

B”H

*Eitz Chayim Hee: A Torah Commentary for Environmental Learning and
Action*

Hebrew/English Source Sheet

Torah Portion of Ki Teitze

“Can Compassion for a Bird Help Bring Mashiach?”

The sources are presented in the order they appear in the commentary

דברים כב:ו-ז

כי יקרא קן-צפור לפניך בדרך בכל-עץ או על-האֶרֶץ, אפרחים או ביצים, והאם רבצת על-האפרחים, או על-הביצים--לא-תקח האם, על-הבנים. ז שלח תשלח את-האם, ואת-הבנים תקח-לך, למען ייטב לך, והארכת ימים.

Deuteronomy 22:6-7

6. If a bird's nest chances before you on the road, on any tree, or on the ground, and [it contains] fledglings or eggs, if the mother is sitting upon the fledglings or upon the eggs, you shall not take the mother upon the young. 7. You shall send away the mother, and [then] you may take the young for yourself, in order that it should be good for you, and you should lengthen your days.

Devarim Rabbah 6:7

Another comment: THOU SHALT IN ANY WISE LET THE DAM GO (SHALEAH TE-SHALLAH). The Rabbis say: Why is the word shalah repeated? To tell you that if this precept comes your way a second time, do not say, 'I have already done my duty,' but every time it comes your way you must fulfil it. Another comment: THOU SHALT IN ANY WISE LET THE DAM GO. The Rabbis said: If you have fulfilled the precept of letting the dam go you will merit also to fulfil the precept of letting go free the Hebrew slave.¹ Whence this? For it is said, And when thou lettest him go free from thee (Deut. XV, 13). Another explanation: What is the meaning of, THOU SHALT IN ANY WISE LET THE DAM GO? If you will fulfil this precept you will hasten thereby the coming of King Messiah, of whom Scripture uses the expression shiluah ('sending free'), as it is said, That send forth freely the feet of the ox and the ass (Isa. XXXII, 20).² Another comment: R. Tanhuma said: If you fulfil this precept you will hasten the coming of Elijah the prophet, of blessed memory, of whom Scripture uses the expression, 'shiluah,' as it is said, Behold, I will send (sholeah) you Elijah the prophet (Mal. III, 23); and he will come and comfort you. Whence this? For it is said, And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children (ib. 24).

דברים טו:יב

כי-ימכר לך אֶחִיד העברי, או העבריה--ועבדך, שש שנים; ובשנה, השביעת, תשלחנו חפשי, מעמך.

Deuteronomy 15:12

If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you for six years, and in the seventh year you shall send him forth free from you.

מלאכי ג:כג

הנה אָנכִי שֶׁלַח לָכֶם, אֶת אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּבִיאָה—לִפְנֵי, בּוֹא יוֹם הַי, הַגָּדוֹל, וְהַנּוֹרָא.

Malachi 3:23

Lo, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord,

בראשית א:כא

כֹּא וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹקִים, אֶת-הַתַּיִמִּים הַגְּדֹלִים; וְאֶת כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה הַרְמֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵהֶם, וְאֶת כָּל-עוֹף כַּנֶּף לְמִינֵהוּ, וַיִּרְא אֱלֹקִים, כִּי-טוֹב.

Genesis 1:21

And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that crawls, with which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged fowl, according to its kind, and God saw that it was good.

בראשית א:כד

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים, תּוֹצֵא אֶת-הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ, בַּהֵמָה וְרִמְשׁ וְחַיִּת-וְאָרֶץ, לְמִינָהּ וַיְהִי-כֵן

Genesis 1:24

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kind, cattle and creeping things and the beasts of the earth according to their kind," and it was so.

תהילים קמה:ט

טוֹב-ה' לְכָל; וְרַחֲמָיו, עַל-כָּל-מַעֲשָׂיו

Psalms 145:9

The Lord is good to all, and His mercies are on all His works.

תלמוד בבלי סוטה יד

דַּרְשׁ ר' שְׁמַלַי תוֹרָה תַּחֲלֵתָהּ גְּמִילוֹת חֲסָדִים וְסוּפָהּ גְּמִילוֹת חֲסָדִים
תַּחֲלֵתָהּ גְּמִילוֹת חֲסָדִים דְּכָתִיב וַיַּעַשׂ ה' אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתוּב
עוֹר וַיִּלְבִּישֶׁם וְסוּפָהּ גְּמִילוֹת חֲסָדִים דְּכָתִיב וַיִּקְבֵּר אוֹתוֹ

Talmud Bavli, Sota 14a

R. Simlai expounded: Torah begins with an act of benevolence¹¹ and ends with an act of benevolence. It begins with an act of benevolence, for it is written: And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them;¹² and it ends with an act of benevolence, for it is written: 'And He buried him in the valley'

ישעיהו יא:יז

ו גר זאב עם-כבש, ונמר עם-גדי ירביץ; ועגל וכפיר ומריא יחדו, ונער קטן נהג בס. ז ופרה ודב תרעינה, יחדו ירבעו ילדיהן; ואריה, כפקר יאכל-תבן.

