

Parashat Ki Teitzei **SEPTEMBER 13, 2019**

Taught By: Zachary & Ayden

SUMMARY

Ki Teitzei starts by teaching the Israelites some of the *mitzvot* they will be responsible for when they go to war to conquer the Promised Land.

According to Rabbi Moshe Maimonides *Parashat Ki Teitzei* contains 74 *mitzvot*, the most of any Torah portion. Among the many *mitzvot* mentioned in the Torah portion, Moshe tells people to return any lost items that they may find; to pay workers on time; to make sure a new home is safe for family and others by putting a fence around the roof, and to be honest in doing business. It also sets limits on punishment for people and animals that do something wrong.

The *Torah* portion concludes with the commandment to remember the tribe of Amalek's attack on the weak members of the community who lagged behind the main group as the Israelites set out from Egyptian slavery.



1) In this week's *parasha* we learn the *mitzvah* of making a railing around any portion of a roof that we intend to use for outdoor space:

כִּי תִבְנֶה בַּיִת חֲדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ מַעֲקֵה לְגַגְךָ וְלֹא-תָשִׂים דָּמַיִם בְּבֵיתְךָ כִּי-יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ:

When you build a new house, make a railing for your roof and do not put blood on your house, when “the faller” falls from it.

Why do you think the Torah calls the person who might fall from your roof “the faller” instead of a “the person”?

ZACH: I think this is saying that you should put a railing around your roof if you are using it as an outdoor space, because it's possible someone could fall from it by accident, even if they aren't a “faller”.

AYDEN: By calling the person who might fall “the faller” it might be teaching us that there are people who are more likely to fall than others and that, when we build a house, we should think ahead about how we can make our homes safe space for *anyone* who might visit us.

2) The word “**מַעֲקֵה**” (*ma'akeh*) translated above as “railing” only appears one time in the whole TaNaKH. The name for this kind of word is “hapax legomenon”. Because it only appears one time, we don't know exactly what it means, but we do know--from the root of the word--that it means “to hold back”. A **מַעֲקֵה** is likely something designed “to hold back” a person from experiencing danger.

AYDEN: We could put fire escape ladders in second floor rooms or we could make sure there is a safe place to go in case there is a tornado.

ZACH: We could also make sure to put doors in front stair cases to protect people from falling.

What kinds of guests would be most likely to hurt themselves if they visited your home? (Blind? Deaf? “Fallers”? . . .)

What could you build / do to “hold back” these guests from danger?

NOTICE

**ROOF
ACCESS**