

The Jewish Political Tradition

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Redemption of Captives: An Ancient Dispute Over Limits

Captives should not be redeemed
in excess of their price,
on account of *tikkun `olam*
[=the proper ordering of social affairs].

(Mishnah *gittin* 4:6).

The question was raised:

This [issue of] *tikkun `olam* -- is it because of the [financial] strain on the community,

or

is it perhaps so that they [=potential captors] should not come and take more and more captives?

(BT *gittin* 45a)