

# The Dee

## Pirkei Avot Project

רַבֵּן שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אָמַר, עַל שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הָעוֹלָם עוֹמֵד, עַל הַדִּין וְעַל הָאֱמֶת וְעַל הַשְּׁלוֹם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (זְכַרְיָה ח) אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט שְׁלוֹם בְּשַׁעְרֵיכֶם:

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel used to say: on three things does the world stand: On justice, on truth and on peace, as it is said: "Truth, and a judgement of peace you should administer in your gates" (Zechariah 8:16).

Law is about fairness and justice. It is about considering all of the evidence at hand and making an informed judgement based on the complete picture.

Truth, אמת in Hebrew, is spelt with the first, middle and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet and can also be read אמ-מת which means from birth to death. Both of these points teach us that truth encompasses the whole picture, from the beginning to the end of the story, with all the details in the middle. Abiding by truth as a tenet of democratic society means investigating the entire story, not just zooming in on some convenient facts and ignoring the rest.

What is shalom? It is not peace. The root of the word peace is the Latin word 'pax' which means tranquillity (i.e. an absence of war). Shalom is from the Hebrew word meaning 'complete' and refers to a positive outcome between two or more parties which is everlasting and permanent. Peace can be compared to a mosaic in which all pieces, while varying in colour, are identical squares and follow a rigid monotonous structure. Shalom can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle with pieces of different shapes that fit together in a particular format. While both form beautiful pictures, the jigsaw of shalom allows for difference whereas the mosaic forces compliance.

### Discussion Points:

What do law, truth and peace all have in common? What are their opposites? When in your life do you sometimes choose to focus on some details because it's easier than accepting the whole truth, the אמת?

Where do you see examples of reliance on law, truth and peace for a functioning and secure society?

Idea by Rabbi Leo Dee

לעילוי נשמת:

לאה בת רפאל הכהן וציפורה

מאיה אסתר בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה

רינה מרים בת הרב אריה מרדכי ולאה



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