



יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו וא'להי אבותינו שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים,  
רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפצועי המלחמה, ולנפגעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות  
בישראל ובכל מקום שהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured;  
may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He end this war with  
success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.

...וְאַתָּנָה לָךְ אֶת-לִנּוֹת הָאֶבֶן וְהַתּוֹרָה וְהַמִּצְוָה...



וְהָאֵל יִתֵּנוּ ... מִנְחָצִית הַשָּׁקֶל בַּשָּׁקֶל הַקָּדֵשׁ...  
ראש חדש אדר יהיה ביום שלישי וביום רביעי...

**YERUSHALAYIM** in/out times for Shabbat Parshat  
**MISHPATIM-SH'KALIM-M'VORCHIM**

כ"ז שבט ה'תשפ"ו • February 13-14, '26

 **4:49PM** PLAG **4:15PM** •  **6:02PM** R' Tam **6:37PM**

Use the Z'MANIM link for other locales

PhiloTorah (292mish) - 1 - all at once file



## Shabbat M'vorchim

Sh'vat always has 30 days in our fixed calendar. Therefore, Rosh Chodesh Adar is two days.

This Shabbat, Mishpatim-Sh'kalim, we bench Rosh Chodesh Adar, which will be on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 17-18.

רֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר יִהְיֶה בְּיוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי וּבְיוֹם רְבִיעִי הִבָּא עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְטוֹבָה:

The molad of Adar will be on Tuesday, 50 minutes and 12 chalakim after three in the morning.

הַמּוֹלַד יִהְיֶה בְּיוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי, חֲמִישִׁים דְּקוֹת וּשְׁנַיִם-עָשָׂר חֲלָקִים אַחֲרֵי שְׁלֹשׁ בַּבּוֹקֵר.

The molad in clock time is at 3:44am Israel Winter Time. Rambam notation for the molad is ג' ט:תתקיב

The actual (astronomical) molad (a.k.a New Moon) is at 2:02pm Tuesday.

## Parshat Sh'kalim

This Shabbat we read the maftir of Parshat Sh'kalim in a second Sefer Torah, and we read the haftara for Sh'kalim (and not the regular haftara of Mishpatim).

Sh'kalim is the first of the Four Parshiyot.

Why is there a Parshat Sh'kalim?

Basically, there are two reasons for it. The first mishna in Masechet Sh'kalim states "On the first of the month of Adar a proclamation is made about the [giving of the] sh'kalim..." The silver half-shekels were collected around the country during the month of Adar, so that the Mikdash treasury would be ready for the fiscal year of communal offerings and activities by the first of Nissan. Our reading of Parshat Sh'kalim is a commemoration of the mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel - and a hopeful prayer for its restoration with the building of the Beit HaMikdash - **Bimheira V'yameinu, Amein.**

The other reason for Parshat Sh'kalim at the beginning of Adar, specifically - shortly before Purim, is that our mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel is the antidote for, the vaccine against, Haman's sh'kalim. Haman offered Achashveirosh 10,000 silver talents for permission to wipe out the Jewish population of the kingdom. It is, as if, our annual gift to the Mikdash of sh'kalim protects us from our enemies who would pay many sh'kalim to facilitate our destruction. There are even sources that say that a silver talent was the equivalent of 30 shekel, making 10,000 talents equal to 600,000 half-shekels, the iconic number of adult males of Bnei Yisrael at the Exodus.

# MISHPATIM SH'KALIM



18th of 54 sedras;  
6th of 11 in Sh'mot

Written on 185 lines in a Torah (31st)

33 parshiyot; 6 open and 27 closed

3rd most in the Torah;

2nd most S'tumot in the Torah

118 p'sukim - ranks 22 (5th in Sh'mot)

1462 words - ranks 31 (7th in Sh'mot)

5313 letters - ranks 37 (8th in Sh'mot)

The noticeable drop in ranking from p'sukim to words indicates short p'sukim; in fact, Mishpatim's p'sukim are among the shortest in the Torah.

## MITZVOT

MISHPATIM has 53 mitzvot;  
23 positive and 30 prohibitions.

Only three sedras have more mitzvot - Ki Teitzei (74), Emor (63), and R'ei (55). K'doshim follows Mishpatim with 51 mitzvot. And let's add Shoftim with 41, since the next in line is down at 28. Mishpatim has 8.65% of the Torah's mitzvot (1.85% is average); 48% of the mitzvot in Sh'mot. The top 6 mitzva-sedras account for 337 of the 613 mitzvot - that's 55% of the Torah's mitzvot in 7½% of its sedras.

MAFTIR FOR PARSHAT SH'KALIM adds 6 p'sukim, 90 words, 346 letters, and one mitzva.

## Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

## Kohen - First Aliya - 19 p'sukim - 21:1-19

[P> 21:1 (6)] EVED IVRI, a Jewish male indentured servant, works for 6 years and goes free in the 7th year. He leaves as he entered, i.e. if he had a wife and children previously, they, of course, leave with him. If, on the other hand, his master had given him a SHIFCHA K'NAANIT as a wife, she and any children he fathered remain the possessions of the master - they are halachically not his wife or children.

If the EVED IVRI wants to remain in his master's service, his ear is pierced (a symbolic rebuke: "The ear that heard at Sinai that we are G-d's servants, should not want to be a servant to a servant.") and now he serves "forever" (until Yovel). The details of EVED IVRI constitute a positive mitzva [42, A232 21:1].

**SDT:** Of all the topics to begin this mitzva-filled sedra, we see a signifi-

cance in the Torah's choice of SERVITUDE. This is part of the definition of Belief in G-d, the first Commandment. G-d puts Himself in the context of He Who freed us from slavery. We should not be slaves anymore; and we shouldn't really have any. But at a time when it was still practiced, we are duty-bound to treat the EVED in the manner commanded by the Torah, thus reflecting our belief in G-d. In fact, the Gemara says that he who acquires an EVED (IVRI), it is as if he has acquired a master. One blanket in cold weather - the EVED gets it, not the "owner". No humiliating treatment permitted. And lots more.

As you can tell by the large number of parshiyot, the many topics and mitzvot are subdivided well in this sedra. This indicates not only many mitzvot, but many different types and categories of mitzvot. The first parsha deals with EVED IVRI, as explained, and is introduced by the opening pasuk of this entire mitzva-filled sedra - And these are the laws that you shall place before them...

[S> 21:7 (5)] A man can arrange for his daughter to be "in service". She, the AMA IVRIYA, does not have the same rules as an EVED IVRI. Either her master, master's son, or someone else, takes her as a wife [43, A233 21:8] with the full rights and respect accorded a Jewish wife - NOT LESS [46, L262 21:10], or she is to be

redeemed or returned to her family [44, A234 21:8], but she may not be sold to anyone else [45, L261 21:8] or belittled or disgraced.

The alternative to the above options is to free her completely. (Apparently, the purpose of AMA IVRIYA is to help the young girl improve her status in society.)

It is interesting and important to note that mitzva #46 includes giving ALL wives (not just the former maid-servant) their rights under Jewish Law. This is an example (there are others) of a mitzva whose context in the Written Torah is narrow, but whose scope, as taught to us by the Oral Torah, is much broader. This is NOT a case of Rabbinic extension of Torah Law, nor of Rabbinic legislation. It is a DEFINITION of the Torah's intent, as transmitted to us via the Oral Law. Our Sages did both - transmit G-d's law and legislate their laws... and teach us which is which.

[S> 21:12 (2)] Murder is punishable by beheading, known as HEREG or SAYIF. This is an example of the Torah's presenting both a warning - LO TIRTZACH (from Yitro), Thou shalt not murder, and a punishment - He who strikes a man and he dies, he shall be put to death.

At this point in Mishpatim, Rambam counts the mitzva to execute by strangulation he who is tried, convicted, and sentenced for a sin whose



punishment is strangulation [47, A227 21:12]. (It seems that this mitzva was meant to link to 21:16 below, because the punishment fits that context.)

Unintentional killers are provided with a place (city) of refuge.

[S> 21:14 (1)] Intentional murderers who flee to a city of refuge - or even to the Mikdash to cling to the Mizbei'ach - are forcibly returned to stand judgment.

[S> 21:15 (1)] Striking one's parent (and drawing blood) is a capital offense [48, L319 21:15].

[S> 21:16 (1)] Kidnapping (prohibited by LO TIGNOV, Commandment #8) is a capital offense if the kidnapper sells the victim into slavery. (Rashi explains the seeming anomaly in the text.)

[S> 21:17 (1)] Cursing one's parent (even after death) is a capital sin.

[S> 21:18 (2)] If one inflicts a non-fatal injury upon another, he must pay full compensation based on five factors: damage, pain, insult, expenses, and lost earning potential [49, A236 21:18].

Implied in this concluding portion of the first Aliya is our Jewish and human obligation and challenge to heal the sick. This derives from the double wording of V'RAPO Y'RAPEI. We do not see G-d as the only Healer, so to speak. Of course, everything depends upon G-d, but He expects us, so to speak, to do our share of the task of healing. He supervises that,

helps out, and takes over when we've done all we can. (The plain meaning of V'RAPO Y'RAPEI is that part of the payment required of the one who caused the injury is covering the medical costs.)

