



13 SEPTEMBER 2024

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From the Rabbi's Desk

Dear Friends

In Elul, the month leading up to Rosh Hashona, I personally, and probably we collectively, start holding my breath. I need to do what I can to deserve to be inscribed and sealed for all that's revealed good. That takes lots of work.

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At least we are given the recipe: UTeshuva, UTefila, UTzedoka, Ma'avirin et ro'a hagezaira!

... Teshuva, Prayer and Tzedokka remove the harshness of the decree!

Introspection to see what needs repair and remodelling...and acting on it! a.k.a. Teshuva. (The daily call of the Shofar sets the tone.)

Saying extra Tehillim and concentrating more on having meaningful conversations with Hashem...Tefila, Prayer.

Constantly going out of my comfort zone to do more for others, creating Eternal Angels to ask Hashem to reciprocate and give me perhaps more than I usually deserve...Tzedokka/ Gemilut Chassadim (random acts of kindness).

SHABBAT TIMES

STARTS	5:42pm
ENDS	6:32pm
SHACHARIT	9:00am
MINCHA	5:30pm

We heighten this all in the Ten Days of Repentance, and then with the cadence of the long Shofar blast after Yom Kippur we take this supercharged energy and launch into building our Sukkot. We channel this intense depth of feeling into unleashed joy. In fact, we are taught that the true unbridled joy of dancing with the Torahs on Simchat Torah can take us to even loftier spiritual heights than our heartfelt tears on Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur.

We are now a third of the way into Elul. Let's catch ourselves and make sure we are actively on this journey. We are so grateful to be in our special community, riding this wave together with you!

May each and all be showered with such revealed good that you can sense it with all six senses, no philosophy needed. May we be spending this Rosh Hashona in the Bait Hamikdash with Moshiach!

Ketiva Vechatima Tova, LShana Tova Umetuka.

Love,
Rabbi Zusman Y and Laia

Calendar



Sundays & Public Holidays Shachrit is at 8:00am.
 Shachrit during the week is at 6:45am.
 Mincha Ma'ariv during the week is at 5:45pm.
 Mincha Ma'ariv on Friday is at 5:45pm
 Shabbat Shachrit is at 9:00am.

This week's Haftorah will be read by David Taitz.

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Thursday night at 5.00pm - Pirkei Avot.
 Saturday after Kiddush - LADIES' Shiur.
 New Shiur - Sunday Morning at 7:15am - Tanya with Rabbi Yossi Sher.
 Monday 6:30pm - Journey of the Soul - Session 5
 Wednesday night at 5:00pm - Shulchan Aruch - Code of Jewish Law
 - Code of Jewish Law.

Yahrzeits for the Week

DOVE	Ephraim	Father	12th ELUL	15th September
ABRAHAMSOHN	Alfred	Sister	14th ELUL	17th September
BERNSTEIN	Toby	Sister	14th ELUL	17th September
LEIBOWITZ	Norman	Uncle	14th ELUL	17th September
STERNBERG	Trevor	Grandfather	15th ELUL	18th September
FLEISHMAN	Sonia	Husband	17th ELUL	20th September
FLEISHMAN	Dovie	Father	17th ELUL	20th September



Mazeltov to Ariella Levin on her upcoming marriage to Jonathan Fine.
 Thank you to Derek and Elise Levin for sponsoring this week's brocha in honour of Ariella's Shabbos Kallah.
 Mazeltov to David Taitz on his 'Second Barmitzvah'. Thank you to David and Ceciley Taitz for sponsoring next week's brocha.
 Mazeltov to our Batmitzvah girls and their parents, who are having an exciting celebratory Candle Lighting, Shabbat morning and Havdalah Ceremony this Shabbat: Amber Joselowsky, Daniela Hollander, Isobel Agulnik, Jordanna Valkin, Juliette Bertoldi, Michaela Solovei, Mila Weis, Naledi Mathosi, Sivan Shapiro, Zoe Fine and Zoe Lazarus.



The son of Bismark, one of the Shul's long-standing workers, has had his phone stolen. He is in matric and desperately needs a phone for his studies. If you have a phone that you no longer use, please consider donating it to him.

Insights PARSHAT KI TETZEI

DEUTERONOMY 21:10 – 25:19

The name of the Parshah, "Ki Teitzei," means "when you go out," and it is found in Deuteronomy 21:10.

Seventy-four of the Torah's 613 commandments (mitzvot) are in the Parshah of Ki Teitzei. These include the laws of the beautiful captive, the inheritance rights of the firstborn, the wayward and rebellious son, burial and dignity of the dead, returning a lost object, sending away the mother bird before taking her young, the duty to erect a safety fence around the roof of one's home, and the various forms of *kilayim* (forbidden plant and animal hybrids).

