

Because learning Torah is sweet



September 8 - 14, 2024 ה' - י"א אֶלּוּל תשפ"ד

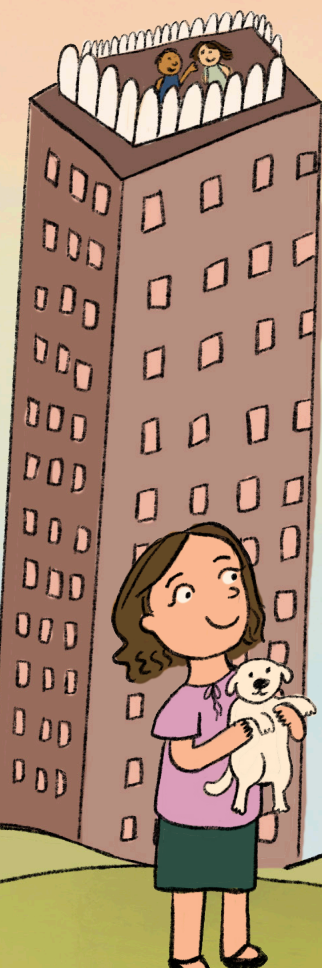
- DEVARIM
- VA'ETHANAN
- EIKEV
- RE'EH
- SHOFTIM
- KI TEITZEI**
- KI TAVO
- NITZAVIM-VAYEILEKH
- HA'AZINU
- VEZOT HA-BERAKHAH



• In This Week's Parashah • כָּה בַּפָּרָשָׁה

Ki Teitzei contains 74 mitzvot—the most of any parashah! The mitzvot here focus on individuals, families, and neighbors. Here are some examples:

- ◆ If you find someone's lost animal, or another lost object, return it to its owner.
- ◆ A נֶדֶר (neder) is a serious promise to God. You have to keep your word.
- ◆ If you want to take eggs or young birds from a nest, you should first send away the mother bird.
- ◆ You must pay your workers on time, especially if they are poor.
- ◆ When you build a house, put a fence around the roof to keep people from falling off.
- ◆ Don't muzzle an ox while it works in the field.
- ◆ Some mixtures are not allowed. Don't plant a mixture of two kinds of seeds, or plow with two different animals together, or wear a piece of clothing made from wool and linen. That's called שְׂעִטְנָה (shaatnez).
- ◆ Use honest measurements and weights in business.
- ◆ You have to be clean and dignified even when going to the bathroom and make sure you don't leave a mess.
- ◆ Don't charge interest when you lend money to someone from Benei Yisrael.





There are a whole lot of mitzvot in our parashah. Are they just smushed together randomly? Or can we learn something from the order in which we find them?

Tanhuma Ki Teitzei 1

One mitzvah leads to another mitzvah. How do we know this? It's written: "If you come across a bird's nest, send away the mother..." (Devarim 22:6-7). What's written after this? "When you build a new house" (Devarim 22:8). When you observe the mitzvah of sending away the mother bird, your reward is you'll get to build a new house for yourself, and then you'll get to do the mitzvah of ma'akeh (building a railing for your roof).



תנחומא כי תצא א

מִצְוָה גּוֹרֶרֶת מִצְוָה —
מִיָּן? דְּכָתִיב: "כִּי
יִקְרָא קוֹן צִפּוֹר
לְפָנֶיהָ... שְׁלַח
תְּשַׁלַּח..."
אֲחֵרֵיוּ מֵה
כְּתִיב? "כִּי
תִבְנֶה בַּיִת
חֹדֶשׁ" — תִּזְכֶּה
לְבִנוֹת בַּיִת חֹדֶשׁ
וּלְעֲשׂוֹת מַעֲקֶה.

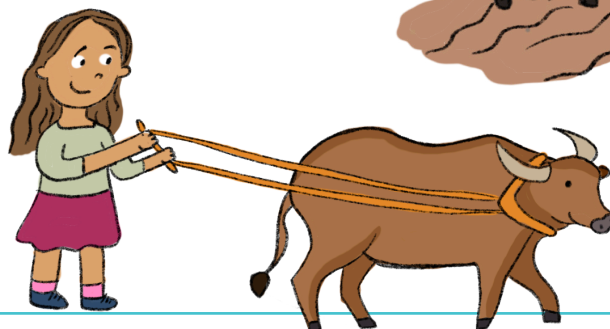


What's written after this? "Do not plant your vineyard with different kinds of seeds" (Devarim 22:9). When you observe the previous mitzvot, your reward will be to have a vineyard and plant a field.

מֵה כְּתִיב אֲחֵרֵיוּ?
"לֹא תִזְרַע בְּרִמָּה
בְּלֶאֱמִים" — תִּזְכֶּה
לְבָרֶם וּלְזֶרַע שְׂדֶה.

What's written after this? "Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together" (Devarim 22:10). If you don't mix plants in your field, then you'll get to have oxen and donkeys.

מֵה כְּתִיב אֲחֵרֵיוּ? "לֹא
תִחַרֵּשׁ בְּשׁוֹר וּבַחֲמֹר —
תִּזְכֶּה לְשׁוֹרִים וְחֲמֹרִים.



