

9-13-25 Message to Roeh Israel Abilene – *Ki Tavo* (when you enter in)
Torah Portion: Deuteronomy 26:1 – 29:9
Haftarah: Isaiah 60:1-22
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: Eph 4:1-4

Biblical Dispute Resolution 17 – The Decision Tree 1 – Sin or Not, Urgent or Not?

Central question: When there is a dispute, where should we begin in the process of resolving it?

We are this week in parasha *Ki Tavo*. Its name comes from the fifth through the seventh words in English, and the second and third words in the original Hebrew.

Deut 26:1-3

26 "Then it shall be, when you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, and you possess it and live in it, 2 that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you shall bring in from your land that the Lord your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name.

26:1

נָתַן	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	יְהוָה	אֲשֶׁר	הָאָרֶץ	אֶל־	תָּבוֹא	כִּי־	וְהָיָה
giveth	thy God	the Lord	which	the land	unto	thou art come in	when	And it shall be,
<u>5414</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>3068</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>776</u>	<u>413</u>	<u>935</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>1961</u>

לָךְ	נַחֲלָה	וַיִּרְשֶׁתָּהּ	וַיֵּשְׁבָתָּ	בָּהּ:
for thee	an inheritance,	and possessest it,	and dwellest	therein;
<u>9999</u>	<u>5159</u>	<u>3423</u>	<u>3427</u>	<u>871a</u>

2

וְלָקַחְתָּ	מֵרֵאשִׁיתוֹ	כָּל־	פְּרִי	הָאֲדָמָה	אֲשֶׁר	תָּבִיא
That thou shalt take	of the first of	all	the fruit of	the earth,	which	thou shalt bring
<u>3947</u>	<u>7225</u>	<u>3605</u>	<u>6529</u>	<u>127</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>935</u>

מֵאֲרֶצְךָ	אֲשֶׁר	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	נָתַן	לָךְ	וְשַׂמְתָּ	בַּטֶּנָּא
of thy land	that	the Lord	thy God	giveth	thee,	and shalt put	it
<u>776</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>3068</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>5414</u>	<u>3807a</u>	<u>7760</u>	<u>2935</u>

וְהָלַכְתָּ	אֶל־	הַמָּקוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	יִבְחַר	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֶיךָ	לִשְׁכֹּן	שְׁמוֹ
and shalt go	unto	the place	which	shall choose	the Lord	thy God	to place	his name
<u>3212</u>	<u>413</u>	<u>4725</u>	<u>834</u>	<u>977</u>	<u>3068</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>7931</u>	<u>8034</u>

שָׁם:

there.

8033

2

This passage discusses how our people were to honor G-d when we came into the Land that He promised to us. We were to bring an offering of the first fruits of the land. This served to remind us that the bounty we were harvesting was not of our own doing, but came directly from G-d.

Deut 11:13-25

13 "And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, 14 that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. 15 And He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be satisfied. 16 Beware, lest your hearts be deceived and you turn away and serve other gods and worship them. 17 Or the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.

18 "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. 19 And you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. 20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

21 so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth. 22 For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you, to do it, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him; 23 then the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. 24 Every place on which the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours; your border shall be from the wilderness to Lebanon, and from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea. 25 There shall no man be able to stand before you; the Lord your God shall lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you.

You can see that the promise of prosperity in the Land is a conditional one. If we do what G-d has commanded us to do through Moses, then we will not only have prosperity in the land, but we will not be fearful of the various nations around us.

Please allow me to address some issues of our day, before I address the matter of dispute resolution. I wish for you to be well-armed for discussions with the “pro-Palestinian” people.

Note the boundaries of the “promised land” set out in this passage. The southern boundary is currently in place. The northern boundary is currently in place. The western sea is already set as a boundary (note that this includes what was once called Phylistia, and today called Gaza. But the eastern boundary goes only to the river Jordan (if we ignore the silly “west bank” argument).



G-d intended us to take all the way to the river Euphrates, which (if we imagine straight lines are drawn in a generally east to west direction from

the already-established boundaries) would include parts of Syria, most of Iraq and Jordan, and a part of Saudi Arabia as well.¹

So, when we hear the ill-informed “pro-Palestinians” chanting “From the river to the sea!” we can actually agree with them on part of the chant. That describes the historical land-grant to Israel by G-d given in this passage. But they just get the people groups reversed. It is promised to be Israel, not “Palestine.” There are no such people group as “Palestinians.” But in recent years, many uninformed have insisted there is such a people group. But that is not the lesson of history.

