



The Shortcut

רמב"ם הלכות נזקי ממון, ה:ג

He [Yehoshua] also established that any person who loses his way in a vineyard or the like may break through the vines and ascend, or break through the vines and descend until he is able to find his way.

וְכֵן הִתְנָה שְׂפָל הַתְּוֹעָה
בֵּין הַכְּרָמִים וְכִי־צָא בָהֶן
מִפְּסָג וְעוֹלָה מִפְּסָג וְיֵרַד
עַד שֶׁיֵּצֵא לְדַרְכּוֹ.

When Yehoshua divided Eretz Yisroel amongst all the *shevatim*, he made them all agree to ten conditions before each received their plot of land.

One of those conditions was that if a Yid gets lost and finds himself in someone else's vineyard he is allowed

to tear through the vines so that he can quickly find his way out. We don't make him walk around to the end of the column of the vineyard; instead he is allowed to cut straight through.

Eretz Yisroel had been promised to Yidden for centuries. They had

just gone through 40 years of ups and downs in the desert to reach that point. Now they were finally in the promised land, at the final phase where every Yid was to be given his part of Eretz Yisroel, thereby fulfilling the ultimate plan and vision of Hashem for the Jewish nation. Is there really nothing more important at this moment than sparing someone from the extra inconvenience of circling a column in his neighbor's vineyard? How common is this and how big of a disruption is it already, to the extent that Yehoshua decided to make it a priority at this great moment?



מחזור הארבעים

40 CYCLES OF LEARNING RAMBAM

לזכות
הרה"ת ר' שניאור זלמן שיחי'
ליפסקער
בקשר עם יום הולדתו
ח"י אדר שני
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

And what is the logic of this rule anyway? Someone lost his way and to save him a few extra steps we let him ruin someone else's vineyard, without being responsible for the damages?

From here we learn how dear and special a Yid is. His feelings are so important to us, that even to save him a bit of pain and bother we are willing to let him crush someone else's vineyard.

But this puts the question the other way: What about the pain of the Yid whose vineyard is wrecked? Why don't we care about his predicament?

The answer is, that by making this condition, Yehoshua instilled in the

Yidden such *ahavas Yisroel*, that from this day on they would be willing, and even happy, to have their property ruined just to spare a fellow Jew from experiencing a little bit of pain.

This is also why we don't make the wayfarer pay for the damages. We are so sure that the owner of the vineyard is not only not upset about it but he is actually happy to have saved this Yid some pain.

A deeper lesson that we can learn from this halacha: What is the significance of being lost in a vineyard?

Some Yidden are lost in the wilderness, void of Torah or

Yiddishkeit. This Jew is not lost in a desert or even a plain field. He is lost in a vineyard, a place full of *kedusha*. The only problem is that it's not *his* vineyard; it's a holy *avoda*, just not his. He is lost doing the wrong thing at the wrong time.

Even for such a Jew who is not in a life threatening situation—in fact he is in a wonderful place like a vineyard, it's just not his—even to help him out we are willing to go the great length of absorbing some material loss to help him find his way quickly. **1**

(Adapted from the *sicha* of the third night of *Sukkos* 5748)