



Shoftim 2022

What Do You See?

2 minute read | Straightforward

The Torah's civil laws consistently emphasize the duties and responsibilities humans owe to each other.

In one of them, the Torah considers what happens when you find someone's animals wandering unsupervised:

לֹא תִרְאֶה אֶת שׂוֹר אֶחָיֶךָ אוֹ אֶת שִׂי נִדְחִים וְהִתְעַלְמָתָּ מֵהֶם הֲשִׁיבָם לְאָחִיךָ – Do not see your brother's ox or sheep straying and ignore them – you should return them to your brother. (22:4)

This law is simple and consistent with the Torah's vision, but its phrasing is unusual.

The law as practiced is about not ignoring someone's lost animal but is phrased in terms of seeing – לֹא תִתְעַלְמָתָּ / לֹא תִרְאֶה וְהִתְעַלְמָתָּ.

Why does the law talk about what we see instead of what we ignore?

R' Shlomo Freifeld teaches that sight is not an exclusively visual function. Our eyes govern a physical aspect of perception, but there is also a mental and emotional aspect, the way you process optical inputs. A deficiency in the physical element will result in actual blindness, but lacking the mental component also results in functional blindness, if only in the figurative sense.

As the Sfas Emes explains, the Torah does not charge us with a simple instruction against ignoring; there are genuinely things that we don't see! But the Torah here makes us responsible for the way we look at things, and especially the things in our peripheral vision – the things we see but ignore – לֹא תִתְעַלְמָתָּ.

When you change how you look at things, the things you look at change.

In this instance, the person you are helping isn't even an active participant; your obligation to help exists independently of that person. There is no one on the other side seeking your help here, so it's an easy one to avoid, and so the Torah warns us against the tendency to ignore our brothers and sisters.

Being unaware or not noticing aren't good enough excuses. The errors and omissions for things we weren't paying attention to are still sins that require rectification on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur – שׁוּגַג / עַל חַטָּא שְׁחָטְאֵנוּ בְיִוְדַעִים וּבְלֹא יוְדַעִים.



Every day, we ask God to open our eyes – פוקח עורים – which takes on new meaning in light of this teaching; it’s a prayer for clarity and perception, and it’s hard to overstate how important that is.

Your eyes aren’t enough when it’s your mind that’s blind.

Is there something you might be blinding yourself to right now?

Tests And Consequences

3 minute read | Straightforward

War is bad.

Apart from the carnage between opposing forces, one of the awful consequences is that nearby civilians are typically subject to collateral damage at best and direct atrocities at worst. The Jewish people know this fact better than most, and history students will know of countless others.

For the vast majority of the history of warfare, women were raped and enslaved. Although international humanitarian law has deemed wartime sexual violence a war crime in the last century, it was a common practice in antiquity for millennia and still occurs frequently in less civilized parts of the world.

There’s a law about it in the Torah, permitting soldiers at war to capture women:

כי תצא למלחמה על איבויך ונתגוה אליהם בגדך ושביית שבי. וראית בשבייה אשה יפת תאר ותשקתה בה ולקחתה לך לאשה – If you go out to war against your enemies, and the Lord, your God, will deliver them into your hands, and you take captives; if you see among the captives a beautiful woman and you desire her, you may take her for yourself as a wife. (21:10,11)

This mitzvah flies in the face of what we consider ethical and moral today. Why does the Torah endorse such a barbaric act?

Rashi quotes our sages’ explanation that the Torah does not command anyone to practice sexual violence proactively; instead, it gives a license to human inclination in the heat of the moment and provides discretionary permission for people in a moment of weakness.

That doesn’t seem substantially better, but it makes a difference, minimizing its occurrence and brutality.

R’ Daniel Rowe notes that the Torah places heavy restrictions on people who practice this law; she must be shaved bald and grieve for thirty days in rags in the soldier’s home. It’s supposed to be



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distressing, not attractive. If the soldier comes to his senses over thirty days, he will probably regret abducting this poor stranger and forcing her to live under his roof, and will send her home.