## Levi - Second Aliya - 21 p'sukim - 21:20-22:3

[S> 21:20 (2)] Next we have the command to the courts to carry out the punishment for murder, viz. execution by beheading [50, A226 21:20].

It is significant that the Torah "chose" as the context for this mitzva, the situation of one who beat his EVED CANAANI to death. This is considered an act of murder, in contrast to the world's attitude and mistreatment of slaves throughout history. In Jewish law, one may not mistreat his slaves. On the other hand, corporal punishment which does not result in death or even the loss of limb (or even a tooth), is within the prerogative of the slave's owner. (But even causing a tooth to fall out is considered excessive and results in the slave being freed.)

[S> 21:22 (4)] The Torah next elaborates on the rules of personal injuries requiring the guilty party to pay compensatory damages. The famous "an eye for an eye..." passage has stimulated much slander against Torah and Judaism by being construed literally. Our Oral Law explains the

passage as requiring a thorough evaluation by the court to determine the proper amounts to be paid to the injured party.

[S> 21:26 (2)] A few p'sukim back, the Torah was discussing killing a slave or just injuring him mildly. Here the Torah teaches that if striking a slave causes the loss of an eye... or even a tooth, the slave must be freed.

[P> 21:28 (5)] The next passage of the Torah deals with damages caused by one's ox (all animals are included; the Torah uses a practical example) [51, A237 21:28]. We distinguish between damages that can, and therefore must be foreseen by the owner (for which he is held completely responsible), as opposed to an unexpected and unusual action by the animal that causes damage, for which the owner is held only partially accountable.

An animal that kills a human, is to be destroyed by stoning and its carcass is ASUR B'HANA'A - it may not benefit anyone [52, L188 21:29].

[S> 21:33 (2)] The Torah then discusses damages caused by a pit dug in the ground and negligently left uncovered [53, A238 21:33].

The Gemara enumerates various categories of damages. Each case is to be examined on its own merits, so that the fairest treatment of the parties will result. For example...

[S> 21:35 (2)] If an ox owned by one

person gores the ox of another person and kills it, then the two owners share the responsibility and each gets 50% of the value of both the live ox and the dead one. But if the ox that gored had developed a reputation for violent attacks, then its owner is held more accountable. He gives his live ox to the other owner and takes the carcass of the dead ox. It has value, but not as much as a live ox.

[S> 21:37 (4)] Stealing an animal for slaughter or sale is punished by compensation of 4x (for a small animal) or 5x (for a large animal) the market value. This reflects the seriousness of stealing not just another person's property, but his livelihood as well.

If a thief is caught "red-handed" and is killed by the home-owner, there are certain circumstances for which the killing would be justified, and other cases where it would be considered criminal homicide.

This is the very sensitive passage that deals with self-defense and pre-emptive action to protect oneself. The Torah presents both possibilities; it is a Court (of 23) that would have to rule on specific cases and perhaps provide us with rough guidelines to distinguish between cases. This is the Torah source of "He who comes to kill you, beat him to the draw and kill him first." HABA L'HORG'CHA, HASH-KEIM V'HORG'GO - This 'permission' to kill is conditional upon it being the only way to save yourself (or

someone else). This is part of what makes this issue so sensitive. It is a "judgment call" on the part of the person, and, literally, a judgment call on the part of Beit Din.

A thief who voluntarily turns himself in repays that which he stole. (In certain cases where a false oath compounded a theft, there can be an added penalty of "one fifth - 25% added to the principal.) If a thief is caught, he pays double [54, A239 22:2], or 4-5 times in the case of livestock (that he slaughtered or sold).

A thief (male, not female) who cannot make full restitution can be sold by the court as an Eved Ivri in order to pay off his debts.

## Shlishi - Third Aliya - 23 p'sukim - 22:4-26

[S> 22:4 (1)] Compensation must be made for damages caused by one's animal's grazing on someone's property [55, A240 22:4].

[S> 22:5 (1)] So too, if damages result from a fire that one carelessly caused, he must pay damages [56, A241 22:5].

[S> 22:6 (4)] Next, the Torah presents the responsibilities of guardianship - when one is watching that which belongs to someone else without being paid for the service, then the guardian is responsible if something happens to that which he is watching, only if he was negligent in his guardianship.

Properly carrying out the laws of the SHOMEIR CHINAM is a positive mitzva [57, A242 22:6].

[S> 22:9 (4)] There are differences in the rules in the case that the guardian is being paid for his services. E.g. paying someone to house-sit while one is on vacation. Because the guardian is being compensated, he is held responsible for some situations besides his own negligence. These rules also constitute a mitzva [59, A243 22:9]. Included in the rules for SHOMEIR SACHAR are the rules for renting and leasing (SOCHEIR).

The courts are charged [58, A246 22:8] with careful handling all of these types of cases.

[P> 22:13 (2)] The 4th "guardian" is the borrower who is responsible for all losses except the death of a work animal in the normal course of work [60, A244 22:13] (and by extension, the ruin of an object from "normal wear & tear").

[S> 22:15 (2)] A man who seduces an unmarried woman is required to pay punitive damages to her &/or her father. And he must marry her, if she insists [61, A220 22:15].

[S> 22:17 (2)] Sorcery is a capital offense, and it is forbidden for the courts not to judge and execute its practitioners [62, L310 22:17].

Bestiality is a capital offense.

[S> 22:19 (8)] Sacrificing to a god other

than HaShem is condemned (to death).

A convert to Judaism must not be embarrassed or taken advantage of with words [63, L252 22:20] or in money matters [64, L253 22:20]. These rules vis-à-vis the Ger are in addition to the "regular" prohibitions of embarrassing and taking advantage of any Jew. Thus the Torah sensitizes us to the plight of the more vulnerable members of our society. The Torah also spells this out vis-à-vis the orphan and widow [65, L256 22:21].

With so many different parshiyot to handle so many different mitzvot, notice that the requirements of sensitive behavior towards the convert, widow and orphan shares a parsha with sacrificing to idolatry. One can imagine G-d saying to us, be very careful, I take this as seriously as that. Mistreat a GER? That to Me is as serious as if you mistreated Me, so to speak.

[P> 22:24 (3)] It is a mitzva to lend money to a poor person [66, A197 22:24] and not demand repayment when none is reasonably forthcoming [67, L234 22:24]. Included in this passage is the prohibition of charging interest on personal loans or having any part in such a loan [68, L237 22:20].

If one took a poor person's bedding as security for a loan, it must be returned each evening for his use. This is but one of the many lesson's in the Torah in G'milut Chasadim.

## R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 9 p'sukim - 22:27-23:5

[S> 22:27 (4)] Do not curse judges [69, L315 22:27] nor The Judge (the prohibition of blasphemy) [70, L60 22:27], nor may we curse our leaders [71, L316 22:27].

Do not withhold the gifts of the produce - T'ruma, Maaser, etc. - nor confuse the order in which these gifts should be taken from produce [72, L154 22:28].

Firstborn sons are to "be given to G-d" (i.e. redeemed, with Pidyon HaBen). Firstborn cows, goats, and sheep are sanctified and require special procedures. [These mitzvot are counted from elsewhere in the Torah.]

The Torah here briefly mentions the prohibition of taking an animal for a korban from its mother before it is eight days old. Such a korban would be automatically invalid, as M'CHUSAR Z'MAN, deficient in time.

TREIFA, literally is an animal torn up by a predator and left to die, is forbidden to eat (even if the animal was killed by proper sh'chita), but other benefits may be derived from it. Included in the laws of TREIFA are animals found, upon post-mortem examination, to have specific defects [73, L181 22:30]. Note that the term TREIF is also used for all non-kosher, but its specific meaning is as above.



[S> 23:1 (3)] Courts many not hear one side of a dispute without the other party being present [74, L281 23:1]. This prohibition includes not being influenced by rumors. Judges may not accept testimony from unworthy witnesses [75, L286 23:1]. A majority of one is not sufficient to convict in capital or corporal cases [76, L282 23:2]. In their deliberations, judges must be careful not to do anything that might pervert justice or unfairly shift the feelings of the court against the accused [77, L283 23:2]. Generally, rules of law are determined by majority vote of the judges [78, A175 23:2]. Judges may not show favoritism, even towards the poor [79, L277 23:3].

**SDT:** A judge's heart might go out to a poor person who stands before him in a dispute with a wealthy man. Would it not be an act of kindness, of Chesed, to see to it that the poor person wins the dispute? NO! Not at the expense of justice. A judge wants to give charity? Fine. He wants to convince the rich guy to help the poor guy out? Nice. But justice must be fairly meted out. Any and every bent case shakes the whole society's confidence in the justice system.

[S> 23:4 (1)] If one finds a stray animal, he shall return it to its rightful owner (even if it involves personal expense). This command is related to Lost & Found whose "main" place is in Parshat Ki Teitzei.

[S> 23:5 (1)] One must help even his enemy unload his beast of burden [80, A202 23:5]. This mitzva is one of several that are considered the sources of the concept of avoiding Tzaar Baalei Chayim.

**SDT:** Sefer HaChinuch says that if this mitzva applies to a donkey, how much more so does it apply to humans. If one sees a fellow loaded down with bundles, it is a Torah mitzva to help him with them. And what might follow from that idea is that when someone offers to help you with packages, don't immediately say "No thank you, I got it." It is a nice thing to be gracious and accept the help - good for you and a merit for the one offering.

