

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 175

Ki Teitzei | The Mitzvah of Returning a Lost Item



MESILOT

Pathways to the Soul

Illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly Parsha
of **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel Zt"l**

From the weekly lessons of his son
Rabbi Yisrael Abargel Shlita

פרשת כי תצא | אנגלית

...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Mitzvah of Returning a Lost Item . . .	1
Knowing What Belongs to You	3
Everything For the People of Israel	4
The Silver Cord of the Soul	6
The Soul Weeps Within	8
The Righteous Are Guarantors	11
With Love and Affection	14
The Valued Trait of Equanimity	17
Can One Not Act?	21
True Love of Israel Requires Action	23
Summary and Practical Conclusions	25



DONATE

Beit Hamidrash Hameir La'aretz

Publisher and Distributer of the Teachings of
Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel zt"l



500 Frank W Burr Blvd Suite 47
Teaneck, NJ 07666



en@h-l.org.il



www.hameir-laarets.org.il/en



HaKatzir 666, Netivot, Israel



(954) 800-6526



HameirLaaretsEN



HameirLaaretsEN



054-870-8737

Message Us to Join Our WhatsApp Groups

Parshat Ki Teitzei

The Mitzvah of Returning a Lost Item

Our parsha, Parshat Ki Teitzei, is the longest Torah portion in terms of the number of commandments written in it, containing seventy-four commandments (of the 613).

Among them, we are commanded about the mitzvah of returning a lost item, and the verse reads as follows:

"You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep wandering off and ignore them; you must certainly return them to your brother. If your brother is not near you or you do not know who he is, take it home with

you and keep it until your brother comes looking for it; then give it back to him" (Deuteronomy 22:1-2).

The mitzvah of returning a lost item is a positive commandment between a person and their fellow, requiring one to return a lost item to its owner.

And we quote the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat, Siman 259:1):

"One who sees a lost item belonging to a fellow Jew is obligated to attend to it and return it to its owner, as it is said: 'You shall certainly return them.'¹

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

1. Rabbi Eliezer Shlomo Shick once related the following (Sichot Moharosh, vol. 16 - page 71):

In Jerusalem lived a righteous Jew named Rabbi Avraham Vaknin, who had many special and holy customs.

One of them was that he would gather children on Shabbat afternoon in the

synagogue until it was filled to capacity, he would recite the entire book of Tehillim with them, and then distribute to them candies.

No less significantly, he would also tell them stories of righteous individuals.

Once, he told them a wonderful story about a poor and destitute man who barely had bread to eat.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Mitzvah of Returning a Lost Item

If he took it with the intention of stealing it, and the owners have not yet despaired of its return, he

then violates the commandments of 'You shall certainly return them to your brother,' 'You shall not

Wellsprings of Wisdom

One day, while walking in the street, he found a valuable gold chain. His first thought was to sell it and live off the money, as he was very impoverished. But then he reconsidered, remembering the mitzvah of returning lost property.

He decided to announce his find in case the owner would come to claim it. He posted notices all over the city, stating that he had found a piece of jewelry and that the owner should bring identifying signs to retrieve it.

Almost a year later, someone came and said that he had lost a gold chain a year ago and gave precise identifying details.

The poor man realized that this was indeed the rightful owner to whom he needed to return it.

However, he asked the owner to wait a few minutes, saying he would soon return the lost item.

Meanwhile, he quickly ran to the grocery store, bought rolls, herring, and drinks, prepared a complete meal, and invited a quorum of ten people to join the feast.

The owner of the lost item was puzzled and even fearful that they might forcibly take the chain from him. But when he saw everyone washing their hands for the meal, he joined them.

Suddenly, the finder of the lost item stood up, took out the chain, and loudly and enthusiastically declared: 'L'shem Yichud' - "For the sake of the unification of the Holy One, blessed be He, and His Shechinah, I am ready and willing to fulfill the mitzvah of returning lost property."

He then returned the item with great intention and great joy.

Everyone was astonished, having never seen anyone celebrate the mitzvah of returning lost property with such grandeur.

The poor man explained: "It is mentioned in the Talmud (Shabbat 118b) that when Abaye saw a Torah scholar completing a tractate of Talmud, he would make a feast for the sages, celebrating the completion of the great mitzvah.

"I have kept this lost item with me for an entire year, fulfilling the mitzvah of returning lost property, and now that I have finally found the owner, how could I not make a feast to honor the completion of the mitzvah?"

Everyone was deeply moved by this Jew's sincerity and learned how to perform G-d's commandments with great splendor and joy. Fortunate is the one who thus performs G-d's commandments with joy.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - Knowing What Belongs to You

steal' (Leviticus 19:13), and 'You shall not ignore' (Deuteronomy 22:3).

And even if one later returns it, he has already violated 'You shall not ignore'.

This mitzvah applies in all places and at all times, to both males and females (items that women typically do not carry, they are exempt from tending to, similar to an elderly person for whom the same is not required if it is beneath their dignity).

There are many details in this mitzvah. Some items the finder is

not required to announce, and some items he is required to announce. Additionally, regarding items that must be announced, one must know how to announce and how to verify the person claiming the lost item, and so forth.

The sages of the Talmud dedicated an entire chapter to elucidating this mitzvah, the chapter of 'Eilu Metziot' (the second chapter of Tractate Bava Metzia).²

We will now bring another detail on this topic.

Knowing What Belongs to You

The prevalent custom in Jewish communities worldwide is that the first part of

the Talmud taught to children is the chapter of 'Eilu Metziot.'

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

2. As is known, the Holy One, blessed be He, fulfills himself the commandments of the Torah that he gave us.

In his famous halachic work, Rabbi Yosef Chaim of Baghdad (whose yearzeit is observed every year around the time of Parshat 'Ki Teitzei', the 13th of Elul), known as the 'Ben Ish Chai', explains how G-d fulfills the mitzvah of returning lost property:

It is written: "You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep straying and ignore them; you shall surely return them to your brother" (Deuteronomy 22:1).