Our sages note the juxtaposition of the two laws that follow, the law of a hated wife and the rebellious son, which our sages took to mean that this is a slippery slope. A person who exploits this permission to take an unsuitable wife will come to hate her, and their abusive relationship will produce dysfunctional children.

With this law, the Torah requires a total departure from thousands of years of normalized slavery and rape. Instead of conforming to a convention that classified women as spoils of war like other property to be exploited, the Torah demands that a woman's personhood be acknowledged and respected by giving her certain minimum rights. She preserves an element of dignity and status despite the fact she has been captured and her autonomy destroyed.

This radical polemic represents a total paradigm shift, and perhaps that's the real message to take from the law of the captive womeweains lofty ideals; it also has words for the moments we are not at our best, even in our basest, most primal moments, in the moments of anger, passion, or lust.

The Torah is not some distant ideal that is beyond the reach and understanding of humans – לא בשמים, הרה.

The Torah is written for humans, with all our fallibility – דיברה תורה כלשון בני אדם.

The Torah talks about rape and slavery, but that's not the final word. The fact they are in the Torah does not mean they are ideals we aspire to practice again.

Because if we look a little closer, the Torah is steering us away from a world that tolerates rampant immoral practices and toward the more civilized world we are familiar with today.

The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.

Pure Priorities

5 minute read | Straightforward

In the Jewish Tradition, the human body and human life are sacrosanct, seeing as humans are created in God's image – הָרַבִּיב אָדָם שֶׁנִּבְרָא בְּצֶלֶם –

Traditional burial is mandatory for Jews; other funeral rites including cremation are prohibited. The mitzvah of burial includes a component of urgency that for certain close relatives, nearly all positive obligations are suspended until after the burial has concluded to facilitate prompt burial. It is



degrading to allow a body, which remains sacred even in death, to lie idle and unburied – קבור תקברנו – ביום ההוא פי־קללת אלקים תלוי

But although there are tangible and practical laws relating to death, the Torah also talks about intangible laws, the laws of ritual impurity which result from death.

In the Torah's conception of a Jewish nation-state, ritual purity was a prominent element of daily life, and all people were to be mindful of their purity status at all times. The state of impurity makes people unsuited to specific activities and puts them at risk of contaminating sanctified foods and objects. A person in a state of impurity must undergo a predefined purification process that usually includes the passage of a specified amount of time.

Although we no longer practice most purity laws today, we still retain certain ritual immersion practices for our bodies or kitchenware as a legacy of these laws.

Traditionally, the job description for any practicing Kohen was to be knowledgeable and fluent in this arcane and specialized body of law, which was essential given their role in Temple service reporting as well as their year-round consumption of sacred foods that a Kohen could interact with only while in a state of ritual purity.

The way the Torah categorizes impurity doesn't neatly correlate with anything we can relate to today; it has nothing to do with hygiene or sin.

But perhaps it's something like this.

Death is the archetypal trigger of existential dread; the confusion and disorientation that result from our subjective experience of thinking, feeling, and acting in this mode of existence are meaningless and absurd. All you have ever known is your conscious attachment and connection to the universe we experience; one day that will cease to exist.

The notion of death exposes the fleeting fragility of human life, a thought that is antithetical to our entire primary experience in this living universe, undermining any real meaning or value to our lives, and exposure to it imparts something a status-affecting condition called tuma, which loosely translates to impure.

Most people are not ritually pure, albeit with different gradations. Someone out of the state of ritual purity is disqualified from a realm of normal activities in the land of Israel; but for most people, it doesn't really matter most of the time, so most people didn't have to be mindful of these laws and could attend to the dead with no issue.

