

KI TEITZE



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



Rabbi Reuven Tradburks Director of RCA Israel Region

The Parsha contains 74 mitzvot, the most of any parsha in our Torah. It is the third of the parshiot of Mitzvot; Ekev, Shoftim and Ki Teitzei. Moshe began his long address in Sefer Devarim with narrative, reviewing the central experiences of the desert and their lessons; his intent was to help the entry into the Land be successful. He then switched to speaking not about entering the Land, but on how to live in the Land; the building of the Jewish nation. In the Parshiot of Ekev and Shoftim, he outlined Jewish National society beautifully. It is to be an ethical monotheistic society; hence, he outlined the laws of avoiding idol worship, the centrality of what would be Jerusalem and laws of generosity, of sharing with others. He then moved on from the principles of ethical monotheism



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to the foundations of our Nation; the judiciary, the executive and the legislature. And now in Ki Teitzei, he focuses on personal mitzvot. Nation building requires government, courts and checks and balances. But government does not make a great nation; it regulates behavior within certain broad frameworks. Greatness will lie in the day to day life of the people; how they treat each other, help each other, what they say and what they give, how they live with kindness and generosity in day to day life. That is where the greatness of the Jewish nation will lie. Perhaps said differently: Parshat Shoftim will produce headlines. The court system, the king, the wars. Now those make good headlines. Parshat Ki Teitzei will never make the headlines: returning a lost object, paying wages promptly, healthy relationships in marriage. Regard for others doesn't make headlines, but it makes great nations.



1st aliya (Devarim 21:10-21) **Captive Woman:**

One may not marry a woman captured in war until 30 days have elapsed and the passion subsided.

First born: The rights of the first born to a double portion shall not be diverted to the first born of a more favoured wife. **Ben Sorer Umoreh:** a boy entering adulthood who is brazen and gluttonous shall be judged on the fear of future more egregious behaviour.

The soldier is able to marry the non-Jewish woman captured in war; but only after a month of seeing her daily in an unkempt manner. But what is left unsaid is far more important: war is accompanied by rape and pillage of women. Women are viewed as the spoils of war. Not in the Jewish army. The

permission granted to marry this non-Jewish woman after a month screams out the far more basic war ethic: war should never ever be seen by the Jewish army as license for abuse of women.



2nd aliya (21:22-22:7) Burial: Do not allow the body of one sentenced to death to be hung. He is to be buried immediately. **Returning Lost Property:** Don't look away from lost property; return it to its owner. Help up an overly **burdened animal** who has buckled; don't look away. Do not **cross dress**. **Send** a mother bird away before taking the eggs or chicks.

Look at the implied ethic. A person sentenced to death has committed the most serious of sins. Nonetheless, human beings never lose the right to dignity. Even one sentenced to death is a human being; their body is not to be left hanging, but to be buried immediately. Human beings may sully their dignity by terrible crimes deserving of death; but they never forfeit their essential human dignity.

A further implied ethic is contained in the return of lost property. Legal ethics can only regulate that I do not damage your property. But Jewish ethics mandates that we go much further; I need to jump to help your property. There can be no passive bystanders; we need to jump to save lives of others and property of others.



3rd aliya (22:8-23:7) Build a fence on a roof to prevent accidents. **Do not: plant vines and grain together, plow with ox and mules together, wear wool and linen together.** A man shall

איזהו חכם? הרואה את הנולד
Who is wise? He who foresees the future.
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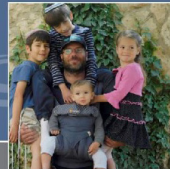
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not: **slander** a new bride claiming her not to be a virgin, nor commit **adultery** with a married woman, nor with a betrothed bride, nor **rape** a single woman. One may not **marry** a mamzer, nor a male from Amon or Moav.

In this aliya we have mitzvot about the most basic of daily life: our homes, our fields or livelihood, our clothes and our relationships with our partners. Each one of these regulates the basic aspects of our lives. In this lies the profound meaning of this parsha. The Torah infuses our lives with meaning. Our relationships, our homes, our food, our clothes; all these things take on meaning when regulated by mitzvot. Rav Soloveit-chik called this redemption, or geula; man's mundane life is redeemed from vulgarity and emptiness by mitzvot. Suddenly, the trite and trivial, the banal life we live

becomes meaningful, an expression of loyalty to our Creator and His love of us by commanding us.



4th aliya (23:8-23:24) One may **marry** one from Edom or Egypt.

Military encampments shall be treated with a degree of **cleanliness**; bathroom facilities shall be outside the camp. Since G-d's presence goes with you, your camp has holiness. **Shelter** a runaway slave. Do not engage in **prostitution**, nor accept its gains as offerings. Do not exact **loan interest**. **Do** that which you **vow**; do not delay its fulfillment.

The charging of interest on a loan is not permitted. This is a Torah legislated type of welfare. When a person is in trouble and needs a loan, he is vulnerable to loan sharking. If he needs money and is desperate, what better recipe for milking him for all he is worth. The Torah forbids the preying on misfortune. Find another way to profit; not off the misfortune of others.



5th aliya (23:25-24:4) **Harvesters** may eat grapes or grains while harvesting. **Divorce**: Divorce needs to be done through a bill of divorce (a Get). If the woman marries another she may



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ח"י אלרל, On her 21st Yahrzeit,

*Judith Berger, Zale Newman, Chaviva Braun
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not return to remarry the first husband.