It is therefore that G-d created the source of souls above the source of the angels, making the source of the souls of Israel close to Him, through which he returns their lost souls, meaning He accepts their repentance when they confess and regret, and abandoning the sin.

The story is told³ that once the educators of the Tiferet Jerusalem Yeshiva approached Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, and asked him whether it would be advisable to heed the advice of those who suggested beginning to teach the young students with a simpler chapter, such as 'Ein Omdin Lehitpalel,' because at the start of their learning, it is sometimes difficult for children to grasp the concepts of 'Eilu Metziot.'

Rabbi Moshe replied that they should not change the established custom and should indeed begin learning with the

children the established chapter of 'Eilu Metziot.'

He explained further:

'Know that the first fundamental principle that children need to learn is: this belongs to me, and this does not belong to me, meaning they should know how to differentiate between an item that is theirs, which they are permitted to use, and an item that is not theirs, which they are not permitted to use. This fundamental principle is learned well throughout the chapter of 'Eilu Metziot.'

Now let us begin our further discussion.

Everything For the People of Israel

The Book of Deuteronomy is called 'Mishneh Torah,' where Moses our teacher reviews and summarizes all the commandments of the

Torah, interweaving it with lofty prophecies and tremendous revelations, spanning the time from the beginning of creation to the end of days.⁴

~~~~~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~~~~~

3. 'Bdidi Hava Uvda' (page 123) by Rabbi Shmuel David Friedman.

4. The book of 'Mishneh Torah' (Deuteronomy) is a book of ethics, and everyone can find many lessons on ethics within it.

It presents before man, great aspirations, lofty values, and the desire to perform ethical improvement within himself.

Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin wrote (Pri Tzadik, Devarim - section 1):

One such unique revelation is the verse:

"Remember the days of old... When the Most High gave nations their inheritance and divided mankind, He set up boundaries for the nations according to the number of the people of Israel. For G-d's portion is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance" (Deuteronomy 32:7-9).

These lofty verses elucidate the immense connection and tremendous uniqueness that exists between the people of Israel and G-d.

It is known that the early generations sinned greatly, and therefore they deserved to be destroyed from the world, in fulfillment of the verse: "When

the wicked perish, there is joy" (Proverbs 11:10).⁵

Indeed, some of these generations perished and were destroyed from the world, but there were generations that sinned and nevertheless, G-d did not destroy them, because of the people of Israel.

As Rashi explains:

"Remember the days of old' - what He did to the early ones who provoked Him: the generation of Enosh - He inundated them with the waters of the ocean. The generation of the flood - He washed them away. When the generation of the dispersion sinned, He had the power to remove them from the world, but He did not do so; rather, He established the boundaries of the peoples.

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

I heard from many others that the 'Yehudi Hakadosh' studied a few verses from the book of Deuteronomy every day, stating that it served as a book of 'Mussar' for him.

The reason he studied specifically the book of Deuteronomy is that Moses, our teacher, said it himself (with prophetic vision), and his words are eternal, and

moreover, during this reading, it is as if he hears the words directly from Moses, and Moses' words most surely enter the heart and have a guaranteed effect.

5. Metzudat David (there) explains: 'Rejoicing' - because while alive, they caused harm to others.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Silver Cord of the Soul

The reason: 'according to the number of the people of Israel' - for the number of the people of Israel who were destined to come from the sons of Shem.

'For G-d's portion is His people' - because the people of Israel are G-d's portion in the world."⁶

We will now expand on this...

The Silver Cord of the Soul

In a talk delivered by my father, Rabbi Yoram Abergel, he said ('Imrei Noam', Parshat Haazinu - Maamar 2):

In Parshat Ha'azinu, it is stated: "For G-d's portion is His people, Jacob His allotted inheritance" (Deuteronomy 32:9).

This verse speaks of the secret of the holy soul of each and every Jew, which comprises two aspects: inner and outer.

Corresponding to the inner soul, it is said: 'For G-d's portion is His people,' and corresponding to the outer soul,

Wellsprings of Wisdom

6. The prophet Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations during the terrible period of the destruction of the First Temple and the ensuing exile of the Jewish people from their land.

In Lamentations, he describes all the sufferings that befell the Jewish people, the humiliations, the pains, the persecutions, and the exiles.

Yet in the middle of it all, Jeremiah pauses and notes: "G-d is my portion, says my soul; therefore, I will hope in Him" (Lamentations 3:24). And Rashi explains: G-d is my portion, and it is fitting for me to hope in Him.

In other words, Jeremiah wants all to know that a Jew is eternally connected to G-d. No one can sever a Jew from his G-d.

The saintly Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi explains (Tanya, Iggeret HaKodesh, chapter 7):

From the time of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, we were chosen to be a part of G-d.

The Divine power that shines in the soul of every Jew - whoever he may be - is called 'a portion.' For every Jew has the Divine light that illuminates and sustains him.

The meaning of 'portion' (in this context) is an equal part among all of the Jewish people - it is the Divine light revealed in the heart of every Jew of the people of Israel, and it exists in them forever.

For this we thank G-d and praise: Fortunate are we, how good is 'our portion'.

it is said: 'Jacob His allotted inheritance.'

The explanation:

Every Jew emanates from G-d's name, as in the verse "a part of G-d above" (Job 31:2).

The essence and inner part of the soul is in the upper worlds, close to the Throne of His Glory, and only a small, outer part of the soul descends down below in this world within a person's body.

Corresponding to the part of the soul that is in the upper worlds, it is said: 'For G-d's portion is His people,' because this part remains directly connected to its source above in Heaven, and is a connected undetached portion.

