

# KOLLEL AGUDATH ACHIM

Rosh Kollel  
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PARASHAT MATOT- 2022

פרשת מטות 5782

**\*\*MAZAL TOV\*\* WE ARE PLEASED TO INFORM YOU OF THE BIRTH OF OUR “GREAT GRANDSON”, BORN TO OUR GRAND CHILDREN, MEIRA & SHAYA WINIARZ , MAZAL TOV TO SHLOMO & MIRIAM PARENTS OF MEIRA , AND TO MIRIAM MOTHER OF SHAYA .**

HaShem commands Moshe to “take revenge for the people of Israel against the people of Midian” (31:2). When Moshe transmits this command to the people he says “Arm yourselves and prepare for war against Midian in order to inflict HaShem’s vengeance against Midian.(31::3). Was the act of revenge meant to avenge HaShem or to avenge the people of Israel? Rashi resolves this issue by stating that “one who wrongs Israel is regarded as if one had wronged G-d Himself”

Revenge could be very sweet, yet revenge is strictly prohibited. In parashat Kedoshim we are taught (Vaikra 19:18) “Lo Tikom veLo Titor”, (Do not take revenge and do not [even] bear a grudge), Revenge means retaliating against someone who has displeased us, by attempting to do them harm. According to the Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 241) at the root of this Mitzvah lies the purpose that a person should realize and reflect that whatever happens, good or bad, is caused by “The One Above”, nothing can occur without the will of HaShem approving it. Therefore, should a person inflict suffering or pain upon us, let us know in our soul that our bad deeds were the cause, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu decreed this upon us. Let us not set our thoughts to take revenge. I would add that the person who inflicts harm on us is not guiltless for he was not commanded to do so nor was he even asked to do it. He did it willingly and voluntarily, for which he will pay the consequences. As we learn in Pirkei Avot (2:7) “Because you drowned others, they drowned you; and those who drowned you will be drowned eventually.”

So much for personal revenge. However, taking revenge on behalf of HaShem as Pinchas did is considered a noble deed. Indeed, G-d Himself praises Pinchas, stating that “he zealously avenged Me” (Bamidbar 25:11). So taking revenge on behalf of HaShem or on behalf of the nation of Israel is permitted, but not commendable as our Sages did not approve of what Pinchas did; they even wanted to place him in cheirem (excommunicate him) The proper approach of action against those who want to destroy us is to pray to HaShem that He should take the full measure of revenge against our enemies. David HaMelech said it in Tehillim 91:1- “*Keil Nekamot HaShem*” *O G-d of vengeance.*

Also in 149:5-“*La’asot Nekama Bagoyim*” *To execute vengeance among the nations.*

In the Av HaRachamim that we recite on Shabbat before Musaf, we say, “May He, before our eyes, exact retribution for the spilled blood of His servants”

With this in mind, Rabban Gamliel II, the Nassi of Israel after the destruction of the Second Temple in Yavneh, instituted the 19<sup>th</sup> Beracha of Shemoneh Esrei. It was a response to the rise the early Christians who used their political power to oppress the observant Jews. The Beracha asks HaShem to avenge us against them and to destroy them. It can and should be used today against our enemies who threaten to destroy us. That is the Torah way of Nekama, revenge. It is sweet, it is desirable, but we beseech G-d to do it for us, and preferably before our eyes, when we are alive and can enjoy the pleasure of seeing it happen.

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim  
Rabbi Aharon and Libby Ziegler

לבנת הספיר

THE  
Great News!

Rabbi Ziegler is publishing a new sefer entitled  
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