Allowing the worker to eat that which he is harvesting is the introduction of employer ethics. Being an employer comes with responsibility; people's lives are in your hands. Allowing the worker to consume what he is harvesting is merely an example of sensitivity to the feelings of employees. Worker's rights have their basis in these verses.

Divorce is accomplished through a Get, or a document of divorce. While the creation of a marriage is called kiddushin and has holiness, the dissolution of the marriage must be absolute and complete. The Get is called sefer krittut, a document of complete dissolution. The granting of complete freedom to the woman is the essence of divorce. Creating a relationship is marriage: granting complete freedom is divorce.



6th aliya (24:5-13) First year marriage: Do not go to war in the first year of marriage: bring joy to the new bride. **Kidnapping** is a capital offense. Remember Miriam's **Tzara'at** and keep its laws. **Collateral** may be taken, but only with the owner's cooperation. If the owner needs this collateral, return it to him nightly.

We will mark the 5th yearzeit of our dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather

Rabbi Joel Litke z"l

on Sunday evening, Aug. 29

כא' אלול

We will meet at the main parking lot in Har Hamenuchot at 6:00pm

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If I lend you money and am concerned that you will not pay me back, I may secure my loan with collateral. That makes sense. But the granting of collateral, while fair, should be fair to the borrower as well. Monetary laws are all the balancing of conflicting interests. Benefitting the lender, disadvantages the borrower. And benefitting the borrower, has a cost to the lender. The Torah alerts us to be sensitive in all monetary dealings; an action that benefits one, hurts the other. Balancing the needs of both is the message of the rules of the taking of collateral.



7th **aliya (24:14-25:16)** Do not withhold **wages**: workers are to be paid before the end of the day. Do not **pervert justice** of the foreigner or widow. When **harvesting** grain, olives or grapes, leave the dropped produce for the needy. No more than 40 **lashes** shall ever be given. **Yibum**: a brother shall marry the childless widow of his brother and hence maintain his name. Maintain only **accurate weights** and measures. Remember what **Amalek** did to you in attacking the weak when you left Egypt. Erase any memory of him.

In one aliya we have mitzvot of wages, of

justice, of kindness, of lashes, of levirate marriage, of honesty in business and of Amalek. What was Moshe thinking when he put these all together? Rav Moshe Taragin once commented that the lack of cogent flow to the poetry of Shir haShirim could be explained as a flow of consciousness. Writers often think clearly about the order of their thoughts. Thinkers do not. Our minds fly around, thinking of our work, then about people, then whether we are staying focused, then to our families, then vacation, then our work again, then meaning of life, then...Our minds do not move from 1 to 2 then to 3. Our minds move from 1 to 10 to 5 to 7. Our minds are dynamic, moving quickly, one moment happy, one sad, one excited, the next tired. Perhaps Moshe is reflecting that here. In relating mitzvot, Moshe's mind is moving in a flow of consciousness. He wants to cover mitzvot in all aspects of our life. And so his mind flies through the myriad parts of our lives. Our lives include homes and relationships and work and war and honesty and keeping our word and paying our workers....and on and on. Moshe is describing our life. And telling us that in all aspects of our lives we have mitzvot; ways to do things nobly and with holiness. And that

A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

“Zachor Et Asher Asa Lecha Amalek” (Devarim 25:17)

“Remember forever what Amalek did to you when you left Mitzrayim.”

The entire final paragraph of the Parsha that refers to Amalek was written as though it was speaking to a single individual. Why in a single fashion and not in the plural to all of us as a nation? Rabbi Simcha Bunim from Pshischa (1765-1827) explains this as a formidable message to all of us that Amalek was only able to overcome those people who were disengaged and who felt separate from the nation.

However, the others who were united and identified with the Jewish people were invulnerable. The lesson, well learned, Amalek or any threat cannot penetrate against us if we are all united in our observance and dedication to G-d. Shabbat Shalom ■

there is nary a part of life void of mitzvot. It is this richness of behavior in our personal life that is truly the necessary ingredient of nation building.

HAFTARAH

YESHAYAHU 54:1-10

This week's *haftarah* is the fifth of a series of seven "Haftarot of Consolation." These seven *haftarot* commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

The navi compares the city of Jerusalem to a barren woman devoid of children. Hashem enjoins her to rejoice, for the time will arrive when the Jewish nation will return and repopulate the Holy City. The prophet promises the Jewish people that Hashem has not forsaken them. Although at times Hashem hides His countenance He will certainly gather them from the *galut* with great mercy.

"For like the waters of Noach shall this be for Me: As I have sworn never again to pass the waters of Noach over the earth, so have I sworn not to be wrathful with you or rebuke you." ■

STATS

49th of the 54 sedras; 6th of 11 in D'varim
Written on 212.8 lines; ranks 21st
44 Parshiyot; 2 open, 42 closed; rank: 1
110 p'sukim; ranks 28th (5th in D'varim)
1582 words; ranks 23rd (5th in D'varim)
5856 letters; ranks 26th (6th in D'varim)

MITZVOT

74 mitzvot - 27 positive, 47 prohibitions; Ki Teitzei has the most mitzvot (both positive and prohibitions) in the Torah

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