Corresponding to the part of the soul that is down in this world within a person's body, it is said: 'Jacob His allotted (- literally, of) inheritance,' because this part is somewhat distant from its source and root, and it is connected by a spiritual cord called "the silver cord" (Ecclesiastes 12:6).

Through this cord, which connects the part of the soul within

the body to its source in the upper worlds, all of a person's prayers and Divine service ascends to the heavens, all of a person's vitality and sustenance descend, and through it as well, the Torah that they study also descends to them.

Therefore, one must carefully guard the strength of this cord and not cause it to weaken, G-d forbid.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, explains in Tanya (Igeret Hateshuva, Chapter 5), that this spiritual cord is comparable to a thick rope made up of 613 thin strands.

Similarly, the cord that connects the part of the soul within the body to its source in the upper worlds consists of 613 strands corresponding to the 613 commandments of the Torah. As long as a person refrains from sin and observes the commandments properly, this cord remains intact, and G-d channels vitality and sustenance through it to the person, both physically and spiritually.

However, when a person neglects any commandment or transgresses any sin, the

corresponding strand in the cord is cut, diminishing the overall cord. The more commandments one neglects and sins, the more strands are severed, leading to a significant weakening of the cord.

If G-d forbid, one transgresses a sin punishable by spiritual excision, the cord is completely severed, thereby disconnecting the person from their Creator.

Let us delve a bit further on this.

The Soul Weeps Within

When Maimonides (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuva 7:6) describes the calamity that the sinner brings upon themselves, he writes:

"Teshuva brings near those who are far. Yesterday, this person was rejected by G-d, despised, and abominable, and today they are beloved, desirable, close, and 'a friend'".

This means that when a person lives in sin, they distance themselves and become lost before G-d, and G-d is saddened by this.

Not only is G-d saddened, the person's soul is also quite saddened.

When a Jew sins, their soul feels that they're being distanced from G-d, and it weeps and laments over this.

It dons black garments and rolls in the dust, crying out and weeping: 'Woe to me. Why have I been placed in such a coarse and cruel body?'

The soul's weeping and sorrow are also felt in the outer layers of the psyche, resulting in feelings of anger and frustration, sadness, and bitterness.

In the words of the Rabbi Yekutiel Yehuda Halberstam:⁷

"When a gentile commits a sin, he does so wholeheartedly, and his mind fully agrees with it without any opposition from his conscience.

But not so with the people of Israel, the holy nation.

Even when they sin, their soul weeps within them, and only the body, against its will, forces

Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Soul Weeps Within

them to act against their better instincts and intellect. Their heart is not at peace within them and is full of anger and pain for not being able to control their desire.

Thus, we see unfortunate people, who constantly change, shifting into various forms.

At home, they are one way, outside another. In the study hall, they are one way, at home another. By day, they are one way, by night another.

And when the High Holy Days come around, they behave completely differently.

This is all because the spiritual form and the physical matter are always at war and at odds with each other, and the soul struggles against the body, and there is no peace inside the person.

As the expression our sages used (Berachot 61a), 'Woe to me from my inclination and woe to me from my Creator.'

Thus, all their life they are in a state of fluctuation and frenzied movement; in one moment they are intoxicated by their desire, with a burning heart, and the next, after they stumble, they beat their head against the wall, groaning from the depths of their heart, 'What have I done?' and feel ashamed and regretful about the past'.⁸

For this sad case as well, G-d, in His abundant mercy, assigned to the righteous the mitzvah and obligation of 'returning lost items'.

Before we continue, let us bring an introduction.

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

7. 'Shefa Chaim - Torah Umoadim' (vol. 22 - page 281, Parshat Nitzavim-Vayeilech 5722).

8. Nonetheless, a Jew must not despair and must gather within himself the strength and start anew each time.

A Jew must remind himself: 'What was yesterday belongs to yesterday. Today will be completely different'.

In this regard, the following story is related ('Bein Dagim L'Zemiroh', by Rabbi Zalman Ruderman Part 3 - page 53):

In one of the townlets in Russia lived a simple wagon driver with a firm and pure faith in G-d, but an unlearned person the same. As a child, he was

Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Soul Weeps Within

orphaned and therefore did not receive a proper Jewish education.

He never studied Torah, and the fact that he could read and pray from a siddur was considered an achievement for him.

When he grew up, he took up the trade of a wagon driver and was moderately successful.

Every morning, he would wake up early and pray quickly at home, as the prayer services at the synagogue had not yet started at that early hour.

Then he would prepare his wagon, hitch it to his horse, and set off to the train station, about thirty kilometers away from town.

Twice a day, the train would stop at the station. In the morning, on its way from west to east, and at noon, on its way from east to west. The wagon driver would wait for the train, and when it stopped, he would ring his bell.

Then the residents of his town, returning from the nearby cities, would gather around him, and he would take them to their homes for a fixed fee.

At noon, he would return along his route, usually earning twice as much, as he often took passengers to the station for the return journey, in addition to passengers who disembarked from the train at noon.

This was his regular life pattern, year after year, following a fixed and routine pattern.

When the wagon driver's son reached the age of education, the father wanted

to give him what he himself had missed in childhood, and sent him to a 'melamed' (teacher) to learn Torah.

However, the son struggled to grasp the studies. His mind was dull, and he barely learned the Aleph-Bet. While his peers were already studying Chumash and Mishnah, he still struggled to form words into sentences.

When the father saw this, he decided to take his son under his wing so that at least he would learn a trade. The boy quickly picked up the skills of a wagon driver, showing great diligence.

Over time, the father delegated tasks such as feeding the horse during breaks and ringing the bell before departure to his son.

