a human's body.

Said Rabbi Hamnuna, [...] David came and reduced them to eleven [principles], as it is written, "A Psalm of David. Adonai, who shall sojourn in Your House? Who shall dwell upon Your Holy Mountain?— (1) They that walk uprightly, and (2) do righteousness, and (3) speak the truth in their heart; that (4) has no slander upon their tongue, (5) nor does evil to their neighbors, (6) nor take up criticism against their neighbor; (7) who only seeks good companions, (8) Who honors them that are faithful to God, (9) who does not blame others, (10) who does not take advantage of those less fortunate, (11) nor takes bribes; they shall never be shaken" (Psalms 15:1-5). [...]

Isaiah came and reduced them to six [principles], as it is written, "(1) One that walks righteously, and (2) speaks uprightly; (3) One that fights the oppression, (4) One that does not take bribes, (5) One that refuses to listen to evil (6) and shuts their eyes from looking upon evil; they shall dwell on high" (Isaiah 33:15). [...]

Micah came and reduced them to three [principles], as it is written,  
“It hath been told to you, ‘Do what is good, and what God does require of you: (1) only to do justly, and (2) to love mercy, and (3) to walk humbly with your God’” (Micah 6:8). [...]

Again came Isaiah and reduced them to two [principles], as it is said,  
“This says God: (1) keep justice, and (2) do righteousness” (Isaiah 56:1).

Amos came and reduced them to one [principle], as it is said,  
“God said to the house of Israel: Seek Me, and live” (Amos 5:4).

To this Rabbi Nahman ben Isaac demurred, saying, [Might it not be taken as,] Seek Me by observing the whole Torah and live? But it is Habakkuk who came and based them all on one [principle], as it is said, “But the righteous shall live by their faith” (Habakkuk 2:4).

### **[Midrash] Song of Song Rabbah 1:4 (*adapted selections from the original*)**

Rabbi Meir said: When Israel stood before Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, the Holy One said to them: “I am about to give you the Torah. But you must [first] give Me good guarantors that you will keep it, and then I will give it to you.”

They replied: “Ruler of the universe, our patriarchs and matriarchs will be guarantors for us, our prophets will be guarantors for us.”

The Holy One: “These also require guarantors for their own persons. You yourselves must bring Me better guarantors, and I will give it to you.”

Israel: “Behold, our children will be guarantors for us.”

The Holy One: “Certainly, these are excellent guarantors. Because of them will I give you the Torah.”