Given that a kohen's life and work revolve around purity, it follows that a kohen's attending to the dead is more restricted; even today, a kohen may not intentionally come into contact with a dead body nor approach too closely graves within a Jewish cemetery, except for seven legally defined close relatives.



The Kohen Gadol was held to even stricter standards; he wasn't even allowed to contaminate himself to attend to a deceased parent.

Apart from the hierarchy of purity standards that exists for people, there is also a hierarchy of purity in time. Before Yom Kippur, the Kohen Gadol would isolate for seven days to attain the highest purity status and perform his duties on the year's holiest day. With these seven days of preparation, he could enter the Holy of Holies and perform the most sacred ritual of the year.

Purity plays a central and pervasive role in the Torah's conception of Jewish life, and yet in a landscape where purity is everything, there is a revealing exception. There is a law that obligates all Jewish people to take responsibility for the burial of an unattended Jewish body; this obligation supersedes every purity law and is almost if not entirely overriding – מת מצוה.

If you ever hear about a Jewish person who has died and has no one to perform a Jewish burial, there is rare mitzvah to handle it personally, and it even applies to a Kohen must as well. Usually, since the Kohen is unrelated, he would not otherwise be permitted to handle the burial. But there is no one else, and the obligation to immediately bury unattended dead is so compelling that it even obligates a Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe highlights this hierarchy of laws to reveal the Torah's sense of where human priorities ought to lie.

Even the holiest person, on the most sacred day of the year, about to perform his holiest and most core function, must roll up his sleeves and wade into someone else's mess and get their hands dirty. This explicitly states that no one is above serving others; it is a grave mistake to be too good for that. The correct decision under the circumstances is to forgo performing his duties on Yom Kippur; the Torah that demands his Yom Kippur service states that it is subject to his duty to bury the dead.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe asks us to wonder how if the Torah obligates all of us to take responsibility for the unattended dead, what might it then ask of us concerning the living dead, people born Jewish and yet totally unaffiliated, cut off, and isolated from any trace of Judaism?

While the analogy isn't precise, perhaps it's directionally accurate.

The Jewish People are a sanctified nation where all are called to serve – מְמַלְכֵת כְּהִנִּיּוֹם וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ –

But however holy or self-righteous you are or think you may be, the Torah demands that you get off your high horse, roll up your sleeves and get out there and attend to physical and spiritual orphans, people who don't have anyone else. If the Kohen Gadol encounters an unattended dead body on Yom Kippur, his role and duties are suspended entirely; his only responsibility is to help the person in front of him.



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The Lubavitcher Rebbe's followers took this teaching to heart; pioneering heroes and their brave families moved across the globe to set up a Jewish presence worldwide. They stepped far beyond their comfort zones with enormous self-sacrifice out of concern for others.

It might be a bit much to ask that of yourself, but you don't have to move to the middle of nowhere to recognize that attending to the needs of others is one of the Torah's highest priorities. The Kotzker mocked the Tzaddik in pelts, a holy man in his fur coat. When people are cold, does the righteous man light a fire that warms others, or does he simply sit back in his comfortable coat sending thoughts and prayers for their wellbeing?

When God talks to Avraham about what it would take to save the people of Sodom, God's conception of righteous people worth saving is people who are out on the streets, engaging with and influencing their surroundings – צדיקים בתוך העיר.

We don't live our lives with purity at the forefront of our minds. But the Torah consistently reminds us where the purity of our priorities must lie.

Caring for others is a core part of the spiritual life. A spiritual life that doesn't engage the world with acts of care and compassion towards others isn't spiritual at all.

Amalek Redux

4 minute read | Straightforward

The Torah has lots of laws. Some are fun and easy to understand, like Shabbos, and some are fun and challenging to understand, like shaking the Lulav. A rare few are not only difficult to understand but leave us with a sense of moral unease as well.

One of them is the laws concerning Amalek.

On the back of the miraculous Exodus and escape at the Red Sea, the Jewish People were exhausted and weary when a band of raiders called Amalek attacked the stragglers in the group.

