



August 21, 2020

Kindness and Compassion

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame." – Job 29:15

"Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? How then can we deal treacherously each person with their brother or sister?" – Malachi 2:10

"When I was young I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people," said Rabbi Abraham Heschel. From the Jewish perspective, an unkind person does not believe in God.

"How could anyone who believes in the God of the Bible treat his or her fellow human beings, all of whom are created in God's image, with less than compassion?" asks Rabbi Joseph Teluskin

The story is told that when Abba Tahnah the Pious was entering his city on the Sabbath eve with a bundle slung over his shoulder, he came upon a helpless man lying at a crossroads. The man said to him, "Master, do an act of kindness for me. Carry me into the city." Abba Tahnah replied, "If I abandon my bundle, how shall I and my household support ourselves? But if I abandon a man afflicted with such a need, I will forfeit my life."

He set his bundle down on the road and carried the afflicted man into the city. Then he returned for his bundle and reentered the city with the last rays of the sun. Everybody was astonished at seeing so pious a man carrying a heavy bundle as the Sabbath was beginning, something forbidden by Jewish law. They exclaimed, "Is this really Abba Tahnah the Pious?"

He too felt uneasy at heart and said to himself: "Is it possible that I have desecrated the Sabbath?" At that point, the Holy One caused the sun to continue to shine, thereby delaying the beginning of the Sabbath.

Your kindness and compassion toward others count for eternity and show others the nature of our loving Lord.

*In Christ's Grace,
Pastor Deb Olenyik*