**BTW,** when someone does a mitzva that is also helpful to you, it is proper to say THANK YOU and TIZKEH L'MITZVOT (not just the latter). Thank you addresses the BEIN ADAM L'CHAVEIRO aspect of what was done, and Tizkeh L'Mitzvot relates to BEIN ADAM LAMAKOM.

## Chamishi 5th Aliya - 14 p'sukim - 23:6-19

[S> 23:6 (14)] One must not pervert justice even by slanting a case against a wicked person [81, L278 23:6]. Keep far away from falsehood and be careful not to build a case on circumstantial evidence and supposition [82, L290 23:7]. Do not take bribes, even if they

won't affect the outcome of a case [83, L274 23:8]. Do not oppress a stranger (convert?); this is a lesson of the Egyptian experience. One's fields are to be worked for six years and rested during the seventh, so that the poor and even the wildlife will be able to enjoy the land [84, A134 23:11]. One must abstain from all manner of Melacha on Shabbat [85, A154 23:12].

This mitzva is the positive counterpart of the prohibition of melacha on Shabbat from Commandment #4 in Yitro. It gives a positive spin to the restrictions of Shabbat. As Dayan Grunfeld z"l puts it (in The Sabbath), we lay at the feet of G-d in homage to Him the Creator, the various gifts and creative skills He gives us for our workaday week. This partially explains the significance of the distinction between "abstain from" and "do not do".

Generally, the main motivation for not violating a prohibition is FEAR. Fear of G-d, fear of heaven (as it is often called), fear of sin, fear of punishment. The main motivation of doing a positive mitzva is AHAVA, Love of G-d, Love of Torah, etc. We tremble at the thought of the seriousness of Chilul Shabbat. The punishment is very severe. But we also delight in obeying G-d when He asks (commands) us to abstain from the creative activities with which He endowed us. It is this positive mitzva of "resting on Shabbat" that gives

meaning to the concept of SHAMOR, keep & preserve Shabbat. (Resting, meaning a nice Shabbat afternoon nap is Oneg Shabbat, and is derived from the Navi Yeshayahu.)

Swearing in the name of (and sometimes even just mentioning) a deity is forbidden [96, L14 23:13]. In the spirit of this mitzva, one should avoid popular interjections whose origins are associated with other religions - Gee!, Holy cow! etc.

Inciting others to idolatry (even without worshiping) is forbidden [87, L15 23:13]. Chagiga offerings in the Mikdash are to be brought on each of the Three Festivals [88, A52 23:14]. Matzot are to be eaten during the 7 days of Pesach. It marks the Spring season during which we left Egypt. We must not appear empty-handed at the Beit HaMikdash (but rather bring specific Festival korbanot). Shavuot is the Festival of the First Harvest and Sukkot marks the final harvest at "the turn of the year". We are to go to Jerusalem for the Three Festivals. Korban Pesach may not be brought while we are in possession of Chametz [89, L115 23:18] nor may its fats be left over for the morning [90, L116 23:18]. Bikurim are to be brought to the Mikdash from Shavuot time and on [91, A125 23:19]; it is forbidden to cook meat with milk [92, L186 23:19].

This is the first of 3 times that the Torah commands LO T'VASHEIL G'DI BACHALEIV IMO. Rambam, Chinuch,

and others consider this first time to be the prohibition of cooking meat and milk together, regardless of who does or doesn't eat or benefit from it. The act of cooking itself is a Torah violation. The second time (in Ki Tisa) is considered the prohibition of eating mixtures of milk and meat that have been cooked. The 3rd occurrence (in R'ei) teaches us that the prohibition of eating includes all other benefits from the forbidden mixture. And our Sages added additional rules & regulations to these.

## Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 6 p'sukim - 23:20-25

[P> 23:20 (6)] G-d will send an angel (a prophet?) to lead and protect the People upon our entrance into the Promised Land. We must heed his words so that our enemies will fall before us. We may not bow to idols, nor worship them, nor learn from the deeds of pagans; we must destroy their idols. We must serve G-d and He will bless us with wealth and health.

## Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 26 p'sukim - 23:26-24:18

[S> 23:26 (8)] G-d promises that we will live full satisfying lives and that our enemies will panic before us and will be driven out of the Land - not quickly, but slowly, so that Bnei Yisrael may properly populate the Land.

**SDT:** Wait a minute! Miracles, laws of nature turned upside down. Plagues. Splitting of the Sea. Manna. Water from this and that. MA PITOM (what all of a sudden!) that we will only take over the Land of Israel slowly? What about a couple of miracles to handle the problems? HaShem can do things with the proverbial snap of a finger. The answer is that miracles are nice, but we don't live by them.

We get them when we need them. The purpose of going (coming) to Eretz Yisrael is to live a Torah life in the place it was made for; we have to do it naturally. This is the difference between the suspended animation experience of the Midbar and the down to earth, practical life in Eretz Yisrael. Flashy miracles give way to G-d's natural miracles. The experience in the Midbar is like a baby's experience in the womb. Coming to Eretz Yisrael is like the birth of the Nation.

We may not make treaties with the 7 Nations nor with other idolaters [93, L48 23:32], nor shall we permit idolaters a foothold in the Land [94, L51 23:33], so that we will not be entrapped by them.

[P> 24:1 (11)] The sedra concludes with a description of Matan Torah, including the famous NAASEH V'NISHMA response of the People to the offer of a Torah way of Life. Some of the things described in this portion

"confuse" commentaries as to when they exactly happened.

[S> 24:12 (7)] This final parsha of Mishpatim seems to be the immediate aftermath of Matan Torah - really a continuation of it. G-d tells Moshe that He will be giving him the Luchot AND the Torah AND the mitzvot. **(If anyone you know thinks that all G-d gave us at Sinai was the "Big Ten", just show him the end of Mishpatim.)** After six days of "cloud-cover", which prevented Moshe from ascending Har Sinai, he is welcomed on the 7th day. He remains on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights.

## Maftir in 2nd Torah 6 p'sukim, Sh'mot 30:11-16

Maftir for Parshat Sh'kalim deals with the mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel, the silver half-shekel that was collected from every adult Jewish male each year. If a woman wanted to give, it was accepted from her. Not so with a non-Jew.

Although the 1/2-Shekel collection was used for the census, its main purpose was to provide funds (to which all Jews contributed equally) for communal offerings throughout the year. All Jews - rich or poor - have the same share in the communal fund.

To be specific: The first time the mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel was performed, the silver was used (mostly) for the ADANIM, the founda-

tion blocks of the Mishkan. It is significant that specifically the foundation came from equal amounts given by all eligible people. Different amounts - whatever one was moved to and able to give, 'paid' for everything else in the Mishkan. But the foundation was equally shared.

It is further significant that the amount was HALF of the silver shekel. HALF is not whole, it is only part. And that implies a communal endeavor rather than the efforts of individuals.

In future years, the proceeds of Machatzit HaShekel went for many communal needs in the Mikdash, and that retains the message of "We are all in this together - and equally." Plenty of opportunities to be different from each other. Not with Machatzit HaShekel.

Reading the maftir of Sh'kalim is a ZEICHER, a remembrance of the mitzva, past and future. So too, the practice of giving half shekels (or half dollars, Euros, etc. depending upon where one lives) on Taanit Esther or before Megila reading. A commemorative of the mitzva, but not (yet) the actual mitzva - may we be privileged to fulfill it in our time.



# Haftara - 17 p'sukim - Melachim Bet 12:1-17

*(S'faradim start 4 p'sukim earlier)*

The regular haftara for Mishpatim is preempted often. 60% of the time, Mishpatim is Shabbat Parshat Sh'kalim (as it is this year) and the Sh'kalim haftara is read. Another 5.8% of the time, Mishpatim is Rosh Chodesh of Adar Alef (Mishpatim can also be Rosh Chodesh Adar in a 12-month year, in which case its haftara being pre-empted is already counted in the 60%, as above). Another 10%+ of the time, Mishpatim is Machar Chodesh (with Sunday-Monday being Rosh Chodesh Adar Alef), with its special haftara. The regular haftara of Mishpatim is read only 23.8% of year-types (this year is not one of them).

Silver is a recurring theme in the Haftara for Sh'kalim. It was used for repairs in the Beit HaMikdash and symbolized the people's return to G-d after severe straying.

# Bringing the Prophets to Life

**Weekly insights into the Haftara by Rabbi Nachman (Neil) Winkler**

*Author of Bringing the Prophets to Life (Gefen Publ.)*

## Questions for the Past; Questions for the Future

**SH'KALIM 17 p'sukim**

**- Melachim Bet 12:1-17**

**(S'faradim start 4 p'sukim earlier)**

The Shabbat of, or before, Rosh Chodesh Adar (the Adar which precedes Pesach) is designated by the Gemara in Megila as the first of the "special" parshiot that herald the arrival of Pesach and require a special reading for the Maftir and, consequently, for the haftara as well. The selection for Shabbat Sh'kalim is taken from the twelfth perek of Melachim Bet and tells the story of the repair of the Beit HaMikdash in the days of King Yeho'ash.