Seeing as the Jewish People are the protagonists and our ancestors, we understand that Amalek is the antagonist. But of all the adversaries of Jewish history, Amalek has a unique distinction, sitting in a class of its own. From the earliest Jewish writings, Amalek is the code word for everything that is wrong with the world ideologically.

The story of the Land of Israel is a story of conquest. In many stories, the inhabitants recognize the geopolitical risk and act accordingly, such as Balak, Sichon, and Og. But that's not how the Torah tells



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the story of Amalek, who attack not out of self-defense, but because they could, and with great dishonor, by targeting weak stragglers.

By most counts, there are no less than three separate duties incumbent on all Jews as it pertains to Amalek: to remember that Amalek attacked the Jewish People just as they left Egypt; not to forget what they did; and the big one, to eradicate the memory of Amalek from the world.

These laws are serious and are part of the rare category of mitzvos that apply to all people at all times under all circumstances.

But isn't it a little unsettling?

It sounds uncomfortably like a mitzvah to commit genocide, the moral argument against which is certainly compelling, especially for a nation who heard the commandment “do not kill” from God's voice at Sinai, even more so having suffered a genocide in living memory. Although some people have no trouble understanding it that way, you're in good company if you find difficulty in a commandment to kill Amalek today.

Long ago, the Gemara dismissed the notion of practicing the straightforward interpretation, pointing to a story in the Prophets where the Assyrian king Sennacherib forcibly displaced and resettled the entire Middle East, eliminating distinct bloodlines of racial descent.

While this elegantly eliminates the problem in a practical sense – there is no problem because the law can no longer apply – the moral issue remains open.

Over centuries, a substantial number of prominent halachic authorities have clarified that the status of Amalek is not racial; that although a tribe called Amalek attacked the Jewish People and formed the context for the law, the law is not and never was an instruction to commit genocide against those people. While the Gemara says that Amalek can never join the Jewish People, it also says that descendants of Amalek taught Torah in Israel, suggesting that their women, or children of women who married out, could lose their identity as Amalek. If Amalek isn't a race, then there is no law to kill such a particular of people, and there is no moral dilemma.

R' Chaim Brisker explains that Amalek is not a particular group of humans; it is a conceptual category. It's an attitude and ideology that transcends any specific race or individual and persists forever, an archetype of evil that we must fundamentally stand against and be on alert for. Writers through the ages have labeled enemies or opposition as Amalek, which, although often lazy, correctly categorizes and formalizes this eternal struggle.

The perpetrators of the original crime are all dead, and modern society does not believe in the heritability of guilt. But the offense isn't simply that they physically attacked the Jewish People; as Rashi explains, it's that they cooled us off along the way while we were weary – אֲשֶׁר קָרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ וַיִּזְנֹב בָּהֶּם כִּי כָּל־הַנְּחָשׁוּלִים אֶתְרִידוּ וְאַתָּה עָנִף וַיִּגַע.



As the Netziv points out, it would be self-defeating and tautological to have an eternal command to destroy something's memory; the Torah makes that impossible simply by mentioning it.

The Kedushas Levi goes further and suggests that the legacy of Amalek lies in the heart of every person.

We might stop to wonder if perhaps the ideology of Amalek is all around us in the social Darwinist culture we have built ourselves, which is, at its core, a simple application of survival of the fittest behavior.

Sure, the malignant form of Amalek looks like a Haman or a Hitler. But the benign form is all around us, in ourselves and in others. It's not any particular humans we need to overcome, but their attitude and ideology. The fight against Amalek does not end even though the nation is long gone; its legacy remains, and it's the legacy that poses a threat.

A Chassidic aphorism observes that Amalek is numerically equivalent to doubt – עמלק / ספק.

