

# Does the Black Panthers or LeBron James Really Matter?



**truth about priorities**

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In a world engrossed with politics, war, sports, and box office entertainment, it is very difficult to determine what matters most. Today it seems the average American's god is not from ancient times but from the here and now. Does it really matter what team Kobe Bryant chose to shoot basketball hoops for? Is today's Dow Jones Industrial average eternally important? Shouldn't life be more than entertainment or politics?

When the Messiah was asked what matters most, his reply was a direct quote from the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy. "The most important commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, YHWH our Elohim, YHWH is one. Love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these," Mark 12:29-31. In this passage the Savior clarified that man's priority should be to recognize and accept the one true Elohim of Israel. A person's devotion to an unseen Creator is expressed through actions and attitudes towards other people. Loving or having a relationship with YHWH is not more important than loving and having a relationship with other people.

Many of today's racial and social issues could be easily solved if attention was focused on "loving your neighbor as yourself." A neighbor is anyone who is near, this includes the person who lives next door, a coworker, or the clerk at the local convenience store.

Love, not entertainment or sports, is what gives meaning to life. In the Biblical language, the Hebrew word for love is "ahava." This word is an action verb in the original Hebrew as love is something done and not just felt. The "feeling" of love may

come and go. Such is not for true love that is based on the Biblical commandment to serve and sacrifice. The Hebrew word ahava, like most Hebrew words, can be broken down to a three-consonant root word which contains the essence of the word's meaning. The root word of ahava is "ahav." The term ahav in Hebrew means, "to give." True ahava, true love, is more concerned about giving than receiving. Being the center of someone's attention isn't love. And love isn't about getting some feeling or fix. Ahava is about giving devotion and time. Giving is the vehicle of love. For Elohim so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Meaningful relationships have mutual giving. Lust focuses on receiving. A person can show ahava by sharing a meal with someone, writing an encouraging note to a spouse, talking with a friend, or helping a stranger. Think about a way to express care to neighbor and then act on that desire to share true love.

It's not just enough to have a relationship with an unseen Almighty. The Bible calls believers to love/give/serve those near by. Sacrificial love that reaches out to meet the needs of others is what brings fulfillment and joy in life. It is this type of love, expressed through service and care, that equals spiritual worship of loving Elohim. It's a farce to claim a faith in Jesus and hold on to hatred of others who may have different colored skin or personal religious beliefs. "If anyone says, "I love god," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love YHWH, whom he has not seen," 1 John 4:20.

Movie stars and amazing athletes will come and go. Love, and only love, is what should be life's priority.