As the special Maftir reading calls for the half-shekel head tax to be gathered from all of Israel, so the haftara tells of the "fund-raising" campaign demanded by the king in order to restore and reinforce the Holy Temple. As the half-shekel tax was used for the purchase of communal sacrifices, thereby ensuring that the entire community had a share in these offerings, so the voluntary donations made by the entire nation

in the days of Yeho'ash reinforced the idea that ALL of Israel had a share in the Beit HaMikdash.

It is, however, the entire story of King Yeho'ash, a tragic story that is NOT found in Sefer Melachim - that should be learned as well. In Divrei HaYamim Bet 22-24, we learn the details of the life of King Yeho'ash. When his grandmother, the wicked Queen Atalya, killed off the royal family in order to consolidate her hold upon the throne of Yehuda. The infant Yeho'ash, the son of the former king Achazyahu, was the rightful heir to the throne and was saved from certain death through the courageous actions of his aunt Yehoshav'at, the wife of the Kohen Gadol, Yehoyada. This righteous couple hid the infant in the Beit HaMikdash until he was seven years old, at which time his existence was revealed to the nation. The population, most of whom reviled the "illegitimate" queen who had usurped the throne, quickly deposed her and placed the young child upon the throne. Yeho'ash was brought up, educated and trained by Yehoyada (note the opening words of our haftara) and, throughout that time, followed righteous ways of his mentor.

When Yehoyada died at the age of 130, the king fell under the influence of the corrupt Judean nobility who convinced him to abandon Temple worship and pray to the false gods of

the surrounding nations. Hashem sent His prophets to admonish Yeho'ash, among them Zecharya (not to be confused with the prophet of the Second Temple period), the son of Yehoyada, the very man who saved the king's life. Yeho'ash ignored the many kindnesses done for him by his mentors and he ordered that Yehoyada's son, Zecharya, be stoned to death! So ends the story of the once righteous king who restored the Beit HaMikdash.

I include the painful story of Yeho'ash - despite its omission from our haftara - because, to a certain degree, this bittersweet story evokes parallels to the Purim story. The successful fund-raising campaign that the King led in order to repair and rebuild the Beit HaMikdash, did not succeed, however, in its essential purpose: to renew Temple worship and return the nation to G-d.

Likewise, one can argue that the story of Purim has its own "bittersweet" epilogue. We celebrate the hidden miracles wrought by Hashem, that effected the survival of the Jewish community in Persia. But... what happened then? Like the story of Yeho'ash in Sefer M'lachim, the Megila does not finish the saga! Did the Jews of Shushan realize how unstable life could be for Jews in the Diaspora? Did they join in a large return to Yerushalayim to worship, once again, in the newly-built Beit

HaMikdash? Or did they remain in galut for over 2000 years? Simply put: Were Hashem's Purim miracles meant only to save Persia's Jews or might there have been a more essential purpose?

This week's haftara posed questions for the past. Purim's Megila might very well be posing questions for the future! ★



**ParshaPix**  
explanations



*The fun way to go over the weekly sedra with your children, grandchildren, Shabbat guests*

## YITRO

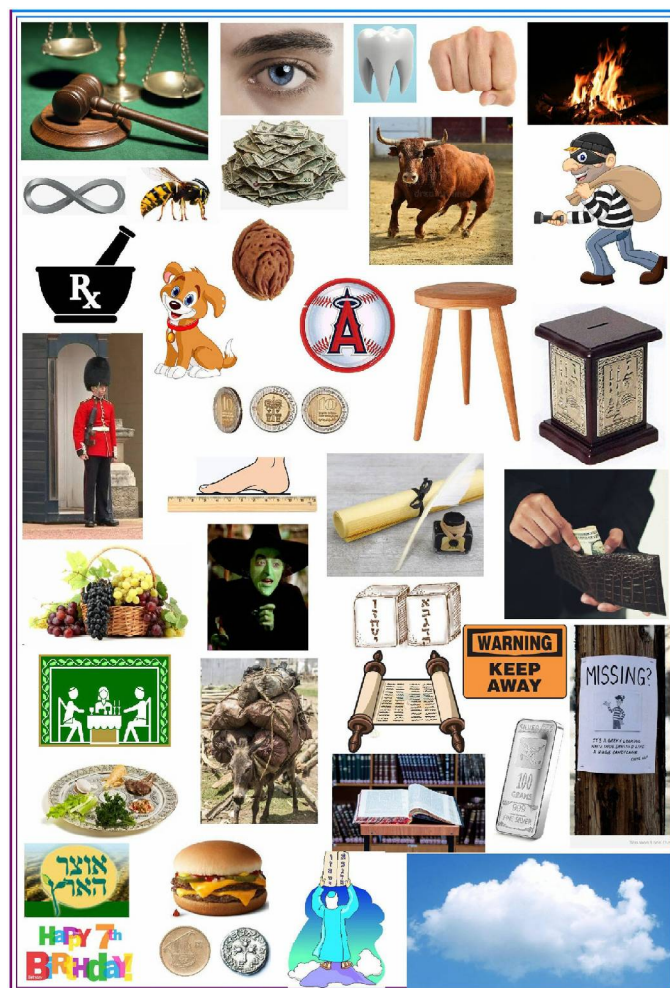
**One Unexplained**

**Finally on it.**

This was a sneaky one, in the style of cryptic crossword puzzle clues. Finally - the final (last) word of the sedra. Which is ALAV, which means "on it".

## Mishpatim-Sh'kalim

Scales and gavel represent Justice. In this case, MISHPATIM. In addition to the broad idea of justice, see what else can be found in the sedra (by yourself, your grand/children, Shabbat guests...) for which the scales of justice would be an appropriate representation • An eye for an eye, literally, an eye UNDER (TACHAT) an eye, is depicted here as money under



an eye, according to our Oral law and Tradition. The GR"A made an interesting observation: The letters that are under each letter of the word AYIN in the Alef-Bet are PEI under AYIN. KAF under YUD and SAMACH under NUN. These three letters rearrange to spell KESEF • Tooth is referred to in the mitzvot related to injuring an EVED K'NAANI and being required to free him. It is also one of the forms of damages. Also, there is a tooth for a tooth • Fist is referred to as one of the weapons that can injure or kill a person • Bull and fire are two potential causes of damages - one of the many key topics of the sedra. We have the bull with horns, the tooth, the feet of the bull, the fire, and the

pit (peach) representing the hole-in-the-ground meaning of the word • the infinity symbol for VAAVADO L'OLAM (which is not really forever, just until Yovel - referring to the Eved Ivri who chooses to remain with this master beyond the regular 6 year limit) • Mortar & pestle is for V'RAPO Y'RAPEI • TZIR'A (wasp) that G-d will send into the Land to help slowly drive out some of the nations there • The sneaking thief was caught in the cellar • Guard at his post represents the whole topic of the FOUR SHOMRIM • The hands pulling the money out of the wallet are about to lend money at 0% interest • Or, perhaps, they are about to offer a bribe. Which will blind the judge receiving it... • The Three Regalim, Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot, are pictorially represented by the Seder plate, Moshe with the Luchot on the Har, and the people in the Sukka • the Wicked Witch of the West stands for the 3-word pasuk which requires Sanhedrin to rid society of witches (just a representation - there are many differences between the broom-flying image of a witch from fiction and what the Torah means by KISHUF and M'CHASHEIFA) • Har Sinai pix for Shavuot also corresponds to the end of Mishpatim • The quill and scroll is for Moshe writing down "all of G-d's words" • the cheeseburger is for the isur of cooking milk & meat together, LO

T'VASHEIL G'DI... • Cloud is covering Har Sinai (end of the sedra) • Happy dog, to receive our TREIF meat, as stated in Sh'mot 22:30 • Tzedaka box - but highest form of Tzedaka is lending those in need of financial assistance - as commanded in the sedra • Otzar HaAretz logo is for the mitzva to observe Sh'mita • Overloaded donkey which we are commanded to help unload • basket of grapes represents the mitzva of Bikurim • Three items that go together: G-d says that He will give Moshe the tablets of stone AND the Torah AND the mitzvot... (represented by s'farim) • Half-shekel coin - old and current - represent the Maftir of Sh'kalim. • Happy 7th birthday is for Yeho'ash who was hidden until his 7th birthday, when he ascended the throne • the stool has SHALOSH R'GALIM • the baseball team logo is for the Angels - see the beginning of Shishi in the Sedra which references an angel • Three Unexplaineds



לע"נ

הרב יעקב צבי ב"ר דוד אריה ז"ל

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l

## In the Details

### MISHPATIM

On the opening phrase of Mishpatim: "And these are the laws you are to set before them" (Sh'mot 21:1), Rashi comments:

"And these are the laws that you shall set before them. - Wherever the word "these" (EILEH) is used, it signals a discontinuity with what has been stated previously. However, where the term "and these" (V'EILEH) is used, it signals a continuity. Just as the former commands were given at Sinai, so these were given at Sinai. Why then are the civil laws placed in juxtaposition to the laws concerning the altar? To tell you to place the Sanhedrin near to the Temple.

"...that you shall set before them." You should not think, 'I will teach them a section, or law, two or three times until they know the words verbatim, but I will not take the trouble to make them understand the reason and its significance.' Therefore the Torah states "that you shall set before them" like a fully laid table with everything ready for eating."