In our day-to-day lives, that looks like when you consider doing something bold or different, and someone, perhaps even yourself, pokes holes or second-guesses the new initiative. “I want to try this new idea, but maybe I shouldn't? What if it's the wrong choice? Maybe I don't deserve it?” Or perhaps, “Why start or support that project—aren't there far more important ones?”

The attack in Rephidim only happens opportunistically when people were caught off guard – רפידים / רפיון ידים.

Anthropologists and psychologists have long observed the phenomenon of crab mentality in some groups. The metaphor derives from a pattern of behavior noted in crabs when they are trapped in a bucket – any individual crab could easily escape, but the others will undermine its efforts, ensuring the group's collective demise. In some groups, members will attempt to reduce the self-confidence of any member who achieves success beyond the others, whether out of envy, resentment, spite, or competitive feeling, to halt their progress. The wrong circles have powerful inertia that draws members towards conformity and mediocrity in a self-fulfilling negative feedback loop.

Letting feelings of self-doubt and personal incompetence persist is called impostor syndrome. You can baselessly hold back from doing things that could transform your life because you're not ready to face the reality of your own potential greatness.

As the Mishna in Pirkei Avos says, eliminate doubt – הסתלק מן הספק.

If it sounds pithy or trite, just know that that's quite literally Amalek's great crime – trying to hold the Jewish People back just as they were beginning to break through, discouraging them just as they were getting started and finding their feet – אֲשֶׁר קָרָה בְּדַרְוֹ וַיִּזְנֹב בָּהּ כַּל־הַנְּחָשׁוּשִׁים אֶתְרִיה וְאֶתְהָ עָרַף וַיִּגְעַע.



It's not apologetics or mental gymnastics; it neatly fits the words and is something we recognize all around us.

Haters rarely hate you; far more often, they hate themselves because you're showing them a reflection of what they wish they could be, and they don't like feeling inadequate.

Shine bright and soar, and forget about the people who tried to hold you back.

Charity Redux

6 minute read | Straightforward

One of the foundations of the modern world we inhabit is the notion of egalitarianism, the idea that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or moral status; giving birth to, among others, the ideas that women aren't lesser than men, and that black people aren't lesser than white people, and the like.

This has been a decisively positive development in many respects; it is self-evident that all humans are fundamentally equal, and the Torah says as much – וַיְבָרֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם.

But it is equally evident that in many respects, the universe is not fair or equal; plenty of people are disadvantaged in countless ways. Many hardworking, honest, and decent people have difficult, stressful, and impoverished lives, not to mention the various health issues so many people experience. Human input isn't decisive; luck is.

A modern phenomenon in human civilization has emerged to address this imbalance: the welfare state. First-world governments allocate taxpayer funds to alleviate the poverty of the disadvantaged and less fortunate – in other words, charity is a core part of national policy. This practice has been criticized for perversely enabling and exacerbating poverty further, reducing the incentive for workers to seek employment by reducing the need to work and reducing the rewards of work. If we help these people, so the thinking goes, they become dependent and lazy. Moreover, it's a zero-sum game; I have to give up more of what's mine, and somebody else gets the benefit from it – as any child could tell you, that's not fair!

While the specific contours of government policy are best left to experts, it brings to the fore a relevant question that profoundly impacts our orientation to others.

What do we owe to each other?

The conventional understanding of charity is that it's an act of benevolent kindness and generosity, initiated and executed at the actor's sole discretion; but this is not the Jewish understanding.



The Jewish understanding of tzedaka is orders of magnitude more comprehensive and overarching. Extending far beyond the boundaries of kindness, the word itself literally means justice. The practice is a religious duty and social obligation; we have a duty to dispense God’s justice by helping the less fortunate. In the ancient agrarian world of the Torah, Jewish farmers were subject to mandatory religious taxes that were allocated to different beneficiaries according to specific parameters. To this day, many Jews tithe their income, allocating at least ten percent to worthy causes.

