

פרשת כי תצא

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Ki Tetzei (Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19) - Finders Keepers?

What should we do if we find something that's not ours? Though it might be tempting to pocket it, especially if no one else would ever know, this week's Torah portion (22: 1-3) tells us that we should make the effort to find the owner and return it. "Finder's keepers, loser's weepers" is not the Torah way.

Story

- In our story, a kid has to decide whether finding means keeping.

TIME KEEPER

Barry and Jack were roughhousing their way home from school as usual, enjoying the cool, sunny walk, when suddenly Barry saw something glimmering under a bush along the side of the road.

Ducking down, he stuck his arm in and let out a squeal of joy, as he pulled out a gleaming, gold pocket watch.

"Wow, what a find!" he said, beaming like an angler who'd just hooked a prize fish. "Check it out. It says 'fourteen carat gold' and even has some fancy initials carved into it."

"M. K.?" asked Jack.

"Well ... yeah. But how did you know?" Barry asked, surprised.

"'Cuz that's what it says on the note taped up to this telephone pole over here, written by the guy who lost it. It has the guy's phone number, too. He's gonna be real happy when you call him and tell you found his watch."

"Forget it, man. I'm not calling anyone! This watch is now in the proud possession of - me." As if to emphasize the point, the boy stuffed the watch deep into his jacket pocket.

"Come on, Barry!" Jack gave him a playful shove. "That's not right. Some guy lost his fancy, expensive watch - the note here describes it perfectly - you've gotta give it back."

"No way! Finders keepers, losers weepers," Barry shot back with a shove of his own "Is it my fault some guy happened to have butter-fingers and dropped his watch?"

Suddenly, Barry's cell phone rang. He answered it, but it was a wrong number. As he went to put the phone back in his pocket, it slipped and fell to the ground. Jack bent down and picked it up. "Thanks, man," Barry said, with his hand out. But instead of handing him his phone, Jack pocketed it.

"Hah-hah. Funny joke. Now give me back my phone."

But Jack shook his head. "Uh, uh. You don't have a cell phone any more. This is *my* phone, now."

Barry lunged to try to get it, but the bigger, stronger Jack jumped back.

"Hey, I'm serious, Jack. Give it!"

"Why should I? *You* lost it - *I* found it. Is it my fault you had butter-fingers?"

Barry realized what his friend was driving at, but didn't want to buy it. "Come on. It's not the same at all."

"Why not?"

"First of all, you *know* whose phone it is."

Jack just smirked and pointed to the note hanging up on the pole. "Barry, you know the watch is ... his."

"Second, it's a really expensive phone. My dad will kill me if..."

"I doubt it's worth more than a gold watch. Hmm ... who should I call first on my new phone? Alaska? ... China?"

Barry was turning red - not only because his buddy was teasing him, but because he was starting to make sense.

"And third of all..." Barry went on in a quiet voice, "I need to use the phone right now to make a very important call."

"Oh yeah, to who?"

"To ... um ... that number on the note over there. The guy must be going nuts hoping someone will find his watch and give it back."

Jack slapped his friend on the back and flipped him the phone.

"*Now* you're pushing the right button!"

Discussion Questions

Ages 3-5

- Q. How did Barry feel when he first found the watch?
- Q. How did he feel in the end?

Ages 6-9

- Q. What life lesson do you think Barry learned that day?
- Q. Is a person never allowed to keep something he or she finds?

Ages 10 and Up

- Q. What is exactly wrong about keeping something of someone else's that we find?

<http://www.aish.com>

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

1. **Why must a captured woman mourn her family for a month in her captor's house?**
21:13 - So her captor will find her unattractive.
2. **What fraction of the inheritance does a first-born receive if he has a) one brother? b) two brothers?**
21:17 - a) $\frac{2}{3}$ b) $\frac{1}{2}$
3. **What will become of a *ben sorer u'moreh* if his parents don't bring him to court?**
21:22 - He will eventually rob and kill to support his physical indulgences.
4. **Why is it a degradation to Hashem to hang a criminal's body on the gallows overnight?**
21:23 - Because humans are made in Hashem's image; and because the Jewish People are Hashem's children.
5. **What do you do if you find a lost object that costs money to maintain?**
22:2 - Sell it and save the money for the owner.
6. **Why does the Torah forbid wearing the clothing of the opposite gender?**
22:5 - It leads to immorality.
7. **Why does the Torah link the mitzvah of sending away the mother-bird with the mitzvah of making a railing on the roof of your house?**
22:8 - To teach that one mitzvah leads to another, and to prosperity.
8. **When is it permitted to wear wool and linen?**
22:12 - Wool *tzitzit* on a linen garment.
9. **What three things happen to a man who falsely slanders his bride?**
22:18 - He receives lashes, pays a fine of 100 silver *selah*, and may never divorce her against her will.
10. **Although the Egyptians enslaved the Jewish People, the Torah allows marriage with their third-generation converts. Why?**
23:8 - Because they hosted Yaakov and his family during the famine.
11. **Why is causing someone to sin worse than killing him?**
23:9 - Murder takes away life in this world, while causing someone to sin takes away his life in the World to Come.
12. **If one charges interest to his fellow Jew, how many commandments has he transgressed?**
23:21 - Three; two negative commandments and a positive commandment.
13. **What is the groom's special obligation to his bride during their first year together?**
24:5 - To gladden her.
14. **When is a groom required to fight in a non-obligatory war?**
24:5 - When he remarries his ex-wife.
15. **What type of object may one not take as collateral?**
24:6 - Utensils used to prepare food.

<http://ohr.edu/qa/5759/devarim/kiseitze>