

THE Kibbitzer

Issue 19



The young man in shul was pursuing the girl, so he took her to the Beit Din, to court her.

You get it? Beit Din is a court. You court for romance. This week's Parsha talks about court and righteous judgment. I would like to thank my student, Bella, for her help.

RABBI ANSWERS HIS PUPILS

I was in Israel, I held a door and nobody said 'thank you.' I found it very rude. Why don't Israelis say 'thank you'?

My Dear Pupil. Hakarat HaTov, recognizing the good one does for you, is extremely important. The real question is what did you do to deserve a 'thank you'? Many Israelis will say 'thank you.' Even so, I shall explain why many do not.

•When they say something in Israel, they mean it. When you say 'thank you' in Israel, it's from the heart. Somebody pours me a drink, I don't thank them. Being in Israel my level sincerity is too much for a pour. Somebody helps me move apartments, I'll give an Israeli 'thank you.' I Todah Rabbah and curtsy.

•There are repercussions for a 'thank you.' I made a mistake and said 'thank you' once. The acknowledgement of my appreciation had me obligated to the guy. He helped me close the trunk of my car when I was pulling out groceries. I was now indebted to him. Next I know, I'm taking him to the airport. I'm stuck checking in his bags and checking on his house while he's away. I'm not saying 'thank you' again.

•They did the army. Did you serve your country? Maybe you should be thanking them. Maybe you should be thanking them that the door is still there and wasn't blown up. Maybe, if you spent five months in a tank, defending Sderot, they would thank you.

•They don't have time to stop and thank you. Do you also need a foot rub after you get the door? What are Israelis focused on, you ask? They're working towards redemption. I'm sorry if you didn't get thanked, my Talmid. Maybe bringing in the dispersed Jews from the Diaspora back to our Home Land is more important. Do your part and hold the door. You might be holding it for Mashiach, making his way to Jerusalem.

•Ever heard of a Chamsin, an Israeli heatwave? Now that I think of it, your holding the door is not appreciated. Your holding the door is killing the air-conditioning. You're letting the 120 degree Chamsin into the building. At best, you're bringing in another inch of sand. Todah Rabbah for caking the floor in 200 degree sand. The sand is hotter than the Chamsin. Gd made sand to hold heat, so you can't enjoy going to the beach.

SERMON OF REBUKE - SHOFTIM

Shabbat Shalom My Congregants,
In this week's portion (Devarim 16:19) we learn about not taking bribes. Judges shall not take bribes as 'Bribery blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous.' We may not bribe judges... Do I really have to answer... Am I hearing that bribery is fine? So, wealthy people should always win in court... We must make for ourselves judges... Law is important. You want no accountability? See what happens at the shul board meeting... However, we may not bribe the judges. How do the judges then make their money? I don't know...

Many people in this congregation started some very legit businesses thanks to bribes. Thanks to these businesses, the shul was able to pay for its new social hall. The Eisenstein Memorial Social Hall. Mark had a great business thanks to the bribes he was able to give. B"H... We must thank the politicians who have taken the bribes that allowed our shul to thrive. Hakarat Hatov... We shall focus on judges. Judges may not take bribes.

It is 'righteousness' that we must 'pursue' as a people צדק צדק תרדוף (Devarim 16:20)...

We're not courting righteousness here. It's not a woman. You don't take righteousness to dinner. That's a bribe. And bribery does not bring truth or righteousness. The same way Max and Maxine met. We shall not talk about that... Righteousness is not an enemy... Yes. We pursue it. We chase it... It's not courting. It's in court... we need better grade school teachers in this community... *Rashi notes that righteousness means a Beit Din, a*

Jewish court. It is through the court that we become righteous. We have no court system in our shul... *Rashi teaches, 'Even for righteous judgement' we may not take bribes...* That was not a bribe. It was a gift...

How can judgement be truthful or righteous if a great man, such as Mr. Eisenstein, is so generous, when Mr. Fishbaum is so cheap?...

Pay your dues... Generosity is forbidden, for if everybody were to have bribed like Mr. Eisenstein, it would be considered a salary.

We are not generous enough, so in the most basic palace of Truth, the court, we must remain not generous, as to not be dishonest...

If all were generous, like Mr. Eisenstein, there would be no bribes... It was a gift, and they got the High Holiday seat they wanted...

(Devarim 17:1) No blemish on the offering...

'it's an abomination'... Have you seen the food that's brought out for Kiddish... You can't bribe the Kohen to take a blemished offering. It's the court of Gd...

Rivka's Notes on R' Mendelchem's Drasha:

The community setup a court system. Sadie headed it. She's tough and she loves banging. She scared everybody last Rosh Chodesh, when she clapped. Clapping is hitting the table, to let all know to say Ya'aleh vYavo, and that you are mad. Nobody forgot to say it that week. They were too scared Sadie would hurt them. It was loud. Fran fell asleep in the middle of the hearings about when the next shul games night should be. Shul stoning was a bit much. Target's been overcharging for a while. Even so, we cannot consider the manager an idol worshipper. High Holiday seating always leads to fights. Nobody wants to sit next to Bernie. He coughs and chucks. Frank davens very loud, when he's davening. He is usually talking. He does that loud too. Mrs. Fialikman got a new hat. That's an eyesore. That's going to take up two seats. Won't be able to see the ark if you're behind her. Sadie is tough as nails. You sit next to her, you're not getting an armrest. She'll clapp that if she has to. Fran waves a piece of paper like she's at the kabuki theater.



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