The Torah is consistently firm and unequivocal in our obligations towards each other:

וְכִי־יָמוּךְ אָחִיךָ וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּךְ וְהִחַזְקֵהוּ בְּךָ... וְחַי אָחִיךָ עִמָּךְ – When your brother languishes, and his hand falters, you must steady and support him... Let your brother live by your side, with you. (Leviticus 25:35,36)

This framing allows no savior complex; the Torah says plainly that the recipient of your help is a disadvantaged equal, lateral to you. There is no hierarchy or verticality in helping your brother – אָחִיךָ – and you must help him live alongside you, with you – עִמָּךְ. The person you get to help is not lesser or worse than you.

R’ Shamshon Raphael Hirsch highlights how in this conception, the value of a person is not tied in any way to their economic productivity; the Torah speaks of a person’s hand faltering and requiring assistance, yet still remaining your brother – וְכִי־יָמוּךְ אָחִיךָ וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּךְ. Other people don’t need to achieve anything or make money to be valid in their humanness or worthy of your respect and support.

The Rambam famously taught that the highest level of charity is helping people get on their own feet – the ultimate and most literal fulfillment of helping your brother stand alongside you.

In the Torah’s primeval story of the dawn of humanity, Cain fatefully asks God the rhetorical question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” This question deserves scrupulous attention, not just because we read the story and know that Cain is attempting to cover up his crime, but because it is the great unanswered question of Genesis and quite possibly the entire Torah and all of human history.

The pregnant silence in the story is jarring; when we read about the obligations we have toward our brother, we should consider them in light of the Torah’s first brothers – perhaps suggesting that yes, you are indeed your brother’s keeper.

Echoing the Genesis story, the Ramban famously wrote to his son that humans have no natural hierarchy; nobody is better than you, and you’re better than nobody. Humans are brothers; the Torah speaks of what we owe each other as a result of our fraternal bond; our obligations to each other are born of sameness, not of difference. The interpersonal mitzvos are obligations between equals – from human to human; horizontal, and not vertical.

The mitzvah to aid others is far-reaching – it goes far beyond money, encompassing your time, energy, and emotions, even to the point of manual labor:

לֹא־תִרְאֶה אֶת־חֲמוֹר אָחִיךָ אוֹ שׂוֹרוֹ נִפְּלִים בַּדֶּרֶךְ וְהִתְעַלַּמְתָּ מֵהֶם הֲקָם תִּקְוֶה עִמּוֹ – If you see your brother’s donkey or his ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it; you must surely raise it together. (Deut 22:4)

Beyond your brother, or the people you’d want to help, you are even obligated to help the people you don’t:

כִּי־תִרְאֶה חֲמוֹר עֹנֵאָה רֵבִץ תַּחַת מְשָׂאוֹ וְהִדְלַתְתָּ מֵעֹבֵד לוֹ עֹבֵד תַּעֲזֹב עִמּוֹ – When you see the ass of your enemy lying under its burden and would refrain from raising it, you must nevertheless surely help raise it. (Ex 23:5)

R’ Shmshon Raphael Hirsch notes the common tendency humans have to give up on people who seem to attract calamity and misfortune; it would be far easier to cut them loose. The Torah speaks against the backdrop of such wayward thinking and reminds us that this person is your brother; you cannot give up on him. You must persist in helping, even if he fails over and over again – עֹבֵד תַּעֲזֹב / הֲקָם תִּקְוֶה.

However, this unilateral obligation is ripe for abuse, giving cheats and crooks a religiously sanctioned opportunity to exploit good people. The Kli Yakar offers a sharp caveat; you must only persist in helping people who are at least trying to help themselves – עִמּוֹ. R’ Shlomo Farhi piercingly suggests that it is not actually possible to help someone who won’t help themselves; the mitzvah is only to help, not enable. But so long as they’re trying, don’t walk away; figure it out together – עֹבֵד תַּעֲזֹב עִמּוֹ / הֲקָם תִּקְוֶה עִמּוֹ.