Three remarkable propositions are being set out here which have shaped

the contours of Judaism ever since.

The first is that just as the general principles of Judaism (Aseret HaDibrot means not "Ten Commandments" but "Ten Utterances" or "Ten Overarching Principles") are Divine, so are the details.

In the 1960s the Danish architect Arne Jacobson designed a new college campus in Oxford. Not content with designing the building, he went on to design the cutlery and crockery to be used in the dining hall, and supervised the planting of every shrub in the college garden. When asked why, he replied in the words of another architect, Mies van der Rohe: 'God is in the details.'

That is a Jewish sentiment. There are those who believe that what is holy in Judaism is its broad vision, never so compellingly expressed as in the Decalogue at Sinai. The truth however is that God is in the details: "Just as the former were given at Sinai, so these were given at Sinai." The greatness of Judaism is not simply in its noble vision of a free, just, and compassionate society, but in the way it brings this vision down to earth in detailed legislation. Freedom is more than an abstract idea. It means (in an age in which slavery was taken for granted - it was not abolished in Britain or the United States until the nineteenth century) letting a slave go free after seven

years, or immediately, if his master has injured him. It means granting slaves complete rest and freedom one day in seven. These laws do not abolish slavery, but they do create the conditions under which people will eventually learn to abolish it. No less importantly, they turn slavery from an existential fate to a temporary condition. Slavery is not what you are or how you were born, but something that has happened to you for a while, and from which you will one day be liberated. That is what these laws - especially the law of Shabbat - achieve, not in theory only, but in living practice. In this, as in virtually every other aspect of Judaism, God is in the details.

The second principle, no less fundamental, is that civil law is not secular law. We do not believe in the idea "render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what belongs to God." We believe in the separation of powers but not in the secularisation of law or the spiritualisation of faith. The Sanhedrin or Supreme Court must be placed near the Temple to teach that law itself must be driven by a religious vision. The greatest of these visions, stated in this week's sedra, is:

"Do not oppress a stranger. You know what it is to be a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in Egypt." (Sh'mot 23:9)

The Jewish vision of justice, given its detailed articulation here for the first time, is based not on expediency or pragmatism, nor even on abstract philosophical principles, but on the concrete historical memories of the Jewish people as "one nation under God". Centuries earlier, God has chosen Avraham so that he would "teach his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, by doing what is right and just" (B'reishit 18:19). Justice in Judaism flows from the experience of injustice at the hands of the Egyptians, and the God-given challenge to create a radically different form of society in Israel.

This is already foreshadowed in the first chapter of the Torah with its statement of the equal and absolute dignity of the human person as the image of God. That is why society must be based on the rule of law, impartially administered, treating all alike - "Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, and do not show favouritism to a poor man in his lawsuit" (Sh'mot 23:2-3).

To be sure, at the highest levels of mysticism, God is to be found in the innermost depths of the human soul, but God is equally to be found in the public square and in the structures of society: the marketplace, the corri-

dors of power, and courts of law. There must be no gap, no dissociation of sensibilities, between the court of justice (the meeting-place of man and man) and the Temple (the meeting-place of man and God).

The third principle - and the most remarkable of all - is the idea that law does not belong to lawyers. It is the heritage of every Jew. Rashi wrote "Do not think, I will teach them a section or law two or three times until they know the words verbatim, but I will not take the trouble to make them understand the reason and significance of the law. The Torah states 'that you shall set before them' like a fully laid table with everything ready for eating." This is the origin of the name of the most famous of all Jewish codes of law, Rabbi Yosef Karo's Shulchan Aruch.

From earliest times, Judaism expected everyone to know and understand the law. Legal knowledge is not the closely guarded property of an elite. It is - in the famous phrase - "the heritage of the congregation of Yaakov" (D'varim 33:4). Already in the first century CE Josephus could write that "should any one of our nation be asked about our laws, he will repeat them as readily as his own name. The result of our thorough education in our laws from the very dawn of intelligence is that they are, as it were, engraved on our souls. Hence to break them is rare, and no one can

evade punishment by the excuse of ignorance." That is why there are so many Jewish lawyers. Judaism is a religion of law - not because it does not believe in love ("You shall love the Lord your God", "You shall love your neighbour as yourself") but because, without justice, neither love nor liberty nor human life itself can flourish. Love alone does not free a slave from his or her chains.

The sedra of Mishpatim, with its detailed rules and regulations, can sometimes seem a let-down after the breathtaking grandeur of the revelation at Sinai. It should not be. Yitro contains the vision, but God is in the details. Without the vision, law is blind. But without the details, the vision floats in heaven. With them the Divine Presence is brought down to earth, where we need it most.

### **Around the Shabbat Table:**

- (1) **Why is it important that not only the Aseret HaDibrot but also the civil laws were given at Har Sinai?**
- (2) **How does the Halacha's repeated focus on the stranger help form our understanding of justice?**
- (3) **What does it mean for legal knowledge to be 'the heritage of every Jew' How can we ensure this remains true?**

**Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH**

## Message from the Haftara

*Rabbi Katriel (Kenneth) Brander*

*President and Rosh HaYeshiva*

*Ohr Torah Stone Institutions*

# When Giving Becomes a Partnership

## SH'KALIM

*This week's D'var Torah is dedicated to my colleague and mentor, David Katz, whose generosity of spirit and deep engagement with our friends and funders truly personify the message of this week's haftara.*

This week's haftara echoes the maftir of Parshat Sh'kalim in its focus on communal responsibility and shared investment. The maftir, read from the beginning of Parshat Ki Tisa, describes the half-shekel donation every Israelite was required to give toward the Mishkan that would soon be built in the wilderness. The haftara, taken from the Book of M'lachim Bet (ch. 12), recounts a similar process undertaken many generations later to provide for the maintenance of the Beit HaMikdash in Jerusalem. Yet here we encounter a striking paradigm shift regarding the fundraising process that provides valuable insight into how Jewish institutions are best built and sustained.

In this story, we are informed that in the later days of the Davidic dynasty, the Beit HaMikdash had fallen into disrepair. The young king, Yeho'ash, turns to the kohanim charged with its care and instructs them to collect the funds that regularly arrived at the Beit HaMikdash - whether through the half-shekel obligations or through voluntary donations - and to also proactively seek additional support. These funds, emphasized Yeho'ash, must be directed toward repairing the breaches in the Temple's structure and renovating the entire building.

Soon, however, Yeho'ash realizes that the capital project has not moved forward. He summons the kohanim to understand the delay and quickly understands that their role as collectors and intermediaries is unintentionally discouraging potential donors by requesting money without clearly explaining how it would be used. Together with Yeho'yada the Kohen Gadol, he decides instead to place a charity box next to the altar in the Temple courtyard, allowing people to contribute directly and without the kohen's solicitation.

The impact is immediate. Once the process shifts from top-down to bottom-up collection, the Temple's coffers begin to fill. By removing an ineffective intermediary, potential donors regain a sense of trust and



ownership. When people are empowered to give freely and directly they are far more willing to contribute generously.

This insight into friend-raising and fundraising remains relevant to this day. Donations given by individuals from personal initiative tend to be more generous and sustainable than those given in response to top-down requests. When people are invited to participate in a vision rather than being asked merely to fund it, they respond with enthusiasm and commitment.

We see this dynamic today, within our own institutions. Whether engaging parents and students in our schools or cultivating relationships with our supporters, success flows when we include, listen, accept feedback, and form genuine partnership. When individuals feel that their voices matter and that they are helping shape a shared dream, they often choose to increase their support, and become invaluable allies.

The haftara goes even further, reminding us that meaningful contribution is not limited to financial support alone. With creativity and motivation, people can give in ways that are “outside the charity box”, through their time and/or creativity. Indeed, the text notes that “No silver bowls, shears, basins, or trumpets -

or any golden or silver vessels - were made from the money that was brought to the House of the Lord” (12:14). The artisans who crafted these items were so invested in the sacred project that they donated their work outright. Their reward was the privilege of being part of the process.

Lasting institutions are built not through transactions, but through trust. When funders, friends and community members are welcomed as true partners, shaping vision, sharing ideas and contributing their financial, creative, spiritual, and intellectual capabilities, authentic partnerships emerge. From those partnerships, resilient organizations, programs and communities grow, capable of achieving far more together and leaving a stronger impact than any could alone. 🌍



**PhiloTorah D'var Torah**

**SH'KALIM**

This Shabbat we read the first of the Four Parshiyot - Parshat Sh'kalim.

Specifically, the Parsha is read as Maftir from a second Sefer Torah, following the reading of Parshat HaShavua - Mishpatim. It consists of the first six p'sukim of Parshat Ki Tisa - Sh'mot 30:11-16.

