

## **“You shall love your fellow as yourself.” (19:18)**

In his *Nusach HaAri Siddur*, the *Baal HaTanya* writes that it is proper and correct that one say before *davening*, “I accept upon myself the positive commandment, ‘You shall love your fellow as yourself.’” The *mitzvah* of *ahavas Yisrael* is the entranceway to be able to stand before Hashem in prayer. *Pardes Yosef* interprets this idea into the *pasuk* in *Bereishis* 37:26, *Mah betza ki naharog es achinu*, “What gain will there be if we kill our brother?” The letters of the word *betza* – *bais*, *tzaddik*, *ayin*, form an acronym for: *boker*, morning; *tzaharaim*, afternoon; *erev*, evening, the three *Tefillos*, prayers, that we recite daily. *Pardes Yosef* explains Yosef’s brothers’ statement homiletically: “What do we gain by praying to Hashem thrice daily, if we do not care for our brother, if we let his blood flow without caring about him?” *Horav Menachem Mendel*, z.l., *m’Varka* added that when one prays to Hashem, he should also concentrate on the needs of *Klal Yisrael*. If he *davens* only for himself – it is tantamount to stealing!