

פרשת שופטים

פרשה זו פותחת בחובה למנות שופטים – הממונים על החוק ופסיקתו, ולצידם שוטרים – הממונים על שמירת החוק, שני אלה נחוצים על מנת להבטיח שישרור צדק בעם. אחד החלקים המעניינים בפרשה עוסק בחוקי המלך, למשל: המלך יבחר אך ורק מתוך העם. ועוד: על המלך נאסרו שלושה דברים עיקריים: להרבות לו סוסים, להרבות נשים ולהרבות לו כסף וזהב. הוא מצווה לכתוב לו ספר תורה שילך עמו תמיד. בהמשך הפרשה - האיסור לעסוק בכישוף, במקום לפנות אל קוסמים – צריך להתייעץ בנביאי האמת שיבחר בהם ה'. ועוד מוצגים בפרשה כללי ההתנהגות בשעת מלחמה: חשיבות הביטחון בה' שיצליח בידינו, כללים הקובעים מי לא יצטרף למלחמה, וכללי התנהגות לאחר הניצחון.

אסור להרוס

במקרה של מצור ממשיך כְּדִי לְתַפֹּס עִיר, אָסוּר לְגַדֵּעַ עֵצִי פְּרִי לְצַרְךָ הַמְצוּר.
כִּי תִצּוּר אֶל עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עֲלֶיהָ לְתַפְּשָׁהּ,
לֹא תִשְׁחִית אֶת עֵצָהּ לְנֹדֶחַ עֲלִיו גֶּרֶזֶן,
כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכַל וְאֵתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת,
כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לְבֹא מִפְּנֵיךָ בַּמְצוּר?

[דברים פרק כ', פסוק י"ט](#)

האדם הראשון - מדרש

בְּשַׁעָה שֶׁבָרָא הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן, נִטְלוּ וְהִחְזִירוּ עַל כָּל אֵילָנֵי גֶן עֵדֶן,
וְאָמַר לוֹ: רְאֵה מַעֲשֵׂי כַּמָּה נְאִים וּמִשְׁבָּחִים הֵם
וְכָל מָה שֶׁבָרָאתִי - בְּשִׁבְלֶךָ בָּרָאתִי.
תּוֹ דַּעְתָּךְ שְׁלֵא תִקְלָקֵל וְתִחְרִיב אֶת עוֹלָמִי,
שְׂאֵם קִלְקֵלֶת - אִין מִי שְׂיִתְקֹן אַחֲרֶיךָ.

על-פי קהלת רבה מהדורת וילנא, פרשה ז', סעיף י"ג

קראו את המדרש וענו על השאלות:

מדוע, לדעתכם, מספר המעשה דוקא על אדם הראשון? במה שונה העולם שלו מהעולם של אלו שבאו אחריו?

חשבו על העולם בימינו: האם מה שקלוקלנו אין מי שייתקן? הביאו דגמה אחת לקלוקל כזה.

<http://www.galim.org.il/>

Shoftim(Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9)

Give Peace a Chance!

From this week's Torah Portion

It's better to make peace than war. In this week's Torah portion (Deut. 20:10-12) we learn that even when war is justified, it's proper to give the other side a chance to settle peacefully first. We can learn from here always to look for ways to make - and keep - the peace.

Story

In our story, some kids find a creative way to show that fighting isn't the only way.

TIE DYE

Laura, the captain of Camp Swan's color-war red team, was about to take a tall plastic pitcher and pour herself a cool drink when she felt a shove.

"Hey, why'd you do that?" she asked the perpetrator.

"'Cuz you're a 'red,' that's why!" the angry looking younger kid said, pointing to her red t-shirt. "And reds always have to wait for 'blues' to go first, 'cuz blues rule!" With that, the kid in her blue t-shirt poured her own drink and stomped away from the camp snack table with a scowl.

"Wow, I saw that," Laura's best friend and blue team captain, Kate, called out, walking her way. "I'm sorry that kid was so rude!"

Laura shrugged. "Unfortunately that's the way it gets around here, color war time. Good thing that kid didn't notice my captain's stripes," she added with a chuckle. "Or else she probably would have poured the whole pitcher on top of my head."

"This is no joking matter, Laura," Kate insisted. "As much as I try to tell my campers - and even my deputy captain - that even though it's called color 'war,' it's really about fun competition and sportsmanship, a lot of them insist on making it into a nasty fight."