Isaiah 11:6-7

6. And a wolf shall live with a lamb, and a leopard shall lie with a kid; and a calf and a lion cub and a fatling [shall lie] together, and a small child shall lead them.

7. And a cow and a bear shall graze together, their children shall lie; and a lion, like cattle, shall eat straw.

רמב"ם משנה תורה הלכות מלכים יב

ח [ה] ובאותו הזמן, לא יהיה שם לא רעב ולא מלחמה ולא קנאה ותחרות--שהטובה תהיה מושפעת הרבה, וכל המעדנים מצויין כעפר. ולא יהיה עסק כל העולם, אלא לדעת את ה' בלבד. ולפיכך יהיו חכמים גדולים, ויודעים דברים הסתומים העמוקים; וישיגו דעת בוראם כפי כוח האדם, שנאמר "כי מלאה הארץ, דעה את ה', כמים, לים מכסים"

Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Malakhim, chapter 12

At that time there will be no hunger nor war or jealousy or competition, there will be great goodness and all sorts of delicacies will be as plentiful as dust. The sole occupation of the world will be to know the Lord. Therefore they will be great sages perceiving deep and hidden matters, achieving knowledge of the creator according to what is possible for man as it is written "the earth will be full of the knowledge of G-d as the water that covers the sea" (translation Gideon aronovich)

יחזקאל לו:כו

כו ונתתי לכם לב חדש, ורוח חדשה אתן בקרבכם; והסרתי את-לב האבן, מבשרכם, ונתתי לכם, לב בשר

Ezekiel 36:26

26. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

ישעיהו יא:ט

לא-ירעו ולא-ישחיתו, בכל-הר קדשי: כי-מלאה הארץ, דעה את ה', כמים, לים מכסים.

Isaiah 11:9

9. They shall neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mount, for the land shall be full of knowledge of the Lord as water covers the sea bed.

Devarim Midrash Rabbah 6:1

WHEN THOU GOEST FORTH (XXI,10). IF A BIRD'S NEST CHANCE BEFORE THEE (XXII, 6). Halachah: Is it obligatory to circumcise an infant who has been born without a prepuce? The Sages have taught thus²: In the case of an infant born without a prepuce it is necessary to cause a few drops of the blood of the Covenant to flow from him, on account of the Covenant of Abraham. And whence do you learn this? From the Torah, as it is written, He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs³ be circumcised (Gen. XVII, 13). Another explanation: 'Must needs be circumcised.' By the duplicate expression [himmol yimmol] two operations of circumcision are implied, namely, circumcision and uncovering. ⁴ R. Levi said: Scripture says, 'himmol yimmol'; from this repetition of the word is to be inferred that he who

performs the circumcision must himself be a circumcised person, for it is written, 'himmol ytmol.'⁵ R. Judan b. Pazzi said: Of Zipporah, the wife of Moses, Scripture records, Then she said: A bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision--la-muloth (Ex. IV, 26). Scripture does not say, la-milah, but 'la-muloth',⁶ that is to say, two operations of circumcision, viz. circumcision and uncovering. And why is an infant circumcised on the eighth day? Because God had compassion upon him in delaying the circumcision until he should have gained strength. And just as God shows mercy to man, so too has He shown mercy to cattle. Whence this? For it is said, But from the eighth day and thenceforth it [sc. the animal] may be accepted for an offering, etc. (Lev. XXII, 27). And what is more, God commands, Ye shall not kill it and its young both in one day (ib. 28). And in the same way that God had compassion upon the cattle, so too was God filled with mercy for the birds, as it is said, IF A BIRD'S NEST CHANCE BEFORE THEE... THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE DAM WITH THE YOUNG

ויקרא כב: כז-כח

כז שור או-כשב או-עז כי יולד, והיה שבעת ימים תחת אמו; ומיום השמיני, והלאה, ירצה, לקרבן אשה לה'. כח ושור, או-שה--אתו ואת-בנו, לא תשחטו ביום אחד.

Leviticus 22:27-28

27. When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall remain under its mother for seven days, and from the eighth day onwards, it shall be accepted as a sacrifice for a fire offering to the Lord.

28. An ox or sheep you shall not slaughter it and its offspring in one day._

משנה ברכות ה: ג

ה, ג האומר על קן ציפור יגיעו רחמיו, ועל טוב ייזכר שמך, מודים מודים--משתקין אותו. העובר לפני התיבה וטעה, יעבור אחר תחתיו; לא יהא סרבן באותה שעה. מניין הוא מתחיל, מתחילת הברכה שטעה זה.

Mishna Berakhot 5:3

if one [in praying] says 'may thy mercies extend to a bird's nest', 'be thy name mentioned for well-doing', or 'we give thanks, we give thanks', he is silenced

Sources not included:

1. Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 151b(?)
2. Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, Tomer Devorah (Palm Tree of Deborah), chap. 2; Baal Shem Tov, Tzava'at HaRiVaSH, sec. 12.
3. Olat Re'iyah 2: 292; cf. Rabbi Chaim Vital, Sha'ar ha-Mitzvot, Eikev, et al

Unless otherwise noted, all English Translations from Judaica Press, available online at www.chabad.org