One day, on the morning of his first fast day that occurred after turning thirteen, the father woke up his son earlier than usual.

The boy, puzzled by the early wake-up call, asked why his sleep had been cut short. The father explained that "today is a fast day," and that the prayers are longer than usual. The boy didn't fully understand but accepted the explanation.

The father then instructed him to prepare the horse for the day.

The boy hesitantly asked about breakfast, to which the father replied simply, "Do as I say."

The boy was confused, as it disrupted their usual routine. He tried to rationalize that perhaps this "fast day" had its unique rules about breakfast.

The Righteous Are Guarantors

In the Book of Chronicles (I Chronicles 4:23), it says:

"These were the potters and those who dwelt among the

plantations and hedges; they dwelt there with the king for his work."

The Midrash explains this verse as follows:⁹

Wellsprings of Wisdom

Later, when the father indicated it was time to go without having breakfast, the boy's confusion turned to concern. He dared to ask again about the meal, only to be rebuked again by his father: "Today is a fast day, and we do not eat breakfast on a fast day."

Crestfallen, the boy followed his father, their morning spent in silence. He hoped for some explanation, but none came.

Before noon, when having arrived back from their first trip, he hoped to find food at home, yet the kitchen was empty, and the table bare.

Afraid to ask again, he decided to help himself to a piece of bread. His father caught him about to take a bite, and angrily reprimanded him: "Have you not understood yet? Today is a fast day, and we do not eat."

That evening, after the stars appeared, the father finally invited his son to break the fast.

By then the boy had been more hurt by his father's harsh treatment than by the day's hunger, and he resolved that the next morning he wouldn't get out of bed, nor would he join his father.

If there was no food given to him, he reasoned, there would be no work to be expected of him either.

The next morning, when the father tried to wake him up, the boy pretended to be asleep.

Only after much urging did he open his eyes and confront his father, saying, "Do you think I will work without food and drink? No, I absolutely will not."

The father's heart softened. In a rare moment of tenderness, he patted his son's head kindly and said, "What happened yesterday belongs to yesterday. Today will be completely different."

This story was told by the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, who concluded:

A Jew may fail in his duties to G-d and to his fellow man during the day, committing various transgressions and insensitive acts.

But every morning, when he rises from his sleep, he must guarantee and promise himself: 'What happened yesterday belongs to yesterday. Today will be completely different.'

9. Ruth Rabbah (2:3).

"These were the potters" - these are the spirits of the righteous with whom G-d consulted to create the world.

"Those who dwelt among plantations and hedges... with the king for his work" - with the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

"They dwelt there" - these are the souls of the righteous with whom He consulted and created the world.

When it arose in G-d's will to create the world, He, in His humility, turned to the souls of the righteous and said to them, "I desire to create man and entrust him with powers such that the entire maintenance and upkeep of creation will be in his hands, and the entire creation will be influenced by his actions.

When he walks in My ways, engages in Torah study, and observes the commandments, he will draw down abundance to all worlds, and they will all be sustained and nourished by his

good deeds. Even the souls of the righteous in Gan Eden will receive elevation and additional strength from the service of man living in this world.

However, if he sins, he will destroy and devastate all the worlds.

So, what do you say, is it worthwhile to create him?"

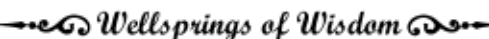
The souls of the righteous responded:

"Creator of the Universe. Create man, and we are ready to accept upon ourselves the responsibility to bring all the wayward souls of Israel back to You in repentance."

G-d indeed accepted their commitment and created the world.

In the words of Rabbi Natan of Breslov:¹⁰

When G-d, blessed be He, wanted to create the world, He consulted with the souls of the righteous and created the world, as it is written: "These were the potters, etc." (1 Chronicles 4:23).



Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Righteous Are Guarantors

This matter of consulting with the righteous is because G-d foresaw that humans would sin and provoke Him, which is why the angels argued against the creation of man, saying: "What is man that You remember him, etc." (Psalms 8:5) - for he will sin before You and anger You (Zohar, Shemini 35b).

Therefore, He consulted and sought advice from the souls of the righteous, and it was decided to create man whom the world would be dependent on.

G-d saw in the deeds of the righteous that they would withstand the trial in this world, and with their great power, they would return all of humanity to Him and correct all the defects caused by others.

The main reliance was on the soul of Moshiach, who preceded the world and is the root of all the righteous of all generations.

He will complete all corrections and rectify all the damages caused in all generations.

Thus, Moshiach is the primary guarantor for the entire world.

As explained in the laws of guarantor in the Shulchan Aruch,

when someone consults with a person whether to lend to another, and that person advises to lend, he becomes a guarantor.

Therefore, Moshiach and all the righteous included with him, who advised G-d to create the world, became guarantors, and eventually, they will fulfill this guarantee made to G-d in its entirety.

Therefore, King David, who is Moshiach, pleads with G-d: "Guarantee good for Your servant" (Psalms 119:122).

Guarantee, is precisely the term he uses here, for he asks G-d to help him fulfill and complete the guarantee that he was responsible for, saying, "Did I not become a guarantor for everyone?" yet there is no one to assist me except You.

Therefore, he asks: "Guarantee good for Your servant."

Therefore, Moshiach suffers for all of Israel because he must bear the sufferings that rectify and purify all of the generations, having become a guarantor for everyone.

Now, with this preface in mind, let us begin studying our weekly Parsha.

With Love and Affection

In our Parsha, we are commanded regarding the mitzvah of returning a lost item, as it is stated: "You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep wandering off and ignore them; you must certainly return them to your brother" (Deuteronomy 22:1).