Our sages suggest that we should be grateful for cheats and crooks; otherwise, we’d be guilty over each and every person we fail to help.

While many mitzvos and rituals have an accompanying blessing to initiate the action, the Rashba notes that interpersonal mitzvos do not have such a blessing; making a blessing before helping another person would be dehumanizing, instrumentalizing a person into an object you do a mitzvah with, eroding the mitzvah entirely.

The Torah has a prominent spiritual dimension, but the interpersonal aspect of the Torah is a coequal, interdependent, and reciprocal component. It can be easy to get carried away with the spiritual trappings of helping people without being concerned about the person, but that’s what it’s all about – the other person is your brother, and you need to relate to him in that way.

R’ Yitzchak Hutner was a Rosh Yeshiva renowned for his wit. Sick in hospital, a student came to visit his teacher and mentor. The great rabbi asked his guest why he had come, and the young man responded that it was a great mitzvah to visit the sick. Characteristically, R’ Hutner challenged his visitor, “Am I your Lulav? Did you come to shake me?”

If we are more concerned about lazy freeloaders who exploit public resources than disadvantaged people who need a leg up, it is only misdirection from the lesser angels of our nature; moral indignation that permits acting on envy and hate under a cloak of virtue. The Torah articulates a clear



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skew and strong preference toward taking action that helps others; the marginal cost of not helping is unacceptable.

Tzedaka is not charity or philanthropy. Less fortunate isn't a euphemism; it's a self-evident and observable fact. It's entitled to think it's not fair that you have to give something up so someone else can benefit; it's about justice, not fairness. Giving your money to others is explicitly a zero-sum game. By telling us to do it anyway, the Torah explicitly dismisses this objection as irrelevant, revealing that thinking in terms of winning and losing is an entirely incorrect perspective to bring to the interaction.

Your choice isn't whether to help others; it's who to help and how – which charities to give to, and in what quantities. It's the right thing to do; it is wrong not to.

It is important to be a good steward of capital; will this contribution be the highest and best use of your resources? But while it's vital to think in terms of impact and effectiveness, be mindful that some people aren't ever going to get by on their own. The widows and orphans of the world aren't going to be okay because you wrote a check one time or sent a care package for Pesach; people experiencing chronic illness aren't going to recover because you visited them once or hosted a fundraiser a while back.

The Torah calls for your continued interest and persistent involvement, not a one-off act; a mode of being, a mentality of feeling obligated to intervene for people who need help today and, in all likelihood, will still need help tomorrow and the day after as well.

Your brothers need you; you must persist.

I present TorahRedux l'ilui nishmas my late grandfather, HaGaon HaRav Yehuda Leib Gertner ben HaRav HaChassid Menachem Mendel.

I hope you enjoyed this week's thoughts. If you have questions or comments, or just want to say hello, it's a point of pride for me to hear from you, and I'll always respond. And if you saw, heard, read, or watched anything that spoke to you, please send it my way - Neli@TorahRedux.com.

If you liked this week's edition of TorahRedux, why not share it with friends and family who would appreciate it?

Neli

PS - TorahRedux is my pride and joy, the product of thousands of hours of learning, research, writing, editing, and formatting. I have a niche business that allows me to spend substantial time on TorahRedux, and I welcome your assistance in furthering my goal to keep publishing quality content that matters. I help NY home care companies implement compliant Wage Parity plans that



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enhance recruitment and retention; whether or not that was comprehensible, if you know anyone in the New York home care field, please introduce me!

PPS - Several of my home health clients are hiring at all levels from entry-level to management. Please send me a resume and a one-line explanation of what kind of role would be the best fit and I'll make some introductions.

Redux: *adjective* – resurgence; refers to being brought back, restored, or revived; something familiar presented in a new way. Not to see what no one else has seen, but to say what nobody has yet said about something which everybody sees.