

Shoftim, Torah

Deuteronomy 19:14-21:9

(14) You shall not move your neighbor's landmarks, set up by previous generations, in the property that will be allotted to you in the land that your God יהוה is giving you to possess. (15) A single witness may not validate against an [accused] party any guilt or blame for any offense that may be committed; a case can be valid only on the testimony of two witnesses or more. (16) If someone appears against another party to testify maliciously and gives incriminating yet false testimony, (17) the two parties to the dispute shall appear before יהוה, before the priests or magistrates in authority at the time, (18) and the magistrates shall make a thorough investigation. If the one who

דברים י"ט:י"ד-כ"א:ט'

(יד) לֹא תִסֵּיג גְבוּל רֵעֶךָ אֲשֶׁר
גָּבְלוּ רֵאשֵׁנִים בְּנַחֲלֹתְךָ אֲשֶׁר
תִּנְחַל בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
נָתַן לְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: {ס} (טו)
לֹא־יִקוּם עַד אֶחָד בְּאִישׁ לְכָל־עוֹן
וּלְכָל־חַטָּאת בְּכָל־חַטָּא אֲשֶׁר
יַחֲטֵא עַל־פִּי | שְׁנֵי עֵדִים אוֹ
עַל־פִּי שְׁלֹשֶׁה־עֵדִים יִקוּם דְּבַר:
(טז) כִּי־יִקוּם עַד־חָמֵס בְּאִישׁ
לְעֵנוֹת בּוֹ סָרָה: (יז) וְעַמְדוּ
שְׁנֵי־הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־לֵהֶם הָרִיב
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים
וְהַשֹּׁפְטִים אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ בֵּימֵי הָהֵם:
(יח) וְדָרְשׁוּ הַשֹּׁפְטִים הַיָּטֵב וְהַנָּה
עַד־שֶׁקֶר הָעֵד שֶׁקֶר עָנָה בְּאָחִיו:
(יט) וְעֲשִׂיתֶם לוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר זָמַם
לַעֲשׂוֹת לְאָחִיו וּבְעֵרַת הָרֶעַ

testified is a false witness, having testified falsely against a fellow Israelite, (19) you shall do to the one as the one schemed to do to the other. Thus you will sweep out evil from your midst; (20) others will hear and be afraid, and such evil things will not again be done in your midst. (21) Nor must you show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. (1) When you [an Israelite warrior] take the field against your enemies, and see horses and chariots—forces larger than yours—have no fear of them, for your God יהוה, who brought you from the land of Egypt, is with you. (2) Before you join battle, the priest shall come forward and address the troops. (3) He shall say to them, “Hear, O Israel! You are about to join battle with your enemy. Let not your courage falter. Do not be in fear, or in panic, or in dread of them. (4) For it is your

מִקְרָבָהּ: (כ) וְהַנְּשָׂאֲרִים יִשְׁמְעוּ
וַיִּרְאוּ וְלֹא-יִלְסְפוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת עוֹד כְּדַבַּר
הָרַע הַזֶּה בְּקִרְבָּהּ: (כא) וְלֹא
תַחֲוֹס עֵינֶיךָ נֶפֶשׁ בְּנֶפֶשׁ עַיִן בְּעַיִן
יָשׁוּן בְּיָשׁוּן יָד בְּיָד רֶגֶל בְּרֶגֶל: {ס}
(א) כִּי-תֵצֵא לְמִלְחָמָה עַל-אִיבֶיךָ
וַרְאִיתָ סוּס וְרֶכֶב עִם רַב מִמֶּךָ לֹא
תִירָא מֵהֶם כִּי-יְהוּהוּ אֱלֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ
הַמַּעֲלֶה מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: (ב) וְהָיָה
כִּקְרַבְכֶם אֶל-הַמִּלְחָמָה וַנִּגַּשׁ
הַכֹּהֵן וְדִבֶּר אֶל-הָעָם: (ג) וְאָמַר
אֲלֵהֶם שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם קְרַבִּים
הַיּוֹם לְמִלְחָמָה עַל-אִיבֵיכֶם
אֶל-יָרֵךְ לְבַבְכֶם אֶל-תִּירְאוּ
וְאֶל-תַּחֲפֹזוּ וְאֶל-תַּעֲרָצוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם:
(ד) כִּי יְהוּהוּ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַהֵלֶךְ
עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם עִם-אִיבֵיכֶם
לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם: (ה) וְדִבְרוּ
הַשֹּׁטְרִים אֶל-הָעָם יֹאמְרוּ
מִי-הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בַּיַּת-חֹדֶשׁ
וְלֹא חָנְכוּ יָלְדוֹ וַיָּשָׁב לְבֵיתוֹ