Also recounted are the judicial procedures and penalties for adultery, for the rape or seduction of an unmarried girl, and for a husband who falsely accuses his wife of infidelity. The following cannot marry a person of Jewish lineage: a *mamzer* (someone born from an adulterous or incestuous relationship); a male of

Moabite or Ammonite descent; a first- or second-generation Edomite or Egyptian.

Our Parshah also includes laws governing the purity of the military camp; the prohibition against turning in an escaped slave; the duty to pay a worker on time, and to allow anyone working for you—man or animal—to "eat on the job"; the proper treatment of a debtor, and the prohibition against charging interest on a loan; the laws of divorce (from which are also derived many of the laws of marriage); the penalty of thirty-nine lashes for transgression of a Torah prohibition; and the procedures for *yibbum* ("levirate marriage") of the wife of a deceased childless brother, or *chalitzah* ("removing of the shoe") in the case that the brother-in-law does not wish to marry her.

Ki Teitzei concludes with the obligation to remember "what Amalek did to you on the road, on your way out of Egypt."

Summary of the Weekly Torah Reading

General Overview: This week's reading, *Ki Teitzei*, contains 74 commandments, more mitzvot than any other Torah portion. Some of the commandments discussed: the law of the rebellious son, the obligation to bury the dead without undue delay, the requirement to return a found object, the prohibition against causing pain to any living creature, the prohibition against prostitution, the laws of marriage and divorce, the procedure of the Levirate marriage, and the obligation to eradicate the memory of Amalek.

First Aliyah: This section begins with a discussion regarding female captives of war, and lays down the conditions under which a soldier may marry a captive. The right of a firstborn son to a double portion of his father's inheritance is then detailed. The section concludes with the procedure for dealing with an aberrantly rebellious child.

Second Aliyah: Commandments discussed in this section: Speedy burial of the deceased, returning a lost object to its owner, aiding a neighbour when his animal has fallen because of its burden, the prohibition against cross-dressing, and the obligation to

send away a mother bird before taking its chicks or eggs.

Third Aliyah: Some commandments discussed in this section: Building a safety fence around a flat roof; the prohibitions against sowing mixtures of seeds, ploughing with a mixed pair of animals, or wearing a garment which contains a mixture of wool and linen (*shatnez*); wearing *tzitzit*; the penalty for a husband who defames his wife; the punishment for adultery; the penalty for rape; and certain prohibited marriages.

Fourth Aliyah: Some commandments discussed in this section: maintaining pure and hygienic army encampments, impurity resulting from seminal emissions, prohibition against prostitution, prohibition against lending with interest, and the obligation to honour vows.

Fifth Aliyah: This section details the right of field workers to eat from the produce they are harvesting. The Torah then briefly discusses marriage and the bill of divorce. A divorced couple cannot remarry if the woman has been remarried to another man (and divorced again or widowed) in the interim.

Sixth Aliyah: More mitzvot: A newly-

wed man is exempt from military service for a full year. It is forbidden to accept utensils used to prepare food as loan security or to forcibly take a debtor's possessions as collateral, and a poor man's security must be temporarily returned to him on a daily basis. Kidnapping is a capital offense. We are commanded to always remember that Miriam was afflicted with *tzara'at* (Biblical leprosy) for speaking badly about Moses.

Seventh Aliyah: We are forbidden to withhold or delay a worker's wages. Relatives' testimony is inadmissible in a court of law. Various mandatory gifts for the poor are discussed. The procedure for corporal punishment is outlined. The mitzvah of Levirate marriage (*yibbum*) is introduced: if a married childless man dies, his brother is obligated to marry the widow. If the brother refuses to marry the widow, he and she go through a *chalitzah* ceremony, which frees her to marry whomever she wishes. We are instructed to maintain accurate weights and measures. The reading ends with the mitzvah to remember Amalek's evil deed, ambushing the Israelites on their way from Egypt.

Squabbles vs. Civil Disagreements

By [Yossi Ives](#)

In laying down the procedure for certain corporal punishments, the Torah begins:

“Should there be a quarrel between people, and they approach the court, and [the judges] judge them, and they acquit the righteous one and condemn the wicked one ...”¹

The verse then goes on to discuss the mode of punishment.

Why does it need to state that the judges should acquit the innocent and condemn the guilty? Is it not self-understood that this is the role of a judge?

On numerous other occasions² the Torah discusses the strict rules of impartiality and integrity to which judges must adhere, along with clear guidance about not bending the law towards an unjust outcome. There really is no need here for the Torah to include a further reminder about the proper function of judges.

And Rashi, who we can normally count on to address such stand-out questions, seems to be entirely silent on the matter. This seems so out of character! Does he not see a problem here that requires an explanation?

Unless Rashi does answer it...albeit unconventionally.