The 'Or HaChaim' (ibid.) explained this verse as follows:

"You shall not see your brother's ox" - This Parsha comes to hint at the obligation of the righteous to kindly rebuke the Jewish people, the nation of G-d.

These righteous are called by G-d 'brothers' due to their exalted status.

He commands them, "when you see the ox," which are the lowly people of Israel who are of the holy flock of G-d, therefore, He called them ox and sheep.

And they are "wandering off," being led astray, as it is said: "And you shall be driven to worship

them" (Deuteronomy 4:19). One who transgresses the word of G-d is called 'driven away,' and G-d commands us, not to ignore them but to rather return them to G-d."

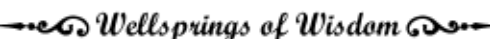
My father, Rabbi Yoram, elaborated on this and said:¹¹

From this verse, the 'Or HaChaim' learned that it is forbidden for the righteous to ignore the children of G-d, even if they are very distant from the world of holiness, and descended to a lowly level.

It is a mitzvah to rebuke them pleasantly and draw them close with love and affection until they succeed in returning them to their Father in Heaven.

This brings the redemption closer, as the 'Or HaChaim' wrote elsewhere (Leviticus 25:25):

"The redemption will come through the awakening of the hearts of people, saying to them:



'Is it good for you to sit outside, exiled from your Father's table ?

What pleasure is there in life in this world, except in the elevated company of your Father's table, the G-d of the world ?'

The righteous will cause people to despise the imagined worldly pleasures, and will awaken them with a spiritual desire, which will be felt by every living soul, until they improve their deeds."

The 'Or HaChaim' concludes his words sharply:

"This task, G-d demands from all the elders of the land, the leaders of Israel, and from them, G-d will seek answers for his neglected house."

The role of the righteous is to tell the people their great value in the eyes of G-d, not to distance them, G-d forbid.

Creating this distance stems from a mistaken perspective. It is an error to create this artificial separation between a Jewish leader and the public.

To bring a Jew close to G-d means to return him to his rightful place, to his home, like 'returning a lost item.'

The 'Or HaChaim' tells you that the main mitzvah of returning a lost item is to return a Jew to their Father in Heaven.

Do not ignore another Jew. Even if they are distant from the world of holiness and act lowly - 'you must certainly return them to your brother,' you need to return them to G-d.

"And if your brother is not near you" (Deuteronomy 22:2) - if there is concealment of the 'face' of the Divine, and there are difficulties, "you take it home" (ibid.) - bring them to the study hall, they will sit and listen to a Torah lesson, and then another lesson, he should come in the morning, come at noon, come the next day, and so on, day after day, week after week, until they are drawn to the right path, all with pleasant ways and patience.

In most cases, a person who has just begun to draw close cannot keep both family purity,

and Shabbat observance, and put on tefillin. Rather, you need to start working with them, slowly but surely.

Therefore, tell them to choose what to start with - Shabbat observance, family purity, tefillin, whatever they can.

If they choose to start with tefillin, help them obtain high-quality tefillin and direct them to a G-d-fearing and meticulous scribe, since their tefillin from their bar mitzvah are surely old and far from being high-quality, and may not be even kosher at all.

One cannot imagine the immense pleasure G-d gets from a Jew buying new, high-quality tefillin and putting them on.

As the 'Reshit Chochmah' writes (Shaar HaKedusha, 6:57):

'For G-d desires more the repentance of a wicked person who puts on tefillin than that of a righteous person.'

By putting on Tefillin with these distant Jews, you help remove them from the category

of having 'a head that never wore tefillin,' which refers to the sinners of Israel, and after laying on tefillin even just once, they have already left this category.

In this way, even the simplest souls among the people of Israel are a dwelling place for the Divine Presence.

When they want to start with tefillin – say to them: 'Well done, you've started something good.'

To make an analogy, if G-d forbid, someone suffered from an illness and was in a coma for two years, and suddenly, after two years, thank G-d, started moving a leg, an arm.

What would you say to them? - 'Sir, the employment office said you should come tomorrow; they have a job for you.'

Is that what you say to someone in rehabilitation?

Slowly, slowly, let them recover.

They move a finger, and you are happy. If they move a hand or a leg, you are even happier.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - The Valued Trait of Equanimity

So it is with spirituality – people who are distant, severely wounded in their souls, have a very weak connection, and everything is fragile for them.

People who have crashed with regard to their faith need to be rehabilitated slowly.

You have children – some are good, thank G-d, and some are not so easy, be careful not to deal with them harshly.

Be wise and act gently so you don't lose everything, G-d forbid.

Extend out your right hand with warmth and your left hand with a lot of caressing.

The old rule of our sages is that 'the left-hand pushes away, and the right-hand draws near.'

Yet today, you need to draw near with both hands and with all this effort, perhaps we will succeed in the mission of bringing people closer to Judaism, to G-d, to the Torah and its commandments.

The Valued Trait of Equanimity

Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburgh, wrote ('Ohr Yisrael', Volume 1, pages 191-193):

The Rebbe Rayatz of Lubavitch, of saintly memory, defines 'hitbodedut' - 'seclusion' as the 'handle of the intellect,' meaning, a tool by which one can grasp, attain, and internalize intellect better.

When one is in seclusion, they silence all material existence that hinders the revelation of the soul's light.

Then, one can ascend and become a person of spiritual form – revealing their inner self and strengthening it over their external, outer, and physical self.

From time immemorial, seekers of G-d have followed the path of seclusion, withdrawing and purifying themselves from all external obstacles and uniting with their Creator in seclusion where they cannot be interfered.

When Moses, who sought seclusion saw the burning bush

that was not consumed, he said:
"I will now turn aside and see
this great sight" (Exodus 3:3).

Rashi explains: 'I will now
turn aside' - 'I will turn away
from here to get closer to there.'

These words express the
balance and tension that
characterize 'hitbodedut':

'I will turn away from here' - I
will withdraw and separate myself
