

Kavannah  
AFTER PARKLAND, FLORIDA  
5778

- Columbine High School, 1999: 13 dead; 20 wounded
- Virginia Tech University, 2007: 32 dead
- Northern Illinois University, 2008: 5 dead
- Oikos University (CA), 2012: 7 dead
- Sandy Hook Elementary, 2012: 26 dead (20 children)
- Santa Monica College, 2013: 5 dead
- UC Santa Barbara, 2014: 6 dead
- Marysville Pilchuk High School (WA), 2014: 4 dead, 1 wounded
- Umpqua Community College (OR), 2015: 9 dead, 8 injured
- Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, 2018: 17 dead, 13  
wounded
- 124 DEAD; 42 WOUNDED

This list, of course, does not include those murdered in other mass killings like the ones in Las Vegas, the Pulse Night Club in Orlando, San Bernadino, California, and the many others.

After many of these incidents, I have spoken about gun control and the failure of politicians to address the issue. The failure obviously continues.

I will say this: A commentator on NPR the other day summarized the issue succinctly: This is about money. This is about valuing money more than human life. The NRA has supported a variety of gun control measures in the past, including background checks. Public opinion polls, including NRA members, show that the clear majority of Americans support increasing and enforcing gun control measures. The gun manufacturers oppose them. And the gun manufacturers – who give a lot of money to the NRA – win. And politicians, who receive money

from the NRA and the gun manufacturers, vote their pocketbook rather than concern for their constituents and the American people.

Children are not safe in America. The gun homicide rate in this country is 49 times higher than in other rich countries.

I taught about last week's parashah, Mishpatim, that the civil laws of the Torah have a strong resemblance to Hammurappi's Code. Except in this case: In Hammurappi's Code, if you destroy something material and valuable, you can pay with your life. If you kill a person of low social station, you can pay a fine. The Hebrew Bible flips this system on its head: there is no equivalence between property and life. You pay for the destruction of property with property. You pay for a life with a life – and never the twain shall meet.

American society seems to be saying that money – the profits of gun manufacturers - is more valuable than human life. This country has re-

jected this logic among tobacco manufacturers and automobile manufacturers, and we must do the same among gun manufacturers.

The Founding Fathers wrote about the entitlement to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Until our leaders get their values straight, these entitlements will be endangered. As always, the choice is in our hands at the ballot box.