Although Rashi does not comment on these specific words, the Rebbe offers an interpretation on Rashi's comment on earlier words in the verse, from which it emerges that without saying so explicitly, Rashi actually offers a highly satisfactory answer to our problem.

On the words, “Should there be a quarrel,” Rashi comments:

[The problem with a quarrel is that] they will eventually go to court. We learn from this that peace cannot result from a quarrel. [Just think,] what caused Lot to leave the righteous man [Abraham]³? Clearly, it was a quarrel.

Rashi seems to be lamenting the negative consequence of a quarrel insofar as it is likely to lead to litigation. He concludes from this that “peace cannot result from a quarrel.”

Rashi's comment is perplexing: What is so bad if two quarrelling individuals go to court? Is that not the best possible place for them to go? Isn't the purpose of the court to adjudicate conflicts in a way that restores peace? The Torah itself states: “And they shall judge the people at all times... all these people will come upon their place in peace.”⁴

The Rebbe explains that Rashi's comment is based on an anomaly in the text. The issue between the two individuals is described in the Torah as a *riv*, “quarrel,” which usually refers to an argument that doesn't make it to court. But when describing a matter of difference that needs to be adjudicated in court, the Torah uses the term *davar* - “dispute” or “matter.”

In describing the squabble between the shepherds of Abraham and Lot,⁵ as well as the one that arose between the shepherds of Gerar and those of Isaac,⁶ the Torah uses the word *riv*, “quarrel.” This word is also used to describe a fight that causes one person to strike another in anger.⁷ A *riv* is an altercation that often turns physical and is rarely handled with civility.

By contrast, a dispute is a disagreement on a matter of fact that is often brought before a third party – typically in the context of a court of law – to be resolved in a civilized and reasoned manner. Such is the

wording used by Moses when explaining his own role: “When one of them [the people] has a dispute (*davar*), he comes to me, and I judge between one person and another...”⁸

In our case, however, the matter *is* being brought before a court (as the Torah clearly states), and it should therefore be called a *davar*, not a *riv*. So why does our verse speak about a *riv* in court? Is it not an inherent contradiction?

That is what Rashi is trying to explain: that here we are talking about a quarrel, not a dispute, to the extent that even if the matter does end up in court, it is unlikely to result in a peaceful outcome. On the other hand, when people come to court with a dispute, but they are not in conflict with one another, the court can work to find a mutually acceptable outcome. Even if the judges feel that one side is entirely right, the legal matter can be resolved in a peaceful manner, because there is no personal quarrel between the individuals.

Here, however, Rashi explains, we are talking about two people who have a *riv*. Even if they had the decency to bring the matter to adjudication – rather than fight it out between themselves – it is unlikely to result in a happy ending, because “peace cannot result from a quarrel.” At the conclusion of the legal proceedings, unfortunately, they are unlikely to make up and be friends.

Proof for this thesis comes from the conflict between the shepherds of Abraham and Lot. Abraham and Lot were relatives and would normally have been expected to resolve a minor disagreement through some sort of practical compromise. What led to the breakdown in the relationship? The fact that a *riv* had erupted between their respective shepherds.

With this perspective, we understand why our verse includes the seemingly superfluous words, “they acquit the innocent one and condemn the guilty one.” The Torah is telling us that if two people come to court because they have a case, the courts can resolve the issue and restore harmony. Not so if there is a quarrel, as is the case here, in which case the most the court can do is determine who is guilty and who is innocent. They cannot, however, restore peace.

Once two parties have already entered into a quarrel, they are no longer interested in the truth. The dispute is now personal and a great deal of animosity has already been generated, so it is predictable that peace will not break out. The court should therefore just focus on working out who among them is innocent and who is guilty.

The lesson is clear: Human beings have their own interests and ideas, and differences of opinions and resultant disputes are somewhat inevitable. But let us keep our disagreements reasoned and civilized, and let truth not be the first victim of a conflict. Even if we feel it necessary to take another person to court, ensure it remains a “case” and does not descend into a “quarrel.” If it is a court case, one can hope that harmony will be restored; if there is a quarrel, enduring animosity is all but assured.

In the eyes of the Torah, few values are greater than that of peace.⁹ It is considered truly regrettable when disputes become personal, eliminating the possibility for good relations to return even after the issue in question has been settled. Dispute? Perhaps. But quarrel? Never!

Adapted from Likutei Sichot, vol. 24, Parshat Ki Teitzei IV.

FOOTNOTES

1. Deuteronomy 25:1-2.

2. Two notable examples are Exodus 23 and Deuteronomy 16.

3. Genesis 13:7-12. 4. Exodus 18:23.

5. Genesis 13:17. 6. Genesis 26:20.

7. Exodus 21:18. 8. Exodus 18:16.

9. Maimonides Mishneh Torah, conclusion of Hilchot Chanukah.