

# THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT KEDOSHIM

10-11 MAY | 3 IYAR

## Sticks and Stones



**KENZEL  
EDER**

Tribe Events  
Executive

In this week's parasha, we read, "You shall not insult the deaf, or place a stumbling block before the blind" (Vayikra 19:14). Our Sages understand that this is not a literal stumbling block, so what does it actually mean?

The Torah uses the metaphor of blindness to refer to situations where people may be vulnerable, lacking knowledge or unaware of certain circumstances. It challenges us to consider the impact of our actions on those who may be

figuratively blind. Our tradition emphasises the value of empathy and compassion. Being careful not to "place a stumbling block before the blind" reminds us to be conscious of the potential impact of our words and deeds on others.

The commandment encourages us to reflect on the ethical implications of our actions. We need to ask ourselves if we are treating others with fairness and justice, or are we inadvertently placing stumbling blocks in their path? How can we align our behaviour with the values of our tradition?

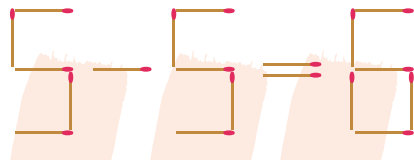
Let's take a look at the first part of the verse. Ramban (Nachmanides, 1194-1270) teaches that the Torah prohibits insulting a deaf person "even though they will not hear

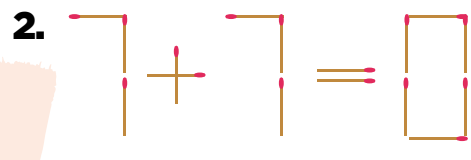
nor be upset by it". Why do we need to be careful not to insult a deaf person if they won't hear us anyway? Because the Torah is not only concerned about the victim, but even about the person who curses or insults. If the insult got back to the deaf person, not only would they be upset, but they might also be angry and seek revenge.

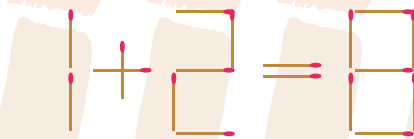
As children, many of us learned the nursery rhyme "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never harm me." Unfortunately, most of us also learned the painful lesson that this convenient playground comeback isn't really true. The Torah challenges us to be thoughtful and compassionate in all our dealings with others.

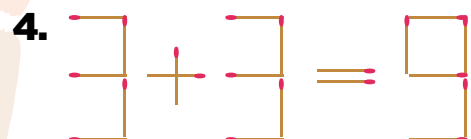
## Sticks and stones matchstick puzzles!

Move only one matchstick in each question to make the equation true.

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

Answers: 1. 5-5=0, 2. 7+1=8, 3. 7+2=9, 4. 3+3=6