

JA10. Allowing Ourselves to Be Abused within Reason.

We are to allow ourselves to be abused within reason.

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

Key New Testament Scriptures

Matthew 5:39-42

But I tell you not to stand up against someone who does you wrong. On the contrary, if someone hits you on the right cheek, let him hit you on the left cheek too! If someone wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well! And if a soldier forces you to carry his pack for one mile, carry it for two!

Additional New Testament Scriptures

Matthew 5:11-12

Luke 6:27-29

1 Corinthians 4:12, 10:13

2 Corinthians 4:8-9, 12:10

Romans 5:3-4

2 Timothy 3:10-11, 4:5

1 Peter 3:14, 4:12-16

Related New Testament Mitzvot

JA02 Being Watchful for & Guarding Against Those Who Would Do Us Harm, & Lead Us Astray

JA03 Not Fearing Those Who Would Oppose, Persecute, or Harm Us

JA06 Offering the Other Cheek

Supportive Tanakh Scriptures

Proverbs 19:11

People with good sense are slow to anger, and it is their glory to overlook an offense.

Comment

Proverbs 19:11 that entreats us to overlook an offense is the *Tanakh* Scripture's counterpart of this *Mitzvah*, "*allowing ourselves to be abused within reason.*" What is within reason is situational, and in non-obvious cases we should seek the Holy Spirit for wisdom and guidance on where to draw the line and be protective. That notwithstanding, the natural question raised by this *Mitzvah* is why we should allow ourselves to be abused at all. Yeshua made himself vulnerable to abuse but, after all, he came to earth for that purpose. Yes, but so did Yeshua's disciples make themselves vulnerable. Sha'ul was imprisoned, Stephen was stoned, and John

was exiled. These cases were extreme, but they were nevertheless reasonable because each of them was the result of their obeying the Holy Spirit to preach and teach the Good News of Yeshua. But that still leaves the question of why allowing abuse to ourselves on any level is sometimes called for.

I can think of two reasons. The first is that we are to rely on God to protect us. If He tells us to protect ourselves we should, and if He tells us to hold back we should as well. The second reason is suggested by Proverbs 18:19 because it is true of both brothers and foreigners alike:

“It is harder to win an offended brother than a strong city; their fights are like the bars of a fortress.”

If, without being led by the Holy Spirit we react defensively to abuses, we are more likely to aggravate the abuser than to cure the abuse and, according to Proverbs 18:19, our ability to minister godly repentance to the abuser will be compromised.

Additional Comment by Daniel C. Juster

Matthew 5:39-42 is especially meaningful when one considers the Roman occupation context behind it. Even the hated Roman occupiers were to be treated in an amazing way of deference that complies with the Mitzvah to love our enemy. Also, if one volunteers the other cheek after being struck, one is not a victim, but one who chooses suffering for righteousness.

Related Mitzvot in Volumes 1 & 2

N07 Taking Reasonable Steps to Keep Ourselves and Others Safe

Y04 Expecting & Accepting Persecution on Account of Our Faith in Yeshua