

Is Self-Defense A Mitzvah

בראשית י"ד:י"ד

(יד) וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אֶחָיו וַיִּרְקַב אֶת־חַנְיָכָיו וַיִּלְיֵדוּ בֵיתוֹ שְׂמֹנֶה עָשָׂר וַיִּשְׁלַח מְאֹד וַיִּרְדֹּף עַד־דָּן:

Genesis 14:14

(14) When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he armed his servants . . . and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

שמות י"ג:י"ח

(יח) וַיִּסָּב אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הָעָם לְדָרֹךְ הַמִּדְבָּר יַם־סוּף וַחֲמֹשִׁים עָלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

Exodus 13:18

(18) So God led the people roundabout, by way of the wilderness at the Sea of Reeds. Now the Israelites went up armed out of the land of Egypt.

נחמיה ד':י"א-י"ב

(יא) הַבּוֹנִים בַּחֹמָה וְהַנְּשָׂאִים בְּסֹכֶל עֹמְשִׁים בְּאַחַת יָדוֹ עֹשֶׂה בַּמְּלָאכָה וְאַחַת מִתְּחַנְקַת הַשֶּׁלַח: (יב) וְהַבּוֹנִים אִישׁ חֶרְבּוֹ אֲסוּרִים עַל־מִתְּנִיּוֹ וּבּוֹגִים וְהַתּוֹקֵעַ בַּשּׁוֹפָר אֶצְלִי:

Nehemiah 4:11-12

(11) who were rebuilding the wall. The basket-carriers were burdened, doing work with one hand while the other held a weapon. (12) As for the builders, each had his sword girded at his side as he was building. The trumpeter stood beside me.

שמות כ"ב:א'

(א) אִם-בְּמַחְתָּרֵת מְצָא הַגֵּנֵב וְהִקָּה וּמָת אִין לוֹ דְּמַיִם:

Exodus 22:1

(1) If the thief is seized while tunneling, and he is beaten to death, there is no bloodguilt in his case.

סנהדרין ע"ב

מתני' הבא במחותרת נידון על שם סופו גמי' אמר רבא מאי טעמא דמחותרת חזקה אין אדם מעמיד עצמו על ממונו והאי מימר אמר אי אזילנא קאי לאפאי ולא שביק לי ואי קאי לאפאי קטילנא ליה והתורה אמרה אם בא להורגך השכם להורגו.

Sanhedrin 72

MISHNA: A **burglar** who is found breaking into a house may be killed by the owner of the house with impunity (see Exodus 22:1). He too is **sentenced on account of his ultimate end**, as it is presumed that if the owner of the house would resist the burglar, the burglar would kill the owner of the house. **GEMARA: Rava says: What is the reason for this halakha concerning a burglar** who breaks into a house? He explains: There is **a presumption that a person does not restrain himself** when faced **with losing his money**, and therefore **this burglar must have said** to himself: **If I go** in and the owner sees me, he will **rise against me and not allow me** to steal from him, **and if he rises against me, I will kill him. And the Torah stated** a principle: **If someone comes to kill you, rise and kill him** first.

ויקרא כ"ה:ל"ו

(לו) אֶל-תִּקַּח מֵאִתּוֹ גִּשְׁוֹ וְתַרְבִּית וְנִרְאָה מֵאֲלֻקֵּיךָ וְתֵי אֶחִיךָ עִמָּךְ:

Leviticus 25:36

(36) do not exact from him advance or accrued interest, but fear your God. Let him live by your side as your kinsman.

בבא מציעא ס"ב א

(ויקרא כה, לו) וחי אחיך עמך אהדר ליה כי היכי דניחי ורבי יוחנן האי וחי אחיך עמך מאי עביד ליה מבעי ליה לכדתניא שנים שהיו מהלכין בדרך וביד אחד מהן קיתון של מים אם שותין שניהם מתים ואם שותה אחד מהן מגיע לשוב דרש בן פטורא מוטב שישתו שניהם וימותו ואל יראה אחד מהם במיתתו של חברו עד שבא ר' עקיבא ולימד וחי אחיך עמך חייך קודמים לחיי חברך.

Bava Metzia 62a

“And your brother shall live with you” (Leviticus 25:36), from which it is derived: **Return the interest to him so that he may live.** The Gemara asks: **And Rabbi Yoḥanan, what does he do with this verse: “And your brother shall live with you”?** The Gemara answers: **He requires the verse for that which is taught in a *baraita*: If two people were walking on a desolate path and there was a jug [*kiton*] of water in the possession of one of them, and the situation was such that if both drink from the jug, both will die, as there is not enough water, but if only one of them drinks, he will reach a settled area, there is a dispute as to the *halakha*. Ben Petora taught: It is preferable that both of them drink and die, and let neither one of them see the death of the other.** This was the accepted opinion until Rabbi Akiva came and taught that the verse states: **“And your brother shall live with you,”** indicating that **your life takes precedence over the life of the other.**