**The Mishpatim-Sh'kalim combination occurs almost 60% of years.**

**Sh'kalim partners with Vayakhel 26.3% of years, with P'kudei 10.53% of years, and extremely rarely (last year) 3.31% of years.**

Two reasons are given for our reading of Parshat Sh'kalim -

The first mishna in Masechet Sh'kalim states "On the first of the month of Adar a proclamation is made about the [giving of the] sh'kalim..." The silver half-shekels were collected around the country during the month of Adar, so that the Mikdash treasury would be ready for the fiscal year of communal offerings and activities by the first of Nissan. Our reading of Parshat Sh'kalim is a commemoration of the mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel - and a hopeful prayer for its restoration with the building of the Beit HaMikdash - **Bimheira V'yameinu, Amein.**

The other reason for Parshat Sh'kalim at the beginning of Adar, specifically - shortly before Purim, is that our mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel is the antidote for, the vaccine against, Haman's sh'kalim. Haman offered Achashveirosh 10,000 silver talents for permission to wipe out the Jewish population of the kingdom. It is, as if, our annual gift to the Mikdash of sh'kalim protects us from our enemies who would pay many sh'kalim to facilitate our destruction.

There are even sources that say that a silver talent was the equivalent of 30 shekel, making 10,000 talents equal to 600,000 half-shekels, the iconic number of adult males of Bnei Yisrael at the Exodus.

The Sh'kalim reading is a commemorative of the Mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel, and is d'Rabbanan. **(Zachor in two weeks is d'Oraita; Para's status is disputed, HaChodesh is d'Rabbanan.)**

The mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel applies only in the time of the Beit HaMikdash - today, it is commemorated with the reading of Parshat Sh'kalim and also with the giving of ZEICHER L'MACHATZIT HASHEKEL (emphasis on the word ZEICHER) some time before Megila reading.

When applicable, the silver half-shekel was a required tax for men from 20 years old and up - and voluntary for women. It was not accepted from non-Jews. It is a membership rite for AM YISRAEL.

It follows that a man who refused to do this mitzva was declaring that he wanted nothing to do with the Jewish People. Very serious, indeed.

A significant feature of the mitzva is the insistence that HE-ASIR LO YARBEH V'HADAL LO YAM-IT, that a wealthy person cannot give more, nor a poor person less, than the silver half-shekel. For the communal offerings in the Mikdash - we are all equal.

Another message of Machatzit Ha-Shekel is in the "half". If a person had a whole bunch of p'rutot that were equal to a silver half-shekel, he had to have it changed into an actual silver half-shekel coin. So too, the person who had a larger coin could not give it and ask for change. All had to give the half-shekel.

And don't think it was just for the ease of counting the population. That could have been done by taking the amount collected and calculating how many half-shekels in the total, and that would give the count, as well.

There is great symbolism and an important message in the mitzva being done specifically with half-shekels.

Half means, not whole. Half means part of something. The mitzva of Machatzit HaShekel announces that we are all in this together. We are all part of Klal Yisrael.

Although the mitzva is in temporary suspension until the building of Bayit Sh'lishi, its messages are still with us.

Being all in this together should be our challenge and our goal... in our very own time.

This is why we read the maftir and haftara this Shabbat. This is why we will give Zeicher L'Machatzit HaShekel. This is why Jewish Unity is so important. **PTDT**



Lobby - a room providing a space out of which one or more other rooms or corridors lead, typically one near the entrance of a public building.

"They went into the hotel lobby."

The real Hebrew word for lobby is

**מְבוּאָה**

This is a classic example of words from English that have been taken into Hebrew... and the average Hebrew speaker probably has no idea what the Hebrew word is for lobby - or even that there is a Hebrew word for it.

*Walk through the Parsha*

with **Rabbi David Walk**



**MISHPATIM**

## **A Torah of Chesed**

I don't know exactly how to translate the two Hebrew words in my title. Torah is a complex concept. It means what the world calls the Bible, but it also means all the material written by our Sages to interpret that text. However, it is even harder to render the term CHESED. I mean people say 'kindness', but it also means 'righteousness' and 'generosity' and

'philanthropy'. It's a little bit of a mystery.

How to be a CHASID (not the Eastern European model, but the Biblical ideal) is actually a controversy which touches on this week's Torah reading. This week we read in chapters 21 through 23 a very detailed list of very dry laws, mostly dealing with the smooth running of a society. One section of this 'list' deals with injuries sustained by a neighbor or their possessions through the actions or possessions of another individual. These laws are called N'ZIKIN (damages) and are the source material for the tractates called Bava Kama, Bava Metzi'a and Bava Batra. These were originally one super tractate called (Surprise!) N'ZIKIN.

Here's the famous debate about being a CHASID: Rabi Yehuda said: 'he who wishes to become pious (CHASID), let him fulfill the matters of N'ZIKIN; Rava said one should fulfill the matters of B'rachot (blessings)', and some say 'let him fulfill the matters of Pirkei Avot' (Bava Kama 30a).

What are they arguing about? The Slonimer Rebbe wrote an outstanding essay on this topic and presented two powerful traditions concerning this famous rabbinic argument. The first idea was presented by the Shnei Luchot HaBrit (Rav Yehoshua HaLevy Horowitz, 1565-1630). He explains

that the four categories of N'ZIKIN (derived from our parsha) describe four types of personality issues which can negatively impact upon our efforts to be pious:

1. Damages by an Ox (SHOR) symbolize arrogance or haughtiness;
2. Damages by a Pit (BOR) symbolize despair or depression;
3. Damages by Teeth (SHEIN, crops eaten by an animal) symbolize desires;
4. Damages by Fire (EISH) symbolize the Evil Inclination.

We begin looking at these dry laws in a novel way. They represent indicators about societal needs and norms. But the Slonimer Rebbe wasn't finished. He explains the positions of the three Rabbis in the original argument. Rav Yehuda, who claims that one becomes a CHASID through fulfilling the rules of N'ZIKIN, further explains that these laws help a person to become at peace with one's fellow man or neighbors.

Then he explains that Rava believes that the laws of B'RACHOT contribute to one becoming a CHASID because these laws contribute to one becoming closer to God. A CHASID is one who is SHALEIM or at one with God, through reciting blessings and prayers. Then the anonymous Rabbi who claims that one becomes a CHASID or 'pious' through the study of Pirkei Avot which informs us how



to be true to ourselves. Everyone must be comfortable in their own skin.

So, each of our ancient Rabbis is presenting a different viewpoint of what makes a person a CHASID. Is it one's relationship with God, one's neighbors, or with oneself? I would like to think that the genuine CHASID is one who is adept at all three of these critical areas of human relations, and that is the position of the Maharal MiPrague.

But the Slonimer Rebbe still has one more question to deal with, and it is based on the fact that we normally describe a CHASID as one who goes beyond the letter of the Law. However, the one who pays the damages caused by his digging, his animal, or his fire is legally responsible to pay for those damages. So, that's not behavior beyond the letter of the Law; that is exactly the letter of the Law.

The Rebbe explains what Rabi Yehuda's position really is: Rabi Yehuda is teaching us that to truly achieve this greatness in N'ZIKIN requires us to do things not required by the law. We must take extra steps to make sure that we prevent injuries of any kind to others, before they occur. The entire idea of CHASIDUT is to go beyond the letter of the Law, and Rabi Yehuda emphasizes that aspect of N'ZIKIN.

Rabi Yehuda wants us to invest great energy in making 100% sure that we never cause injury to another. The Slonimer suggests that he bases this on another Talmudic statement: The early pious ones buried pieces of glass or thorns to a depth of at least three handbreadths...

Clearly, we see that to be a CHASID means to go to extreme lengths to make sure no harm is caused by him. The Torah expects no less from an aspirant for the status of CHASID.

There are many people who read this week's parsha and can't help but feel a yawn coming on. After the exciting readings of B'SHALACH and YITRO, these legal issues seem boring, but they're missing the point: We must be careful of the minutiae of legal niceties to have a moral society.

We need these rules for the smooth running of an ethical state. After all, we are committed to building an OLAM CHESED (a righteous world - T'hilim 89:3). The Bartenura explains building a 'righteous world' means regaling brides, visiting the sick, interring the dead, comforting mourners, and the like. Rabbi Sacks explains that OLAM CHESED means more than just performing these good deeds. He explains that CHESED entails 'acts of extraordinary kindness'. This always means 'greater measure than due'.

The Ba'al Shem Tov adds that our acts of CHESED draw down forces of loving-kindness from God into our world. And that's what we truly desire. Since God built our world with CHESED; we must maintain it with CHESED. Then we can truly become partners with God in this enterprise of building a wonderful world, and an OLAM CHESED! 🕎

## Rav Kook Torah



by Rabbi Chanan Morrison  
[www.ravkooktorah.com](http://www.ravkooktorah.com)

## Permission for Doctors to Heal

### Medical Fees

Amongst the various laws in Parshat Mishpatim – nearly all of which are of a societal or interpersonal nature – the Torah sets down the laws of compensation for physical damages. When one person injures another, he must compensate the other party with five payments. He must pay for

- (1) any permanent loss of income due to the injury,
- (2) embarrassment,
- (3) pain incurred,
- (4) loss of income while the victim was recovering, and

(5) medical expenses.

This last payment, that he “provide for his complete healing” (Sh'mot 21:19), i.e., that he cover any medical fees incurred, is of particular interest. The word “to heal” appears 67 times in the Torah, almost always referring to God as the Healer. Only here, as an aside to the topic of damages, does the Torah indicate that we are expected to take active measures to heal ourselves, and not just leave the healing process to nature.

This detail did not escape the keen eyes of the Sages. “From here we see that the Torah gave permission to the doctor to heal” (B'rachot 60a).