from the mundane surroundings;

'To get closer to there' - to
merit to draw near and cling to
the light of G-d, belonging solely
to him without any separation or
hindrance.

And with every level attained, a
new and stronger aspiration is born
– to get closer and know deeper.

For this period, one withdraws
even more, delves deeper into
the forest, comes home less, and
forgets to an even greater degree
the surrounding reality.

G-d's call to Moses and His
demand for him to reveal himself
and go down to Egypt on His

mission provoked a strong
protest within Moses.

How could he stop his
seclusion and continuous upward
movement? What would remain
of his great spiritual attainments
if he revealed himself from his
seclusion in Midian and lowered
himself to personally deal with
all that G-d's mission required?

When one's entire life is
founded on continuous ascension,
it is difficult to understand how it
is possible to turn outward even
momentarily.

This is not selfishness, but
rather the 'secluded' individual
cannot conceive how it is possible
to withdraw from standing before
G-d even for a moment.

Therefore, G-d said to Moses:
"Remove your shoes from your
feet" (Exodus 3:5), shoes
symbolize one's connection and
attachment to their own reality.

Even the secluded person, who
has devoted all their life to obey
G-d's call, finds it difficult to go
against what their soul knows
and recognizes to be good for it.

However, in order to ascend higher, one must separate from everything familiar and known to them until then and fulfill the Divine will with obedience.

This revelation of self that Moses was asked to commit, was thus not a withdrawal from G-d, but rather the fulfillment of His will in the creation of the world.

Seclusion is, in a way, irresponsible, like a single woman who can easily develop her own career, but does not bear children; she does not engage in the settlement of the world.

Revelation of self does not completely contradict seclusion but constitutes the next level of Divine service – all seclusion was only meant to prepare the soul for it.

However, we must understand, how is it possible to live within the surrounding reality with involvement, and yet maintain continuous ascent and purity of intellect?

It seems that when the secluded individual truly internalizes their

lack and understands that it is impossible to live for themselves without fulfilling their mission and rectifying the world according to G-d's will, they turn this very lack into a tremendous advantage that drives them upward with greater strength.

If previously they had a certain completeness in their service, good taste, and a sense of continuous elevation, now their heart constantly worries that they are not serving G-d as they should, not fulfilling His will in rectifying the worldly reality. This heartache qualifies them more than anything for the purity of intellect and closeness to G-d, as it is said: 'No secrets (of Torah) are given, except to one whose heart is anxious within him.'

When a person perceives themselves as perfect – like our secluded individual at the beginning of his journey, living a complete life with himself, having nothing in his world but the continuous movement 'I will turn aside from here to get closer there' – it is easy to disrupt and topple them from their level. Therefore, they

feel their service needs protection and guarding, and rightfully so.

But when a person's heart is anxious and broken within, always seeing themselves as lacking deeply and fundamentally, this very lack becomes the strongest and healthiest vessel. 'There is no vessel more whole than a broken heart'¹² – a vessel whose very brokenness is its capacity.

Indeed, this trial has passed upon all the righteous of the world. To every righteous person, the evil inclination presents the 'danger' that supposedly exists if they leave their personal endeavors and go to the public. The truth is that for the righteous, this trial is not easy – but they have no choice; they took upon themselves the responsibility to perform the mitzvah of returning a lost item.

This trial was even more intense for the holy Baal Shem Tov because, by nature, he was inclined

to seclude himself and be attached to G-d all the time, without taking upon himself the burden of leadership and public needs at all.

Even though this nature is entirely holy and infused with fear of Heaven, nevertheless, we need to know that this is not the essence. The ultimate purpose – of course – is to fulfill G-d's will, and if His will is to observe the mitzvah of returning a lost item – then there is indeed no difference whether done in this way or that.

This recognition is called 'Midat Hahishtavut' – the attribute of equanimity.

'Hishtavut' – Equanimity, is derived from the verse: "I have set ('Shiviti') G-d always before me" (Psalms 16:8), and it is a most lofty level of accepting the heavenly yoke.

When a person knows that their entire purpose and only goal is to

Wellsprings of Wisdom

12. The saying "There is no vessel more whole than a broken heart" is attributed to Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, also known as the Kotzker Rebbe.

This aphorism reflects the profound spiritual insight that true wholeness and closeness to G-d often results from experiencing and overcoming brokenness and vulnerability.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - Can One Not Act ?

do G-d's will, everything becomes equal in their eyes for good – then they can fulfill every command with the same enthusiasm, whether it is a command that is close to their heart or not.

The attribute of equanimity is a difficult Divine service. Its application is very complex and requires sensitive and refined internal judgment.

The fundamental principle here is that their sole intention is

for the sake of Heaven, but as for themselves, there is no difference whether through this divine service or another

Ultimately, one must choose, according to their understanding of G-d's will, for the sake of Heaven, but not based on their tendencies toward one path or another.

See further on this topic in 'Chelev Ha'aretz'.

Now, let us understand how we can bring these ideas into our lives.

Can One Not Act ?

There is yet another commandment in the Torah that applies to us all – the mitzvah to "Love your fellow as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18).¹³

The Torah's commandment here is:

- To love not only the collective Israel but also each individual Jew personally.
- To love not only the neighbor you know but also

the Jew you have never met.

- To love not only the scholar and righteous person but also the simple Jew and even a sinner.

All this can be genuinely and wholly achieved only when there is a recognition that all Jewish souls are like one body, and love for others is like love for oneself and one's own flesh.¹⁴

~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~

