

You shall not Steal / Lo Tig'nov

By Yochanan Zaqantov

We are told not to steal in the English translation of the 10 sayings from the JPS it is rendered something like this.

Shemot/Exodus 20:13

13 You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

In the Schocken Bible it is rendered this way:

13 You are not to murder. You are not to adulter. You are not to steal. You are not to testify against your fellow as a false witness.

In the Hebrew, it is said lo tig'nov **לֹא תִגְנוֹב**

This is a verb and the Tav prefix it denotes you (third person) shall steal and with the lo it added not to the sentence. That is says not you shall steal. So lets look at ganav and see where it is used and how the Tanakh uses this word overall. It is reference number 1589.

Bereshit/Genesis 40:15 (12-15)

12 Joseph said to him, “This is its interpretation: The three branches are three days. **13** In three days Pharaoh will pardon you and restore you to your post; you will place Pharaoh’s cup in his hand, as was your custom formerly when you were his cupbearer. **14** But think of me when all is well with you again, and do me the kindness of mentioning me to Pharaoh, so as to free me

from this place. **15 For in truth, I was kidnapped (kiy-gunov gunnavetiy **כִּי־גִנַּבְתִּי****

גִּנְבְּתִי) from the land of the Hebrews; nor have I done anything here that they should have put me in the dungeon.”

He we see that Yosef uses the word to denote kidnapping in the JPS and it the Schocken Bible it makes it more clearly stated.

Bereshit/Genesis 40:15

For I was stolen, yes, stolen (**kiy-gunov gunnavetiy **כִּי־גִנַּבְתִּי גִנְבְּתִי****) from the land of the Hebrews, and here too I have done nothing that they should have put me in the pit.

So we see that a person stolen was a kidnapping.

Shemot/Exodus 22:11

But if it was stolen, yes, stolen (v'im-ganov yiganev וְאִם-גָּנַב יִגָּנֵב) away from him, he is to pay it back to its owner.

You can see that again it is taken from the rightful owner.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 24:7

7 When a man is found to have stolen a person from his brothers (iysh goveh nefesh me'echayv וְאִישׁ גָּנַב נֶפֶשׁ מֵאָחָיו), from the Children of Israel (mibenei Yisrael מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), and he deals-treacherously with him and sells him: die that thief shall; so shall you burn out the evil from your midst!

Here we see that to steal a person was punishable by death.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 2:26 (26-28)

26 Like a thief (gannav גָּנַב) chagrined when he is caught,

So is the House of Israel chagrined—

They, their kings, their officers,

And their priests and prophets.

27 They said to wood, “You are my father,”

To stone, “You gave birth to me,”

While to Me they turned their backs

And not their faces.

But in their hour of calamity they cry,

“Arise and save us!”

28 And where are eloheykha

You made for yourself?

Let them arise and save you, if they can,

In your hour of calamity.

For eloheykha have become, O Judah,

As many as your towns!

Here we see that Our Fathers were compared to one caught as a thief or a stealing person. Here we have the related Masculine noun form which is translated thief. It is reference number 1590.

Mishlei/Proverbs 39:24

24 He who shares **with a thief** (im-gannav עִם־גַּנָּב) is his own enemy;
He hears the imprecation and does not tell.

As a stealing one keeps his secrets as is one who goes in with him.

Bereshit/Genesis 30:33

33 And may my honesty plead for me on a future day: when you come-to-check my wages (that are) before you, whatever is not speckled or dappled among the goats, or dark among the lambs, it will be as though **stolen** (ganuv גָּנוּב) by me.

Yaaqov states to Lavan that if any animals are not like his then they were stolen.

Bereshit/Genesis 30:19-20

19 Now Lavan had gone to shear his flock; Rahel, **meanwhile, stole** (vatig'nov וַתִּגְנוֹב) the terafim that belonged to her father. 20 Now Yaakov **stole** (vayig'nov וַיִּגְנוֹב) the wits of Lavan the Aramean, by not telling him that he was about to flee.

Literally, Rachel stole the terafim from her father. Whereas, Yaaqov stole away with his family or left without telling Lavan.

Yehoshua/Joshua 7:11, 21

11 Israel has sinned! They have broken the covenant by which I bound them. **They have taken** (gan'vu גָּנְבוּ) of the proscribed and put it in their vessels; they have stolen; they have broken faith!

21 I saw among the spoil a fine Shinar mantle, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, and I coveted them and took them. They are buried in the ground in my tent, with the silver under it.”

Here we see related to possessing the objects Yehovah tells us not to possess. Though he was quick to confess the result was still he and his family and all that was belonging to him were destroyed.

Shemot/Exodus 22:3-4 (1-4)

1 if in (the act of) digging through, **the stealer (Hagannav הַגָּנָב)** is caught and is struck down, so that he dies, there is to be on his account no bloodguilt; 2 (but) if the sun rose upon him, bloodguilt there is on his account; he is to pay, yes, pay-if he has nothing, he is to be sold **because of his stealing (big'nevato בְּגִנְיָתוֹ)**.

Here we see that the Thief, reference number 1590, is sold because of his stealing which is reference number 1589. One who steals must repay back what he stole or be placed into servitude to the person he stole from.

3 (Now) if what **was stolen (hagenevah הַגְּנֵבָה)** is found, yes, found in his hand, whether ox, or donkey, or lamb, (still) alive, twofold he is to pay. 4 When a man has a field or a vineyard grazed in, and sends his grazing-flock free, so that it grazes in another's field, the best-part of his field, the best-part of his vineyard he is to pay.

Here is the feminine noun form which also denotes stealing. In verse 2, it is possessive in it is his/her stealing. In verse 3, it is specific to the act of stealing in the feminine form. In verses 3-4, we see the act of being caught stealing means to repay double that which the thief stole.

It even discusses the one should not steal in the prophets/Nevi'im.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 7:9 (9-14)

9 Will you **steal (hoganov הַגָּנוֹב)** and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other elohim whom you have not experienced, **10** and then come and stand before Me in this House which bears My name and say, “We are safe?”—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! **11** Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves (violent ones)? As for Me, I have been watching—declares Yehovah. **12** Just go to My place at Shiloh, where I had established My name formerly, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. **13** And now, because you do all these things—declares Yehovah—and though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen; and though I called to you, you would not respond—**14** therefore I will do to the House which bears My name, on which you rely, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, just what I did to Shiloh.

Stealing was just one of the things they were doing during the time of Yermiyahu. They relied upon the temple as a form of talisman that could protect them while they did all the things Yehovah commanded us not to do. They were breaking 4 of the 10 sayings which were most clear we ought not do.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 23:30

25 I have heard what the prophets say, who prophesy falsely in My name: “I had a dream, I had a dream.” 26 How long will there be in the minds of the prophets who prophesy falsehood—the prophets of their own deceitful minds— 27 the plan to make My people forget My name, by means of the dreams which they tell each other, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal? 28 Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream; and let him who has received My word report My word faithfully! How can straw be compared to grain?—says Yehovah. 29 Behold, My word is like fire—declares Yehovah—and like a hammer that shatters rock! 30 Assuredly, I am going to deal with the prophets—declares Yehovah—**who**

steal (megannevey מְגַנְבִי) My words from one another. 31 I am going to deal with the prophets—declares Yehovah—who wag their tongues and make oracular utterances. 32 I am going to deal with those who prophesy lying dreams—declares Yehovah—who relate them to lead My people astray with their reckless lies, when I did not send them or command them. They do this people no good—declares Yehovah.

The prophets who are false steal of proclaim words not spoken to them. They say a word which the person did not say. It steals from them the authority that is bond up in the words that are spoken. It is a false witnessing and stealing.

Hosea 4:2

4:1 Hear the word of Yehovah,
O people of Israel!
For Yehovah has a case
Against the inhabitants of this land,
Because there is no honesty and no goodness
And no obedience to Elohim in the land.
2 [False] swearing, dishonesty, and murder,

And theft (veganov וְגָנוֹב) and adultery are rife;
Crime follows upon crime!

Again, stealing is being one of the chief things they were doing in the land.

Zekhar'yah/Zachariah 5:3

3 “That,” he explained to me, “is the curse which goes out over the whole land. For **everyone who has stolen (kal-hagonev כָּל-הַגֹּנֵב)**, as is forbidden on one side [of the scroll], has gone unpunished; and everyone who has sworn [falsely], as is forbidden on the other side of it, has gone unpunished. 4 [But] I have sent it forth—declares Yehovah of Hosts—and [the curse] shall enter the house of **the thief (hagannav הַגָּנָב)** and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name, and it shall lodge inside their houses and shall consume them to the last timber and stone.”

Less summarize the punishments:

Shemot/Exodus 22:1

1 if in (the act of) digging through, **the stealer (Hagannav הַגָּנֵב)** is caught and is struck down, so that he dies, there is to be on his account no bloodguilt; 2 (but) if the sun rose upon him, bloodguilt there is on his account; he is to pay, yes, pay-if he has nothing, he is to be sold because of his stealing. 3 (Now) if what **was stolen (hagenevah הַגְּנֵבָה)** is found, yes, found in his hand, whether ox, or donkey, or lamb, (still) alive, twofold he is to pay.

If the man slays the thief in the act of stealing there is no blood guilt at night. Yet, he is not to be slayed during the day. He who is caught is to repay or be sold into servitude for the repaying. The value is double what was stolen.

Shemot/Exodus 22:7 (6-7)

6 When a man gives silver or goods to his fellow for safekeeping, **and it is stolen (vegunnav וְגֻנַב)** from the man's house; if **the stealer (hagannav הַגָּנֵב)** is caught, he is to pay twofold; 7 if **the stealer (hagannav הַגָּנֵב)** is not caught, the owner of the house is to come-near HaElohim-oracle, (to inquire) if he did not stretch out his hand against his neighbor's property.

Again the stealer is to repay double what was

Shemot/Exodus 22:11

9 When a man gives his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a lamb, or any kind of beast, for safekeeping, and it dies, or is crippled or captured, no one seeing (it happen), 10 the oath of Yehovah is to be between the two of them, (to inquire) if he did not send out his hand against his neighbor's property; the owner is to accept it, and he does not have to pay. 11 **But if it was stolen, yes, stolen (ve'im ganov yiganev וְאִם-גָּנַב יִגָּנֵב)** away from him, he is to pay it back to its owner.

Again the payment to be made to the owner of the animal or item.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 24:7

7 When a man is found to have stolen a person from his brothers (iysh goveh nefesh me'echayv אִישׁ גֹּבֵה נֶפֶשׁ מֵאֶחָיו), from the Children of Israel (mibenei Yisrael מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), and he deals-treacherously with him and sells him: die that thief shall; so shall you burn out the evil from your midst!

Here we see that to steal a person was punishable by death.

We see that stealing is very grievous and it not only is an offense against another person but also against Elohim. We know this because we must repay that which is taken before we can approach Elohim.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 5:21-26

21 A person-when one sins (techeta תְּחֵטָא), breaking-faith, yes, faith against Yehovah by denying his fellow's (charges) regarding a deposit, or what is placed in one's hand (for safekeeping), or robbery, or by withholding (property) from his fellow; 22 or by finding a lost-object and denying it, or by swearing falsely regarding one of anything that a human may do, to sin by the aforementioned-23 it shall be, when he has sinned and realized-his-guilt, he is to return the robbed-object that he robbed or the withheld (property) that he withheld or the deposit that was deposited with him or the lost-object that he found, 24 or anything (else) about which he swore falsely; he is to repay it in its capital-amount, and its fifth he is to add to it. To the one whose it is, he is to give it at the time of his being-proven-guilty. 25 And as his asham-offering he is to bring to Yehovah: a ram, wholly-sound, from the flock, by your assessment, for an asham-offering, to the priest, 26 the priest is to effect-purgation for him, before the presence of Yehovah, and he shall be granted-pardon, for (whichever) one of all (the things) that he may have done to incur-guilt thereby.

Now here the word for robbed is another word which is gazal which means to strip off or take. It is similar in meaning to ganav but they are not linked. It does show here that before one may approach Elohim they must first repay. Thus, before we can make ourselves right before Yehovah we must make ourselves right with other men.