Yet we need to understand: why should the Torah need to explicitly grant such permission to doctors? If anything, we should expect all medical activity to be highly commended, as doctors ease pain and save lives.

### Our Limited Medical Knowledge

The human being is an organic entity. The myriad functions of body and soul are intertwined and interdependent. Which person can claim that he thoroughly understands all of these functions, how they interrelate, and how they interact with the outside world? There is a danger that when we treat a medical problem in one part of the body, we may cause harm

to another part. Sometimes the side effects of a particular medical treatment are relatively mild and acceptable. And sometimes the results of treatment may be catastrophic, causing problems far worse than the initial issue.

*The tragic example of birth defects as a result of treating morning sickness in pregnancy with thalidomide comes to mind.*

One could thus conclude that there may be all sorts of hidden side effects, unknown to the doctor, which are far worse than the ailment we are seeking to cure. Therefore, it would be best to let the body heal on its own, relying on its natural powers of recuperation.

### **Relying on Available Knowledge**

The Torah, however, rejects this view. Such an approach could easily be expanded to include all aspects of life. Any effort on our part to improve our lives, to use science and technology to advance the world, could be rebuffed on the grounds that we lack knowledge of all consequences of the change.

The Sages taught: “The judge can only base his decision on what he is able to see” (Bava Batra 131a). If the judge or doctor or engineer is a competent professional, we rely on his expertise and grasp of all available knowledge to reach the best decision

possible. We do not allow concern for unknown factors hinder our efforts to better our lives.

“The progress of human knowledge, and all of the results of human inventions – is all the work of God. These advances make their appearance in the world according to mankind’s needs, in their time and generation.”

*Sapphire from the Land of Israel.  
Adapted from Olat Re’iyah vol. I, p. 390*

## **Rav Kook on T’hilim**

*from an unpublished work  
by Rabbi Chanan Morrison*

### **T’hilim 10 - You Prepare Their Heart**

**TAAVAT ANAVIM...** “God, You have heard the entreaty of the lowly. You prepare their hearts; may Your ear be attentive” (10:17).

The psalm speaks of God hearing the prayer of the downtrodden. Yet the expression **TACHIN LIBAM** – “You prepare their heart” – is puzzling. Is it not the suppliant who collects his thoughts and focuses his mind before beginning to pray? Why does the verse appear to assign the task of preparing the heart to God?

The Sages taught (B'rachot 31), "One who prays should direct his heart to Heaven." They based the requirement for directing the heart on this phrase, "You prepare their heart." Again, it is not clear: who exactly is preparing the heart and mind?

## **Awareness of God's Presence**

There are two levels of kavana (intention) in prayer. The first level is when we pay attention to the meaning of the words and the overall intention of our prayers. This is the basic level of kavana.

A more advanced kavana is attained when we are able to sense God's universal presence. The Talmudic guidance to "direct our heart to Heaven" refers to this higher kavana. We should contemplate upwards, elevating our thoughts to reflect on the sublimity of God's Name.

This is how the Sages interpreted the verse: "You" – when we are conscious of You and Your infinite grandeur – this awareness "will prepare their hearts" – will help direct our hearts and minds in prayer.

This explanation sheds light on the conclusion of the verse. By meditating on God's Name, we uplift the soul and fulfill the goal of prayer. A powerful prayer infused with such profound kavana is more likely to be accepted.

Thus, "You" – when we focus on You and Your holy Name, this helps us "prepare the heart" to truly pray – and, as a result, "Your ear will be attentive" to answer our heartfelt prayers.

*Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. I, p. 131  
on B'rachot 8b (1:111)*

## **The Daily Portion - Sivan Rahav Meir**

### **What should be the focus in our relationship with God?**

*Translation by Yehoshua Siskin*

In order to get closer to God, we must begin with the details of everyday life. In this vein, the following was written by Rav Adin Steinsaltz on this week's Torah portion, Mishpatim:

"How can it be that we transition from the dramatic revelation on Mount Sinai in last week's parasha to a parasha with a list of 53 mitzvot regarding mundane concerns of day-to-day living? How do we go from the Giving of the Torah to dozens of divine obligations that include proper care for a donkey and reparations owed for breaking someone's tooth? Yet it's precisely in such matters that



God is found, and the Revelation on Mount Sinai enters everyday life. In contrast to 'The ends justify the means', the Torah teaches us that 'The means justify the ends.' Note: the Hebrew uses 'sanctify' as opposed to 'justify' in this saying.

We may no longer experience the thunder and lightning of Sinai, but we can take the spirit of what happened there and translate it into practical actions – mitzvot – that elevate our lives at home, on the road, in the bank, and at the supermarket. Our values are expressed in how we conduct our lives on a daily basis. We don't need to speak about these values, but simply to live them.

We are accustomed to lifting our eyes heavenward when we speak about God, but Parashat Mishpatim teaches us that He is also present in the money we spend, in the apple we eat, and in our relationship with the parking lot attendant."

Everyone is invited to search for and find God in the details of everyday life, starting today, starting now.

Send your friends this link so that they can receive Sivan Rahav-Meir's content too: [tiny.cc/DailyPortion](http://tiny.cc/DailyPortion)



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

MISHPATIM

## An Eye for an Eye

It is unfair when a text is distorted and misunderstood. But this has often been the fate of the passage, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth..." (Sh'mot 21:24).

Torn out of context, quoted without regard to its obvious purpose, the verse has been accused of teaching primitive vengeance and barbarously taking the law into one's own hands.

Not only has this canard been used to denigrate the Jewish Bible; it has become part of the stock in trade of those who accuse the Jews of being a stern, tribalistic, legalistic people with a stern, tribalistic, legalistic God.

Evidence that this is a distortion of the facts has been constantly advanced over many centuries; hopefully fair-mindedness and reasonable scholarship will ensure that justice will finally prevail.

One of the best defences of the real meaning of the verse was written by the Cambridge scholar, Herbert Loewe.

He asks, what is one of the primary

functions of a state or organised society?

To afford security to its citizens, all of them, great and small, rich and poor.

It does not leave it to the individual to do their own thing when a wrong has been committed; it makes the administration of justice the task of society and its settled courts, on the principle that equality of penalty is maintained without fear or favour.

Penalties, if necessary, are imposed "as the judges determine" (21:22). Guidelines are provided for the judges; they too cannot do their own thing but must serve the cause of justice for all their citizens.

If someone injures another person's eye, "an eye for an eye" does not sanction gouging out the eye of the guilty party. The words are dramatic, but they establish a principle: the punishment must fit the crime. The punishment must not be out of proportion, nor must a rich person suffer less and a poor person suffer more.

"An eye for an eye" is not an invitation to a private blood feud, nor does it imply that a physical injury may be punished with a reciprocal physical injury.

The context makes it clear that we are talking about the payment of compensation, and whilst no amount

of monetary compensation can bring back an eye, a limb or life, at least it enables society to express its strong collective disapproval of what has been done. -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

## Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

### MISHPATIM

Near the end of the parasha, G-d tells Moshe that Am Yisrael will slowly, but not immediately, take possession of the all the Land when they get there:

*Because the Land will become a barren wilderness and the wild animals will become too many for you (23:29).*

Moshe communicated the same message to Am Yisrael before he died, warning them that on entry to the Land they would not conquer outright, but slowly infiltrate and take possession. He gave the same reason: "less the wild animals will become too many for you" (D'varim 7:22).

It appears strange that invading wild animals should be a threat to Am Yisrael in fighting mode, a people who would knock out the likes of Amalek, Sichon, Og, and the cities of Yericho and Ai. What had they to fear from

wild animals if they could defeat an impressive list of Canaanite city states?

As an approach, the late Rabbi Dessler tells of being in a train that came to a stop near a carcass on a desolate landscape in pre-war Eastern Europe. Two hungry wolves emerged, fighting to grim death to get the dead animal. Eventually, the weaker one succumbed. Bleeding copiously, the stronger wolf made his way, and he too fell dead. So in the end no-one got the carcass. Rabbi Dessler uses this story to show how destructive misdirected and unrestrained personal conflicting ambitions can be. Tolkien in *The Hobbit* illustrates this idea beautifully in relating the highly destructive wars and the depths of degradation between self-serving 'entitled' beings in conflict over valuable treasures which had all of a sudden become free for the taking.

Similarly here. Nowhere does the Torah state or imply that Am Yisrael has been a nation of saints. On the contrary. Our sacred sources show that our people have our share of the human nature faults of impatience, jealousy, selfish ambitions, delusions of grandeur, sense of entitlement, and bitter rivalries. The Torah requires disciplining those traits, but it sadly tells of woefully falling short on too many occasions.