On September 4, 2022 Steven Zipperstein wrote an article entitled *Back when Palestinians insisted there's no such place as Palestine*.² I present some excerpts of it, below.

Immediately following World War I and continuing through most of the British Mandate period (1922-1948),³ Palestinian lawyers and witnesses argued repeatedly before various tribunals that there was no such place as “Palestine.” Instead, they claimed the area known colloquially as “Palestine” was in fact part of Syria, or “southern Syria” to be precise.

¹ Please understand that I have no biblical basis for drawing these lines as I have, other than the fact that we were to take the land all the way to the Euphrates River on the east side.

² <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/back-when-palestinians-insisted-theres-no-such-place-as-palestine/>

³ The Mandate included what is now Israel as well as what is now Jordan. It was all referred to as “Palestine”

Following the Israeli War of Independence, the Palestinians changed course and pledged their loyalty to Jordan.

It seems unthinkable that any Palestinian lawyer or legal scholar would argue today that Palestine is part of Syria or Jordan, but those were the predominant Palestinian legal positions from the end of World War I until the Six Day War.

For example, in November 1918 a Palestinian Arab group filed a petition with the French Commissariat in Jerusalem “begging that Palestine might be formally included in Syria.”

In February 1919 the Arab Delegation from Palestine to the Versailles Peace Conference submitted a formal petition urging that rather than be recognized as an independent state, Palestine should be deemed part of and merged into Syria. The petition said, “We consider Palestine as part of Arabic Syria as it has never been separated from it at any time. We are connected with it by national, religious, linguistic, natural, economical and geographic bonds . . . In view of the above we desire that our distinct Southern Syria or Palestine should not be separated from the Independent Arabic Syrian Government.”

The Arab legal argument that there was no such political entity as “Palestine” continued after the League of Nations awarded the Palestine Mandate to Britain in 1922. For example, in 1925 Jamal Effendi-Husseini, a prominent Palestinian Arab, challenged a decision of British High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel allowing local postage stamps to bear an inscription in Hebrew identifying the country as “Palestine E.I.” (Palestine Eretz Israel).

Husseini’s lawyer, Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, argued to the court that “Palestine” was “not an Arab word.” Auni Bey insisted the correct name of the country was “Southern Syria.” “Palestine,” he argued, had no separate existence and was in fact part of Syria.

There is much more evidence regarding the fact that there is no historical land known as “Palestine” and that there never have been any historical “Palestinian” people. In the interests of moving on from this topic, I won’t put it in this teaching.

It seems that due to the persistent publishing of propaganda, much of the world now believes that Palestine is its own country, with its own people.

Satan has been quite busy in the last few decades, attempting to turn the world against Israel and the Jewish people.

And so it shouldn't surprise us that all the nations are aligning themselves against Israel. And when they attack as a unified force, they will have limited successes, right up into Jerusalem itself. Then the L-rd will descend and go to battle for Israel.⁴ And He will win that battle in a moment.

Let's turn from the battles between good and evil playing out today in the middle east, and turn to the smaller conflicts that we as believers have with one another, and with those in the world.

Where to begin in the dispute resolution process.

The natural human reaction to conflict seems to be one of two paths. One is to run away, the other is to fight. As it turns out, there are pitfalls to each of those natural reactions, and we should consider a more holy one.

Let's assume that our hypothetical situation is not one where you simply need to gently disengage because the other person insists on an argument rather than a conversation.

⁴ Zechariah 14:1-11

The first thing to do is to determine if the matter is a sin issue, or merely a personal preference. We must consider that each person in the congregation will have personal preferences which differ from one another, and if we were to confront one another about those, there would be no end to divisiveness and strife. A good general rule is to apply sufficient love to the other person so that differences in personal preferences are ignored, as is contemplated by Scripture.

Prov 10:12

12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all transgressions.

Rom 12:10-11

10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

John 13:34-35

34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Once you have determined that the matter is an issue of sin, next make an initial decision regarding urgency. I divide all matters into two initial categories.