13. For a more detailed explanation, see the book 'Shaarei Ahavat Yisrael' (page 324), by the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

14. Even Jews who have distanced themselves greatly from G-d and have become heretics and apostates must be brought closer.

Parshat Ki Teitzei - Can One Not Act ?

Here, we must pause for a moment and emphasize:

Love of Israel is not a 'theoretical' concept, nor is it just an intellectual understanding. Love of Israel is a feeling, and feelings, as is well known, influence our thoughts.

When one loves a Jew, it is impossible to ignore them or find faults in them, for "love covers all transgressions" (Proverbs 10:12). As mentioned, we are all commanded to fulfill the mitzvah of loving all of the people of Israel.

But when we observe the current state of the world, we can be disheartened: what has happened to people, have they gone mad? Marriages are breaking up, families are falling apart, and children are thus 'orphans' even though both of their parents are alive.

Quarrels erupt between people, conflicts and offenses, anger and mayhem.

Within the soul too: sadness and bitterness, anxieties and depression, and self-hatred are quite common.

People are suffering, oh, how they suffer.

They try to escape their situation but fail.

The evil inclination has ensnared them within its web, and occasionally tightens its strings around their neck.

G-d commands every Jew to love their fellow Jew, with genuine love, love that will not allow them to ignore their plight.

When love of Israel is revealed in one's heart, how can one not act ?

Wellsprings of Wisdom

The Lubavitcher Rebbe wrote (Shaarei Ahavat Yisrael - page 224):

"**It** has always been the way of Lubavitch not to distance any Jew, even those of the above-mentioned types, but rather to bring them closer to our Father in Heaven with gentle words and acts of kindness.

Naturally, caution is needed in this, but it is clear that even in this, one must extend a helping hand - sometimes even a long one - but almost always - with the necessary caution - these efforts succeed, extracting precious gems from the mundane.

We have no other approach but this, and we are assured of success in this."

True Love of Israel Requires Action

Upon deep contemplation of the current state of the world, one realizes that the root of all problems is a lack of awareness. People simply do not know how to behave.

All marital quarrels stem from foolishness and ignorance. Conflicts between people often arise from a mere 'lit match' thrown into the fray.

The evil inclination's control is possible only over someone whose heart is devoid of wisdom.

What we must do is address the lacking 'awareness'.

Every man must learn for himself and teach others the commandments G-d has given to the husband, and learn the duties G-d has commanded the husband to provide for his wife. Duties that include emotional and physical giving.

Likewise, every woman must learn for herself and teach others the commandments G-d has given to the wife, together with the duties G-d has commanded the wife to provide for her

husband, duties that include emotional and physical giving.

When they will understand and truly comprehend these laws, most of the demands and quarrels will cease.

Every Jew must additionally learn the laws of lashon hara (evil speech), and understand that it is forbidden to listen to bad things, and if they accidentally hear, it is generally forbidden to believe them.

Moreover, A Jew is required to develop a genuine feeling of love for the people of Israel, a love that prevents one from seeing evil in another Jew, being that "love covers all transgressions," and when one does not see evil, they won't be able to speak lashon hara.

G-d created two parallel systems for the sake of free choice and trial: one system of holiness and purity and another system of impurity and evil.

When living according to the Shulchan Aruch (Code of Jewish Law), one adheres to the system of

Parshat Ki Teitzei - True Love of Israel Requires Action

holiness, but when sinning, one adheres to the system of impurity.

Entering the system of impurity means entering places of abyss and shadow of death, a place where sadness, bitterness, fears, and anxieties dwell.

The person who wants to heal their soul does not need pills and injections but simply to return in repentance and study Torah daily, regularly. Through this, they will connect with G-d and attain true joy in their heart and soul.

Even if we are not commanded on 'returning a lost item' at the level of the righteous explained by the 'Or Hachaim', we are still commanded on the mitzvah of 'loving your fellow as yourself.'

Before concluding, let us add another detail:

In one of his lectures, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, recounted:

"I met the King Moshiach and asked him: 'Why are you not coming to redeem the people of Israel?'"

Moshiach replied: A million Jewish children in Israel do not know Torah; they do not even know the single verse of 'Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad'."

When people do not know Torah, there is no real connection to G-d, and their souls suffer tremendously.

Whoever has a true love for the people of Israel in their heart cannot remain indifferent.

Whoever sees the terrible fire raging in the streets, a fire of desires, ignorance, and bad traits, must be filled with mercy and do everything in their power to illuminate the world with the light of Torah.



Summary and Practical Conclusions

1. One of the 248 positive commandments in the Torah is the mitzvah of returning a lost item. This is a positive commandment between a person and their fellow, requiring one to return a lost item to its owner. This mitzvah applies in all places and at all times, to both males and females.

There are many details in this mitzvah, as some items do not require an announcement by the finder, while others do. Additionally, one must know how to announce and verify the claimant's identity.

2. Beyond the simple meaning of the mitzvah, there is an additional level that teaches us that the righteous are warned to not ignore the lost Jewish souls, the children of G-d, even if they are distant and separated from the world of holiness.

It is a mitzvah to rebuke them pleasantly and draw them close with love and affection until they succeed in returning them to their Father in Heaven.

3. The role of the righteous is to tell the people their value in the eyes of G-d, not to distance them, G-d forbid.

Bringing a Jew close to G-d is, after all, merely 'returning the item to its place', to his home.

The 'Or HaChaim' teaches that the main mitzvah of returning a lost item is to return a Jew to their Father in Heaven.

And he interprets the verses: 'You must certainly return them to your brother,' return them to G-d, who has a brotherly love to every Jew.