What's written after this? "Do not wear shaatnez (a mixture of wool and linen" (Devarim 22:11). If you don't make your donkeys and oxen plow together, you'll get to have fine garments of wool and fine garments of linen.

What's written after this? "You shall make fringes on the four corners of your garment" (Devarim 22:12). If you don't wear wool and linen together, you'll have the opportunity to observe the mitzvah of tzitzit....



מה כתיב אחריו?
"לא תלבש"
שעטנ"ז—תזפה
לבגדים נאים מן
צמר ולבגדים
נאים מפשתים.

מה כתיב אחריו?
"גדלים תעשה"
לך—תזפה
למצות ציצית....

- ♦ What's the real reward here—getting nicer things, or having the chance to do mitzvot with those nice things? Could it be both?
- ♦ How can the chance to do another mitzvah be a reward? Why does doing mitzvot lead a person to do more mitzvot?
- ♦ Have you ever done a mitzvah and then immediately discovered the opportunity to do another? When?



דקה נשל דיין • One-Minute Debate

Debate: Gardening is no fun.



How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree!

- ♦ I don't like getting dirty.
- ♦ There are too many bugs.
- ♦ It takes too long to get things to grow, and it's too hard to get it right.

Disagree!

- ♦ Plants growing is like a miracle happening before your eyes!
- ♦ It's a yummy hobby because you get to eat what you make.
- ♦ Gardening gives you a lot of chances to do mitzvot, like not planting grapes and other fruits together.





Moshe reminds Benei Yisrael about how God changed Bilam's curse into a blessing:

Devarim 23:6

But God your Lord refused to listen to Bilam. God turned the curse into a blessing for you, **because God your Lord loves you.**

דברים כג:ו

וְלֹא אָבָה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לִשְׁמָעַ אֶל בִּלְעָם
וַיַּהֲפֹךְ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ לָךְ אֶת הַקְלָלָה לְבִרְכָּה
כִּי אָהֲבָה ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ:

Why does Moshe need to highlight God's love? What can we learn from that?

Or Ha-Hayyim (Morocco, 300 years ago)

God could have listened to Bilam because he reminded God of the sins Benei Yisrael had done. Even so, God showed favor to Benei Yisrael for no good reason at all, and God did not listen to Bilam. Moshe explained: "that's because God loves you"—but not because you really deserved it.

אור החיים

הַגֵּם שֶׁהָיָה מְקוֹם לְשִׁמוּעַ מִצֶּד עֲנָפִי
הַחֲטָא שֶׁהָיָה בִּלְעָם נֶאֱחָז
בָּהֶם, אֵף עַל פִּי בֶן נִתְרַצָּה
ה' בְּלֹא טַעַם וְלֹא שִׁמְעַ
וְגו', וְנִתְּנָה הַטַּעַם כִּי
אָהֲבָה ה' פְּרוּשׁ לֹא לְצַד
שֶׁהָיְתָה רְאוּי לְדַבֵּר זֶה.

The Or Ha-Hayyim teaches that God loves Benei Yisrael even though they don't necessarily earn, or deserve, that love. That's called "unconditional" love, which is love that's not based on any condition, like having to do something to earn it.

- ◆ How does it feel to know that God's love for Benei Yisrael is unconditional? What does that teach you about God? How does that change the way you think about God?
- ◆ Can you think of a time when someone showed their love for you even though you had made a mistake or done something wrong? What was that like?
- ◆ How can you show love for other people even when they make mistakes?





מִדְרָש • Midrash

After a criminal has been executed, the Torah says the body has to be buried that day:

Devarim 21:23

Do not let the body hang too long on the post.
Rather, bury it that same day.
Because it's a curse to God to let it hang there.

דברים כא:כג

לֹא תֵלִין נִבְלָתוֹ עַל הָעֵץ
כִּי קְבוּרָתָהּ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
כִּי קִלְלַת אֱלֹקִים תִּלְוֶיהָ

How would that be
a curse to God?



Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are
bugged by something
unusual in the Torah text



Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

It's an insult to the king, because people are made
in the image of the One they are like, and
Israel are God's children. It is like two twin
brothers who looked alike. One of them
was king over all the world; the other one
became a criminal, and they hanged him.
But everyone who went past, said, "The
king is being hanged!"

רש"י

וְלִזְלוֹ שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ הוּא, שְׂאֵדָם
עָשׂוּי בְּדַמּוּת דְּיוֹקְנֵנוּ, וְיִשְׂרָאֵל
הֵם בְּנֵי; מִשְׁלַל לְשָׁנֵי אֲחִים
תְּאוֹמִים שֶׁהֵיוּ דּוּמִים זֶה לַזֶּה,
אֶחָד נַעֲשֶׂה מֶלֶךְ וְאֶחָד נִתְּפֵס
לְלִסְטִיּוֹת וְנִתְּלָה, כָּל הָרוֹאֶה
אוֹתוֹ אוֹמֵר הַמֶּלֶךְ תִּלְוֶיהָ.

- ♦ The midrash Rashi quotes is based on the idea that all human beings are created בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹקִים (be-tzelem Elokim, in the image of God). Based on this idea, why would not showing respect to another person (even if that person is a criminal!) be an insult to God? What does this teach us about how we should treat other people?
- ♦ What does it mean to be an image of God? Why were human beings created to be like God? What can this teach us?
- ♦ How many relationships to God does Rashi describe? What is the difference between being God's subjects, God's children, and God's twins? What can each of these relationships teach us about our connection to God?





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.

aliyot:

- 1) Devarim 21:10 to 21:21
- 2) 21:22 to 22:7
- 3) 22:8 to 23:7
- 4) 23:8 to 23:24
- 5) 23:25 to 24:4
- 6) 24:5 to 24:13
- 7) 24:14 to 25:19

haftarah: Yeshayahu
54:1 to 54:10

Good luck!



1 According to our parashah, how much inheritance is a firstborn supposed to get?

3 What mitzvot relate to your fashion choices?

2 What is the reward for sending away the mother bird before taking her eggs or chicks?



4 What are you not allowed to do with a runaway slave?

5 If you pass through someone's vineyard, what are the two rules regarding eating the grapes?

6 What is Benei Yisrael commanded to remember?

7 What has to be done by sunset?

8 What different things are we told to return to their owner?

9 Two amounts of money are mentioned in our parashah. What are they?

10 **From the haftarah:** What kind of tent renovations does God recommend?

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Look for the answers on page 8!



Devarim 22:4

If you see your neighbor's donkey or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it.

Lift it up imo (together).

דברים כב:ד

לֹא תִרְאֶה אֶת חֲמוֹר אֲחִיךָ אוֹ שׁוֹר נִפְלִים בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהִתְעַלְמָתָ מֵהֶם הִקֵּם תְּקִים עִמּוֹ:

Why does the Torah tell us to lift up the animal עִמּוֹ (imo, together)? Why do we have to be told that this must be done together?



Mishnah Bava Metzia 2:10

If the animal's owner went and sat down and said to you, "Since it's your mitzvah, and you want to do this, then go ahead and unload the animal"—then you are not obligated to. That's because the Torah says the animal should be lifted "imo (together)."

But if the owner was elderly or sick, then you are obligated (to unload the animal on your own).

משנה בבא מציעא ב:י

הָלַךְ וַיֵּשֶׁב לוֹ וְאָמַר, הוֹאִיל וְעָלֶיךָ מִצְוָה, אִם רְצוֹנְךָ לִפְרוֹק פְּרוֹק—פָּטוּר, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "עִמּוֹ".
אִם הָיָה זָקֵן אוֹ חוֹלֶה, חַיִּב.

You can see how an owner might take advantage of the fact that you're doing a mitzvah by sitting back and making you do all the work. The word "imo" teaches that you are not responsible to do all the work for them. Rather, you should help as long as it's "together"—as long as the owner is doing their share, too.

- ♦ What is the Torah trying to teach us about fairness? Why doesn't the Torah expect you to help if the person you're helping is not putting in any effort?
- ♦ What can this teach you about the way you should act if you want help from others? When you ask for help, why is it important to do your share of the work?





בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!



The Torah tells us that an Ammonite or Moabite cannot marry into the Jewish community (Devarim 23:4). It also tells us a reason why:

Devarim 23:5

Because they did not meet you with food and water on the road when you left Mitzrayim (Egypt)

דברים כג:ה

עַל דִּבַּר אֲשֶׁר לֹא קָדְמוּ אֹתְכֶם בִּלְחֶם
וּבִמַּיִם בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם

Why does this mean the Ammonites and Moabites can never enter the Jewish people?

Here's one explanation.

R. Samson Raphael Hirsch (Germany, 150 years ago)

Because they had not followed international humanitarian practice by providing food and drink to people passing through their territory who are exhausted from a long journey through the desert...

The accusation of not bringing food and drink is said in the plural, "they did not meet"; it is an international human duty that is expected of each person to fulfill.

According to R. Hirsch, the Ammonites and Moabites didn't just fail to help Benei Yisrael. They refused to do one of the basic things that all human beings are supposed to do for each other: look after travelers who come through our land.

- Why would this be a basic practice that all human beings should do for each other? What other mitzvot does this relate to? Why should failure to do this make someone not able to join the Jewish people? What does this teach us about what Jewish

people are supposed to do in the world?



Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

- Twice as much as anyone else (21:17)
- A good and long life (22:7)
- You can't wear wool and linen together, and you have to wear גְּדִילִים (gedilim, another word for tzitzit) on four-cornered garments (22:11-12)
- Return them to their master (23:16)
- 1) You can eat as much as you want while passing through, 2) you can't collect them in a container (23:25)
- What happened to Miriam in the wilderness (24:9)
- Paying a poor worker (24:15)
- Lost animals (22:1), other lost objects (22:3), a collateral (something taken from a poor person when they borrow money) (24:13)
- 100 pieces of silver (22:19) and 50 pieces of silver (22:29)
- Make your tents bigger, lengthen their ropes, attach their pegs firmly (Yeshayahu 54:2)