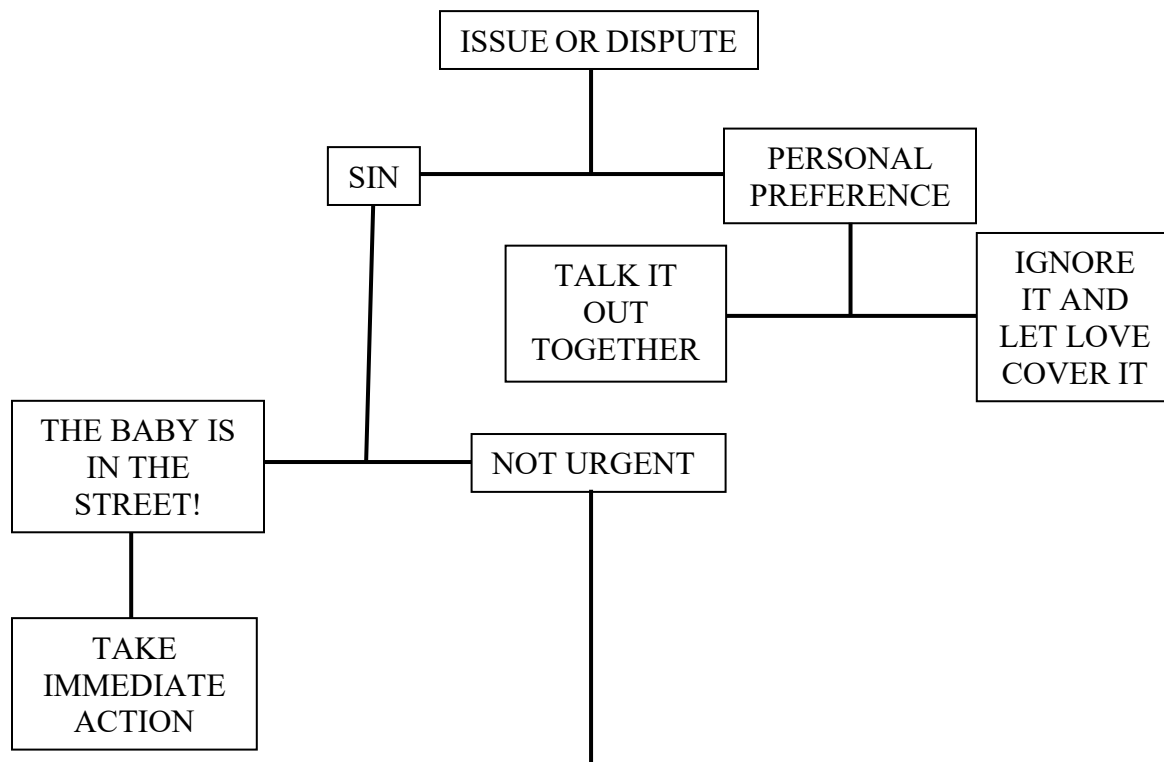
1. What I call “The baby is in the street” issues require urgent action. There is no time for lengthy prayer, for Scripture study, for assembling a committee, to consult with advisors, etc. In this category, the urgency and immediate damage requires immediate action to prevent a very bad result. Admittedly, an imperfect but workable resolution is better than no resolution.

It is important to note that it is quite rare (if not impossible) for issues to be in this category which *do not* fall into the category of sin – so that you will be able to identify one or more verses in Scripture which prohibit an action taken, or require an action omitted. Many sin issues, and virtually all non-sin issues fall into the second category, below.

2. Issues not requiring urgent action occupy the second category. There is a bit of time for dealing with this issue in a more measured way. And that way well may involve a season of prayer, Scripture study, assembling counselors and consulting advisors. Or at least

you have time to make a phone call to an advisor for some guidance and confirmation.

If you have an issue or an offense, and you don't know for certain that the issue is a sin issue, then you have some time to search-out the Scriptures for the answer. If you determine that the issue is one of personal preference (rather than a sin issue), you should strongly consider simply allowing love to cover it over. You can decide to talk it over with the other person, because what is troubling you might also be troubling others and that would be a loving response as well.



