



## **Parashat Mishpatim**

### **1 Adar I 5784 – February 10, 2024**

The Torah teaches that we are obligated to help a person in a predicament even if we strongly dislike them. Help has many different meanings. It could mean physical, emotional, economic, or spiritual assistance.

The Gemara B'rachot brings forth a story. Some teamsters lived in Rabbi Meir's neighborhood. They were a rowdy group who annoyed Rabbi Meir a great deal, so much so that he once prayed that they would die. Rabbi Meir's wife, B'ruriah said to him, "How can you pray for these sinners to die? Is it because, it is written 'Let sin be consumed', which you understood to mean that the wicked should be destroyed." B'ruriah points out to Rabbi Meir that it is written, "sin, not the sinners." The end of the verse in the Psalm reads, "And the wicked will be no more."

What B'ruriah is saying to Rabbi Meir is to pray for the rowdy teamsters, on their behalf, that they may be led to repentance and the "wicked" will end. Rabbi Meir did pray for them, and they were led to repent.

The obligation to help a person that you dislike in a difficult situation is challenging. When the results cause positive Torah to change the animosity fades away and everyone is better for it.

Good Shabbos!

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