



ANIMAL DEVAR TORAH: KILLING

LONG AGO, ISRAEL WAS THE ONLY NATION TO TEACH THAT ANIMALS EXPERIENCE PAIN JUST AS WE DO.

- Do you remember what Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden?
- Do we have to eat meat to survive?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT KILLING AND EATING ANIMALS?

- Do you think it's okay to kill or pay someone else to kill an animal if you're going to eat it—and why or why not?
- Do you think it's okay to kill an animal if you're going to sell its meat to someone else—and why or why not?
- Do you think it's okay to kill an animal if it's threatening other animals or people—and why or why not?
- Do you think it's okay to kill an animal just for the fun of it—and why or why not?
- Do you think it's okay to make animals fight each other, like some people do with dogs and roosters—and why or why not?

WHAT DOES JUDAISM TEACH ABOUT KILLING AND EATING ANIMALS?

- Our wisest teachers, the Sages, said it is sometimes okay to kill an animal:
 1. For food;
 2. To sell its meat as a way to earn the money we need to live; and
 3. To kill it if it's a menace to people or other animals.
- But they also said there were some things we shouldn't do.
 1. They said it was wrong to kill an animal just for fun, which was something done by kings and nobles who were not Jewish; and
 2. Judaism teaches us that it is wrong to breed animals for fighting and then force them to fight other animals.

DOES IT MATTER *HOW* WE TAKE THE LIFE OF AN ANIMAL, WHEN IT IS OKAY TO DO IT?

- If you had to have an animal of yours “put to sleep,” because it was very old or sick, what kind of person would you want to do it?

- Our rabbis taught that it had to be done in the quickest and least painful way.
- In the Jewish community, the person whose job it was to butcher animals for meat had to be very skillful and know a lot, but also had to be a very *good* person, one who loved God and the Torah.
- In every community there was at least one such person who took the life from the animals in the right way and, in doing so, made meat available that everyone could eat—because they kept *kosher*, and that’s what kosher means!



Gather the People

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