If the matter is not urgent, and still is a sin issue, you still have the option to privately forgive, and allow love to cover it. If you choose this option, you *should not* go to the other person to tell them you forgive them for the sin. That will only operate to trouble the other person, and he will insist on a conversation regarding this statement. If the entire reason for the preemptive forgiveness is to let the matter die with you, then you should do precisely that, and let it be done completely privately.

If you choose private forgiveness, then you must also “wipe clean the slate” and forget the issue. If you do not, it will percolate in your soul and poison you as well. And if you are truly loving someone, you do not keep a “record of wrongs.”⁵

Why is it a good thing for us to develop a discipline of private forgiveness of sins, when the circumstances call for it? If every believer took every opportunity to confront every other person regarding every sin, then we would all be living our lives as if walking barefoot in a darkened room with a floor strewn with broken glass. That is not how G-d expects us to behave with one another. The result of that hyper-critical process would be to destroy or dramatically weaken every fellowship.

1 Peter 4:8-9

⁵ 1 Cor 13:5

8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another,
because love covers a multitude of sins.

And we are to diligently seek unity, and preserve unity, because that forms
the basis for our witness to the world of our faith.

Ps 133

133 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brothers to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Coming down upon the beard,
Even Aaron's beard,
Coming down upon the edge of his robes.

3 It is like the dew of Hermon,
Coming down upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the Lord commanded the blessing — life forever.

Eph 4:1-4

4 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in
a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been

called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Col 3:12-15

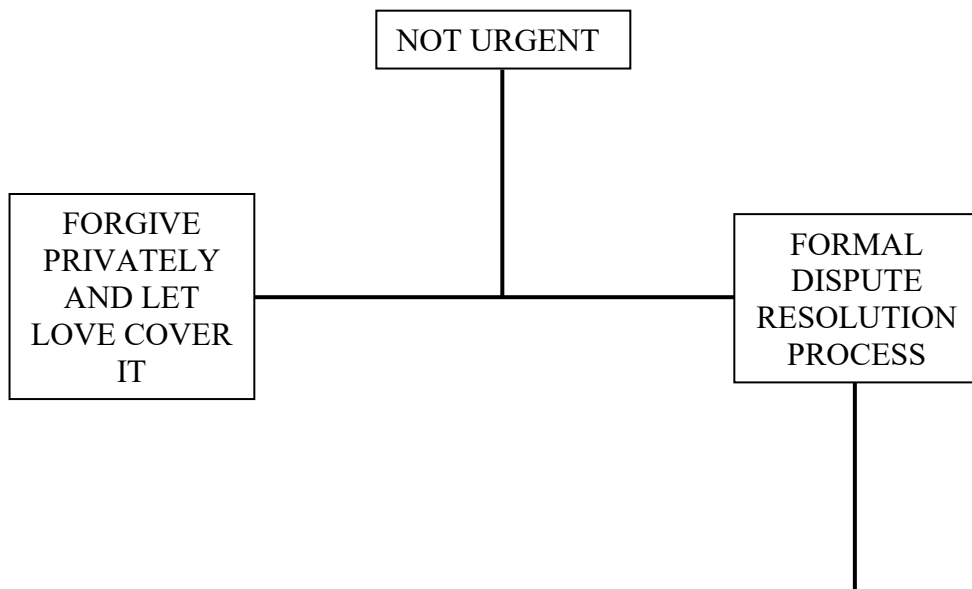
12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

We also know that Scripture commands us to deal with sin by taking advantage of the process of biblical dispute resolution.⁶ So, the righteous choices in dealing with sin issues are reduced to two. One is to privately forgive, and the second is to follow the process of biblical dispute resolution.

The dividing line between what sins we should simply privately forgive and dismiss, and those sins that we must deal with, is not something that

⁶ Matt 18:15

is capable of drawing with any precision. There are certainly some circumstances where certain sins must be subjected to the resolution process. Your spiritual leader will be of assistance, but you also must take advantage of a higher authority. The best assistance you will get in determining where that line rests, in the particular situation that you are facing, is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So, get some godly counseling, and then spend some time praying, and listening for guidance.



In our next lesson we will begin discussing the process of resolving disputes involving the formal process that G-d established for us to use with one another.