

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT KI TEITZEI

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Mitzvot: life's holy guidelines



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Several times in the Book of Devarim, Moshe tells us that the mitzvot are for our benefit as they lead to a growing connection with God. He teaches us to lead lives that are not just moral and ethical, but holy.

In this week's parasha, we read about relationships: between men and women, parents and children, employers and employees, lenders and borrowers. Interestingly, it is also about our relationship with the

animal kingdom.

The parasha says, "Do not plough with an ox and donkey together" (Devarim 22:10). Since the ox is stronger than a donkey, the expectation to have the donkey match the work of the ox is cruel.

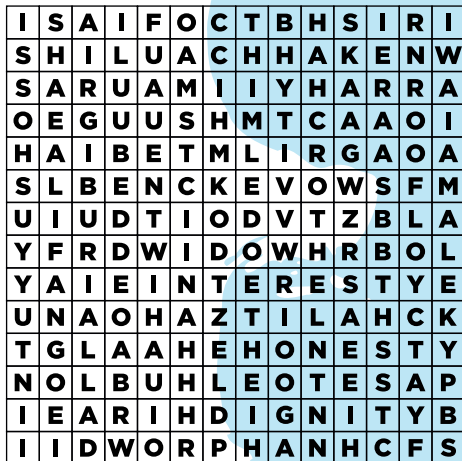
We also read, "Do not muzzle an ox when it is threshing grain" (ibid. 25:4). Rather, we should allow the ox to eat while it is performing a task for our benefit.

A third mitzvah given is that of *Shiluach HaKen*: "If, along the road, you chance upon a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs and the mother sitting over the fledglings or on the eggs, do not take the mother together with her

young" (ibid. 22:6). This can be seen as an additional case of compassion for another non-human entity, by sparing the mother bird emotional pain. It is also a means of training ourselves to refrain from any type of cruelty to any of God's magnificent animals so that by extension we do not come close to cruelty to our fellow human beings.

With 74 mitzvot (the most in any parasha), Ki Teitzei is filled with detailed guidance and instructions of how to live a life that is kind to humans and animals alike, which will then lead to a holy life, in covenant with God.

Parasha Wordsearch



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VOWS
AMALEK
WIDOW
BURIAL
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HONESTY
SHILUACH HAKEN
INTEREST
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