God יהוה who marches with you to do battle for you against your enemy, to bring you victory.” (5) Then the officials shall address the troops, as follows: “Is there anyone who has built a new house but has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it. (6) Is there anyone who has planted a vineyard but has never harvested it? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another harvest it. (7) Is there anyone who has paid the bride-price for a wife, but who has not yet taken her [into his household]? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another take her [into his household as his wife].” (8) The officials shall go on addressing the troops and say, “Is there anyone afraid and disheartened? Let him go back to his home, lest the courage of his comrades flag like his.” (9) When the officials have

פְּוֹיִמוֹת בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר
 יַחְנֹכְנוּ: (ו) וּמִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־נִטַּע
 כָּרֶם וְלֹא חָלְלוֹ יֵלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לְבֵיתוֹ
 פְּוֹיִמוֹת בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר
 יַחְלֹלְנוּ: (ז) וּמִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־אַרְשׁ
 אִשָּׁה וְלֹא לָקַחָהּ יֵלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לְבֵיתוֹ
 פְּוֹיִמוֹת בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר
 יִקְחֶנָּה: (ח) וַיִּסְפוּ הַשְּׂטָרִים לְדַבֵּר
 אֶל־הָעָם וְאָמְרוּ מִי־הָאִישׁ הַיָּרֵא
 וְרָף הַלֵּבב יֵלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לְבֵיתוֹ וְלֹא
 יִמָּס אֶת־לֵבָב אָחִיו כָּל־בָּבוּ: (ט)
 וְהָיָה כְּכֹלֵת הַשְּׂטָרִים לְדַבֵּר
 אֶל־הָעָם וּפְקֻדוֹ שָׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת
 בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם: {ס} (י) כִּי־תִקְרַב
 אֶל־עִיר לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ וְקִרְאתָ
 אֵלֶיהָ לְשָׁלוֹם: (יא) וְהָיָה
 אִם־שָׁלוֹם תַּעֲנֶנּוּ וּפְתַחְתָּהּ לָךְ וְהָיָה
 כָּל־הָעָם הַנִּמְצָא־בָּהּ יִהְיוּ לָךְ
 לְמָס וְעַבְדוּךָ: (יב) וְאִם־לֹא
 תִשְׁלִים עִמָּךְ וְעָשִׂתָּהּ עִמָּךְ
 מִלְחָמָה וְצִרְתָּ עָלֶיהָ: (יג) וּנְתַנָּהּ

finished addressing the troops, army commanders shall assume command of the troops. (10) When you approach a town to attack it, you shall offer it terms of peace. (11) If it responds peaceably and lets you in, all the people present there shall serve you at forced labor. (12) If it does not surrender to you, but would join battle with you, you shall lay siege to it; (13) and when your God יהוה delivers it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword. (14) You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, the livestock, and everything in the town—all its spoil—and enjoy the use of the spoil of your enemy, which your God יהוה gives you. (15) Thus you shall deal with all towns that lie very far from you, towns that do not belong to nations hereabout. (16) In the towns of the latter peoples, however, which your God יהוה is giving you as a heritage, you

יהוה אלהיך בידך והפית
את כל זכורה לפי חרב: (יד) רק
הנשים והטף והבהמה וכל אשר
יהיה בעיר כל שללה תבז לך
ואכלת את שלל איביך אשר נתן
יהוה אלהיך לך: (טו) כן תעשה
לכל הערים הרחוקות ממך מאד
אשר לא מערי הגוים האלה
הנה: (טז) רק מערי העמים
האלה אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לך
נחלה לא תחיה כל נשמה: (יז)
כיהחרם תחרימם החתי והאמרי
הכנעני והפרזי החוי והיבויסי
כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיך: (יח)
למען אשר לא ילמדו אתכם
לעשות ככל תועבתם אשר עשו
לאלהיהם וחסאתם ליהוה
אלהיכם: {ס} (יט) כיתצור
אל עיר ימים רבים להלחם עליה
לתפשה לא תשתחית את עצה
לנדח עליו גרזן כי ממנו תאכל

shall not let a soul remain alive.
 (17) No, you must proscribe them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—as your God יהוה has commanded you, (18) lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things that they have done for their gods and you stand guilty before your God (19) When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? (20) Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siegeworks against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.
 (1) If, in the land that your God יהוה is assigning you to possess,

וְאֵתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ
 הַשָּׂדֶה לִבְאֵ מִפְּנֵיךָ בַּמָּצוֹר: (כ)
 וְקֵץ עֵץ אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְעַ כִּי-לֹא-עֵץ
 מֵאֲכָל הוּא אֵתוֹ תִּשְׁחִית וְכָרַת
 וּבְנִיתָ מָצוֹר עַל-הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר-הוּא
 עֹשֶׂה עִמָּךְ מִלְחָמָה עַד רִדְתָּהּ:
 {פ} (א) כִּי-יִמָּצֵא חָלָל בְּאֲדָמָה
 אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ
 לְרִשְׁתָּהּ נֹפֵל בַּשָּׂדֶה לֹא נוֹדַע מִי
 הִכָּהוּ: (ב) וַיֵּצְאוּ זִקְנֵיךָ וְשֹׁפְטֶיךָ
 וּמִדְּדוּ אֶל-הָעֵרִים אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹת
 הַחֲלָל: (ג) וְהָיָה הָעִיר הַקְּרֹבָה
 אֶל-הַחֲלָל וְלִקְחוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר
 הַהוּא עֵגְלֹת בָּקָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עֶבֶד
 בָּהּ אֲשֶׁר לֹא-מִשְׁכָּה בְּעַל: (ד)
 וְהוֹרְדוּ זִקְנֵי הָעִיר הַהוּא
 אֶת-הָעֵגְלָה אֶל-נַחַל אֵיתָן אֲשֶׁר
 לֹא-יֵעֲבֵד בּוֹ וְלֹא יִזְרַע וְעֵרְפוּ-שֵׁם
 אֶת-הָעֵגְלָה בַּנַּחַל: (ה) וַנִּגְשׂוּ
 הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי לֵוִי כִּי בָם בָּחַר יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׂרְתוֹ וּלְבָרְךָ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

someone slain is found lying in the open, the identity of the slayer not being known, (2) your elders and magistrates shall go out and measure the distances from the corpse to the nearby towns. (3) The elders of the town nearest to the corpse shall then take a heifer which has never been worked, which has never pulled in a yoke; (4) and the elders of that town shall bring the heifer down to an everflowing wadi, which is not tilled or sown. There, in the wadi, they shall break the heifer's neck. (5) The priests, sons of Levi, shall come forward; for your God יהוה has chosen them for divine service and to pronounce blessing in the name of יהוה, and every lawsuit and case of assault is subject to their ruling. (6) Then all the elders of the town nearest to the corpse shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the wadi. (7) And they shall make

וְעַל־פִּיהֶם יִהְיֶה כָּל־רִיב וְכָל־נִגְעָה:
(ו) וְכָל זְקֵנֵי הָעִיר הַהִוא הַקְּרֹבִים
אֶל־הַחֵלֶל יִרְחֲצוּ אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם
עַל־הָעֵגְלָה הָעֲרוּפָה בַּנַּחַל: (ז)
וְעָנוּ וְאָמְרוּ יִדְּינוּ לָא (שפכה)
[שִׁפְכוּ] אֶת־הַדָּם הַזֶּה וְעֵינֵינוּ לֹא
רָאוּ: (ח) כִּפֹּר לְעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
אֲשֶׁר־פָּדִיתָ יְהוָה וְאֶל־תִּתֵּן דָּם נָקִי
בְּקֶרֶב עַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִכְפַּר לָהֶם
הַדָּם: (ט) וְאִתָּה תִּבְעֵר הַדָּם הַנָּקִי
מִקְרֶבְךָ כִּי־תַעֲשֶׂה הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינָי
יְהוָה: {ס}

this declaration: “Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it done. (8) Absolve, יהוה, Your people Israel whom You redeemed, and do not let guilt for the blood of the innocent remain among Your people Israel.” And they will be absolved of bloodguilt. (9) Thus you will remove from your midst guilt for the blood of the innocent, for you will be doing what is right in the sight of יהוה.