

it causes a change in the nature of creatures. Creatures then have less of a desire to damage other beings. The world as a whole becomes a more peaceful place. That is why these laws are called *yeshuos*: these laws bring us closer to the realm of redemption and salvation. These laws make the world more peaceful. The study of the laws about damages hastens the Messianic era, when wolf will live peacefully with the lamb, and when *Lo yareiu ve-lo yashchisu*, “they will not do evil nor will they destroy” (*Yeshayahu* 11:9).

Perhaps this is the rationale underlying the statement of the Rambam in his commentary to the first Mishnah of *Bava Kamma*. The Rambam teaches about priorities in community building.

Suppose a judge is appointed to lead a city and he notices that they have many needs: the weights in the stores are dishonest, workers are not getting paid in a timely manner, and people are allowing their animals to run wild and cause damage. Which issue should he seek to address first?

The Rambam writes that the first job of a judge is to stop the animals from damaging. *Nezikin* begins with *Bava Kamma*, which deals with animals that damage, to teach that the first priority of a judge is to stop damages. Stopping damages takes precedence over improving the way workers are treated or other monetary issues.

Perhaps the reason why stopping damages is so important is that stopping damages brings redemption closer, for it causes a reversal of the impact of Adam’s sin (*Yosef Da’as, Chashukei Chemed*).