"I know what you mean. It's really getting out of hand," Laura nodded, throwing up her hands. "But at least if we stay friends, maybe they will too."

* * *

It was the night before the final day of the bitter, three-day competition. The next morning was the awards ceremony, when the judges were going to tally up all the points and announce the winning team, who'd get prizes and a special victory barbecue. Both teams, certain *they* were going to be the winners, rushed their color-war t-shirts to the camp laundry room to wash, so they'd look their best in victory.

"Excuuuuse me, we go first!" Jenny, the red team deputy said, standing in front of the huge, commercial washing machine with the load of red t-shirts she'd collected from her teammates.

"That's what *you* think," Lynne, the blue team deputy snapped back, trying to push her load of *blue* t-shirts into the machine ahead of the others. "Winners go before losers!"

The two were tugging back and forth on the two loads and shouting, when Laura and Kate, who were meeting to plan the ceremony, heard the commotion as they walked by.

"Jenny, what's going on?" Laura asked her deputy, whose face was as red as laundry basket of t-shirts in her hands.

"I'm just trying to wash our stuff for our victory celebration and this twerp" - she pointed at Lynne - "is trying to jump ahead!"

"Lynne, is that so?" Kate looked at her deputy questioningly.

"Almost..." she snapped, "except it's this loser that's trying to jump ahead of *me*!"

The two team captains looked at each other and shook their heads as the tug-of-war began anew.

"All this fighting, just because we're wearing different colored shirts..." Laura sighed. Suddenly a small smile played on her lips. "Y'know, I have an idea, if, of course, Captain Kate goes along. This washing machine is big enough to wash *both* teams' t-shirts together, so there's no need to fight."

"But, if..." Kate started to object, but then looking Laura's way and noticing her friend's nodding wink, she grinned.

"Yeah, that's a *great* idea!" she said "And make sure to set the machine to the *hottest* water setting so they get *really* clean, okay? Then you can both go to sleep, so you'll be fresh for tomorrow's ceremony. We have to stay up anyway, so we'll take the laundry out, dry it and drop it off at your bunks to give out tomorrow," Kate added with Laura's approving nod.

The next morning Jenny woke with the first rays of the sun to give out the red team t-shirts. She smiled at the big basket of freshly washed laundry at the foot of her bed. She walked over to get them - and gasped...

Meanwhile, in the next bunk, Lynne, who'd got up to give out the blue team shirts, was having the same reaction to the basket of ... purple! ... t-shirts in front of her. Washing both sets of new t-shirts together had made their colors leak and blend into one!

With nothing else to wear, the deputies gave out the shirts to the campers and the awards ceremony, instead of the usual two warring sides, became a sea of identical purple campers. On the stage, the smiling judges, standing next to the two team captains, announced:

"After discussing the matter - and due to some, er, unusual circumstances - we've decided to declare this year's color-war to be a tie. You will *all* be getting awards and be celebrating the victory barbecue - together!

The camper - friends, who'd made the mistake of thinking they were enemies - all let out a cheer. Even Lynne and Jenny laughed and shook hands. Meanwhile Kate and Laura, standing on stage together, smiled, glad they'd finally found a way to get them to see things through different ... that is, the same ... colored glasses.

Discussion Questions

Ages 3-5

Q. How did the team captains, Laura and Kate, feel about the color war competition?

A. They felt it should be good, peaceful fun - not a nasty fight.

Q. How did the Jenny and Lynne feel?

A. They made the mistake of acting like enemies, but in the end realized they were really friends.

Ages 6-9

Q. What life-lesson do you think someone could learn from this story?

A. It's easy to get caught up in fighting with others and looking at them like the 'enemy' but everyone wins when we find ways to be at peace, and stay at peace with others instead.

Q. Do you think the team captains knew what would happen if they washed the shirts together?

A. Certainly, but they realized that if things went on they way they were, with the 'war' tearing the camp in half, something even more important than shirts was going to get ruined.

Ages 10 and Up

Q. Our sages teach us to 'pursue' peace. What do you think that means?

A. It's not enough to passively be willing to be at peace with others as long as they're willing to be at peace with us. Rather, we should actively go out of our way and make an extra effort keep our relations with others peaceful.

Q. Are there times when it's impossible to be at peace?

A. It could be that after making every reasonable effort, others just won't relate to us peacefully. However we should certainly try very hard at making peace before reaching that conclusion.