"And if your brother is not near you" (Deuteronomy 22:2) – if there is a concealment of the face, and there are spiritual difficulties, "and you shall take it home" (ibid.) – bring these souls to the Torah study hall, let them sit and listen to a Torah lesson, and another lesson, and then come in the morning, come at noon, come the next day, and so on, day after day, week after week, until they draw onto the right path, all with pleasant ways and patience.

4. Even someone who is not righteous, must know that they are still commanded on the mitzvah of 'love your fellow as yourself.'

This means loving not only the collective people of Israel but also each individual Jew personally.

Loving not only the neighbor you know but also the Jew you have never met. Loving not only the scholar and righteous person but also the simple Jew and even a sinner. This can be genuinely and wholly achieved only when there is a recognition that all Jewish souls are like one body, and love for others is like love for oneself and one's own flesh.

5. One must know that the love of Israel is not a theoretical concept or an intellectual understanding. The love of a fellow Jew is a feeling.

Feelings influence thoughts. When one loves a Jew, it is nearly impossible to ignore them or find faults in them. When one loves a Jew, the thought that something bad could happen to them is intolerable.

6. The root of all problems in the world is a lack of awareness,

people simply do not know how to behave.

All marital quarrels stem from foolishness and ignorance.

All conflicts between people arise from a lit match thrown into the fray.

The evil inclination's control is possible only over someone whose heart is devoid of wisdom.

Therefore, to succeed, each person must learn for themselves and teach others the commandments and duties which G-d has commanded the husband and wife, including emotional support and physical giving.

When these understandings truly enter into the understanding of the couple, peace and harmony will ensue.

7. Every Jew must learn the laws of lashon hara (evil speech), understand that it is forbidden to listen to bad things, and even if they accidentally hear them, it is generally forbidden to believe them.

This is the basic and fundamental level.

In addition, A Jew is required to develop a genuine feeling of love for the people of Israel, a love that prevents him from seeing evil in another Jew, since "love covers all transgressions."

When one does not see evil, they cannot possibly speak lashon hara.

G-d created two parallel systems for the sake of choice and trial: one of holiness and purity and yet another of impurity and evil.

When living according to the Shulchan Aruch, one adheres to the system of holiness.

However, through sinning, one adheres to the system of impurity, and enters the system of impurity and the shadow of death, a place where sadness, bitterness, fears, and anxieties dwell.

A person who wants to heal their soul does not need pills and injections but simply to return in repentance and have fixed daily Torah study. Through this, they

will connect with G-d and attain true joy in their heart and soul.

8. Although we are not commanded on 'returning a lost item' at the level of the righteous as explained by the 'Or HaChaim', we are nonetheless commanded on the mitzvah of 'loving your fellow as yourself.'

When this genuine love for our fellow Jew is realized, it will drive us to action, and we must be moved to act with mercy and do everything in our power to spread the light of Torah, proper behavior, and proper awareness and understanding.

In summary, the mitzvah of 'returning a lost item' and the commandment to 'love your fellow as yourself' go hand in hand, both of which urge us to care deeply for the spiritual and physical well-being of our fellow Jews, guiding them back to their Divine source with patience, love, and wisdom.

Shabbat Shalom !

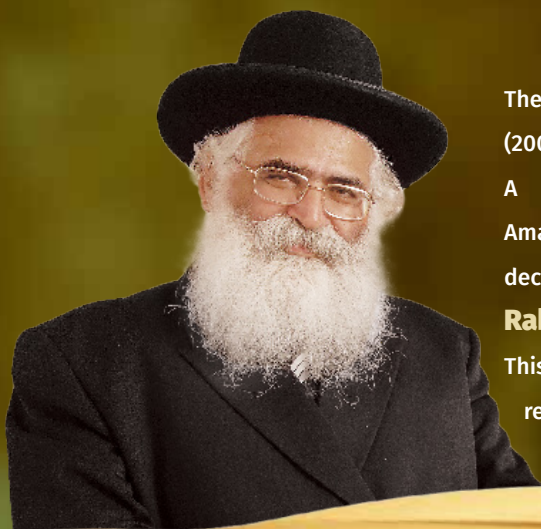
New

Delivered in special



'Betzur Yarum' - Soft Cover

Travel edition



The original set, first printed in 5767 (2007), consisting of 17 volumes. A fascinating interpretation on "Likutei Amarim", the first part of Tanya, culled from decades of lessons by our venerable teacher, **Rabbi Yoram Abargel**, of blessed memory. This series provides endless practical tools and real life advice for every Jew in all areas of life.



For orders:

☎ +1 (954) 800-6526 📞 +972-54-867-3086

666 HaKatzir Street, Netivot



”A person must rejoice when the time for
prayer

as the author of the Tanya says that:

every Jew, wherever he is, receives from G-d at the time of prayer a gift called **"Mochin D'Gadlut,"** meaning that the understanding of everything is expansive before him, as is written

"Open wide your mouth and I will fill it" ”



- Discounts for institutions / bulk orders
- Can be ordered with engraved dedications

For orders:

+1 (954) 800-6526 +972-54-867-3086

666 HaKatzir Street, Netivot | 6 HaMeginim Street, Kiryat Ata



Free distribution

Preserve publication sanctity
by use of Genizah

Shabbat Times Ki Teitzei

11th of Elul, 5784



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	6:49 pm	7:46 pm	8:18 pm
Miami	7:08 pm	8:00 pm	8:37 pm
Los Angeles	6:44 pm	7:38 pm	8:13 pm
Montreal	6:50 pm	7:51 pm	8:18 pm
Toronto	7:12 pm	8:11 pm	8:41 pm
London	7:00 pm	8:06 pm	8:28 pm
Jerusalem	6:32 pm	7:20 pm	8:06 pm
Tel Aviv	6:29 pm	7:17 pm	8:02 pm
Haifa	6:28 pm	7:17 pm	8:01 pm
Be'er Sheva	6:28 pm	7:17 pm	8:01 pm

Pathways to the Heart

From the Words of

HaRav Yoram Abargel zt"l

Even if a young child begs to come to synagogue, he must be told that he is still small, and when he grows older, he will be invited to join.

We must be wise when educating young children so that we are properly attuned to their needs at their age.

A young child needs to play, otherwise, they will play around when they are older. The same is true for their hours of sleep, for it is a requirement that they must fulfill and has healing properties. A child who lacks proper sleep, will not grow properly and will be disorganized and hyperactive. Therefore, it is crucial to be considerate and thoughtful.



Become a Partner!

For Donations:

American Friends of Netivot Inc
Signature Bank

Account # 1504470357

261 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10016

Routing # 026013576

Or Visit: Hameir-Laarets.org.il/Donate

RECOGNIZED BY THE IRS AS A 501(c)(3)
TAX DEDUCTIBLE ORGANIZATION

Do You Enjoy Mesilot?



**Receive Mesilot
Weekly Anywhere
Worldwide!**

- Free of Charge -

**Distribute Pathways
to the Soul in Your
Synagogue!**
Join Now!



Ask The Rabbi!



Rabbi Yisrael
Abargel Shlita
responds to
questions directly
and discreetly

Media

hameir-laarets.org.il/en

Hameir Laarets

(954) 800-6526

054-870-8737

en@h-l.org.il



Français

joindre :



Русский

присоединиться:



English

to join:



Español

Para unirse:



עברית

להצטרפות:

