

August 21, 2009

Shabbat Shalom!

If we were to write our own personal Torah, what would be in it? What rules would it contain? The Torah reading for this week directed the kings that would rule over the Israelites to have the priests write out a new copy of the original Torah/Teaching for them. They were instructed further, "Let it (the Torah) remain with him and let him read it all his life, so that he may learn to revere the Eternal God, to observe faithfully every word of this teaching as well as these laws. Thus he will not act haughtily toward his fellows."

Leaders who are charged with enforcing and strengthening the laws we live by should study those rules in order to understand their simple meaning as well as various ways they can be interpreted. We who are not in a political position of leadership have a similar responsibility to understand laws that govern our lives and, more important, to consider how our own sense of Torah/Teaching/Morality can enhance community life. Often, that sense of what is right and wrong in human society comes back to a sense of justice, fairness and impartiality. Acting haughtily, whether it means believing oneself to be above the law or above other people in some way, can prevent a leader or a citizen from making a positive contribution to the present and future of any society or country. May our own personal Torah, whatever it may contain, guide us along a path of justice, righteousness and peace.

-- L'shalom, Rabbi Larry K.