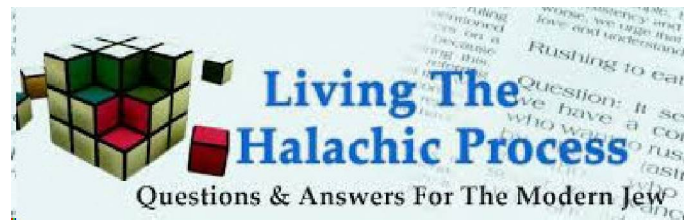
As may be in settling the Land. Would the previous inhabitants suddenly vanish, they'd be plenty of goodies to go around. Too many, in fact. Like wolves on the fold, the newly arrived people would descend on the "houses filled with good things that you didn't build and farms that you never planted and tended" (D'varim 6:11). Inevitably, some would find themselves with more and some would find themselves with what they perceive as less and unfair. Quarrelling and fighting to grim death over all the 'extras' that they could quite well live without. Sense of entitlement and selfish ambitions in the driving seat. Like the carcass that no wolf ended up getting, or so damaged as to be uninhabitable, what was once quality real estate would become barren and fit only for the most savage of wildlife, who would become many by flourishing there. So many in fact, that no-one would be a hurry to stretch out their hand and take it back. Lands and structures becoming unfit for all but the most hostile of beasts and birds of prey, as would be the just deserts of the nations that oppress Israel when G-d finally catches up with them: "Its palaces will sprout weeds, thorns and thistles, becoming the home of the jackals and the ostriches..." (Yesha-yahu 34:13). The hostile and stark wildlife succeeding what was once pride and civilization .

For the economists among us, the Tragedy of the Commons.

Like the grand lottery win with hordes of relatives, 'friends' and hangers-on emerging to make their presence felt, eying a share or two of the wealth. And the mismanagement of the fortune that had become the winner's to enjoy. Ending too frequently with the winner being the worse rather than the better for the win.

So G-d, the Torah tells, will only very slowly drive out the inhabitants. The rate will synchronize with "you become many and inherit the land" (23:30) - as the Israelite population would grow, proportionally more land and dwellings would open up and become available. But not more than they could comfortably handle without fighting over it given their human nature. G-d is in effect telling us that He does not wish to test in order to bring out the worst in people.

Perhaps this idea could also give an insight as to why the manna fell in daily portions rather than one large one for the week. Enough food to sustain, but at no point enough to quarrel over. 🌿🌿



*Reprinted from Living the Halachic Process by Rabbi Daniel Mann - Eretz Hemdah, with their permission [www.eretzhemdah.org]*

## Paying for a Canceled Taxi Order

**Question:** A friend of mine reserved a place on a sherut to Ben Gurion airport for the middle of the night. When he awoke, he realized that he had made a mistake; his flight was the next night. He tried unsuccessfully to reach the taxi service to cancel and then went back to sleep. The taxi driver arrived as scheduled, and when my friend did not appear, the angry driver called him. My friend explained what had happened, but he did not pay the driver. The next night, he called the same taxi service (they did not realize that he was the same person who had called the day before). He did not feel that he had to pay double, as he made use of the transport service to the airport only once. Was he correct?

**Answer:** One (Reuven) who offers a worker (Shimon) a job can generally back out of his commitment if a kinyan<sup>1</sup> had not been made and the job had not begun. However, in this

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<sup>1</sup> An act of finalization.



case, Shimon (i.e., the taxi service, through its driver) already drove to Reuven's (i.e., your friend's) house. Consequently, Reuven cannot back out;<sup>2</sup> traveling to the place of employment was essentially the beginning of the job, which is analogous to a kinyan.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Reuven should have to pay for the job he ordered, which Shimon indeed began. The fact that Reuven tried to cancel before the driver came is irrelevant since he did not succeed in doing so,<sup>4</sup> unless the taxi service was responsible for not enabling him to do so,<sup>5</sup> but this does not appear to be the case.

Perhaps your friend could argue that in this case, the fact that the work was "begun" is not significant. Beginning the work creates an obligation for Reuven to fulfill his commitment to use Shimon for the job. In this case, your friend was willing to use the taxi service for the same job at the same price, but he simply delayed the implementation by a single day – until the correct time of his flight. However, even if this argument is conceptually correct, the following factors may obligate your friend.

Even when Reuven is not bound by a kinyan to use Shimon's services,

when a broken offer of work causes Shimon financial damage, Reuven must compensate him. The classical case is when Shimon could have found another job had he not accepted Reuven's offer and it is now too late to replace that job.<sup>6</sup> In your scenario, it is quite clear that after your friend's cancellation, the driver could not pick up a new customer for that trip to the airport. The question, then, is whether there simply would have been an empty seat had your friend not reserved it or whether someone was turned away or redirected elsewhere. If someone was turned away, your friend should pay for his understandable yet negligent mistake. Your friend has no way of knowing if this is the case. If the driver or the dispatcher says that they did lose out on a fare, then this is an instance of BARI V'SHEMA, in which a plaintiff claims to be certain (BARI) that the defendant owes him money and the defendant says he is not sure (SHEMA) if this is correct. The standard p'sak is that there is a CHIYUV LATZEIT Y'DEI SHAMAYIM (a moral obligation) to pay in such a case.<sup>7</sup>

Another factor is that there are two possible claimants your friend must

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<sup>2</sup> *Bava Metzia* 76b.

<sup>3</sup> *S'ma* 333:6.

<sup>4</sup> See the parallel case in *Gittin* 33b.

<sup>5</sup> See *Bava Metzia* op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> *Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 333:2.

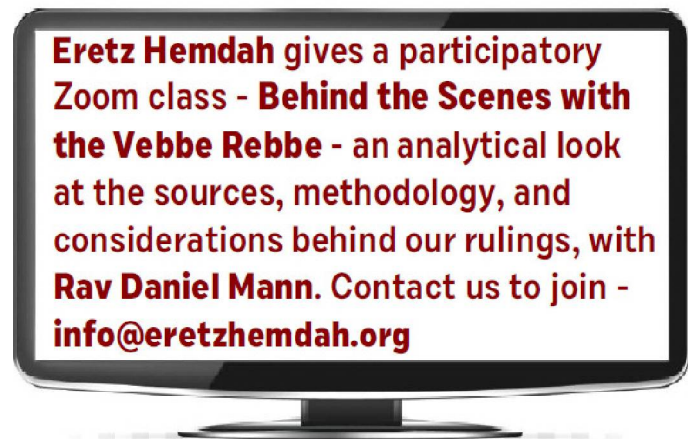
<sup>7</sup> *Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat* 75:9. Further discussion of the application of the general rule to this specific case is beyond our present scope.

consider. The taxi company anticipated receiving a certain amount of money, as did the driver. If each receives a fee on a per-person basis, then either may have lost out because of your friend. Our limited research about such services indicates that the driver pays the company a fixed rate for their service of finding passengers, and he keeps all the fares. If so, even though your friend paid the company's driver the next night, the driver from the first night lost out, assuming it was not the same driver.

A minor factor that often plays a role in cancelled jobs is that when Reuven reimburses Shimon for his lost revenue, Reuven may reduce the amount because he spared Shimon the toil of the job he ended up not doing.<sup>8</sup> However, once the driver came to your friend's house and called, any reduction in work, and thus in the fee, would be negligible at best.

We think that Reuven should have gone out to the driver the first night to offer to pay at least the great majority of the fare. This is all the more so true if your friend's address created a Chilul Hashem (for example, if it was in a religious neighborhood). At this point, he can try to find out if the taxi service can determine who the driver was (or

accept their part, if that is their arrangement). Doing so is at least menschlich (considering the small percentage the fare is of the total travel costs), and your friend appears to even be obligated to pay for his mistake.



## **Dvar Torah** by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

*Graciously shared with PhiloTorah*

### **MISHPATIM**

In this week's parsha of Mishpatim we are presented with a long list of commandments V'EILEH HAMISHPATIM ASHER TASIM LIFNEIHEM. Yet, we were introduced to mitzvot already from Parshat B'shalach (at Mara) and in Parshat Yitro at Matan Torah.

What is the difference, if any between the mitzvot given before Mount Sinai and those given afterwards? According to the Kuzari, Israel became a nation at Mt. Sinai.

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<sup>8</sup> Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 333:1.

This fact would impact upon the character of the mitzvot given to Israel.

The pre-Matan Torah mitzvot, as such were given to individuals. The singular language used in B'shalach confirms this.

In Mishpatim, the plural is used LIFNEIHEM - "before them", to denote that the mitzvot are being transmitted to the community. Furthermore, in Parshat Mishpatim there are laws that stress the idea of equality. No one is to be considered or treated greater than another.

The Hebrew servant, for example, was only permitted to work for six years. Should he desire to remain in servitude, he may only remain until the Jubilee year. No Jew may ever be a servant of another Jew forever. The Talmud points out that the master must treat his servant as well as he treats himself.

Another example of the demand of equality is found by the Sabbatical year. On this year, poor and rich, landed and unlanded were treated equally in the fields.

Another illustration is the discussion in Parshat Mishpatim about the Shabbat day. The reference hereto Shabbat, stresses this day of rest as a great equalizer. Not only do you rest but all that work for you must rest. Both laborer and boss must rest, both

master and servant refrain from work "...in order that your ox and your donkey shall rest, and your maid-servant's son and the stranger shall be refreshed." (23:12)

The Shabbat, as once quoted, can be seen as an "embodiment that all men are equal and that equality of men means the nobility of men".

This is how this week's parsha is something new and fresh. It relates commandments to us as a new nation, stressing equality to all. This was a new concept then, but remains with us even today. We need to always remember that, yes, they were commandments to keep for G-d but they also helped mold us into a nation. 🏰

## The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

### MISHPATIM 5785

Among the many important prohibitions in our Parsha, we have the injunction against telling a lie. The Torah formulates the prohibition thusly (23:7) - "Distance yourself from a false word..." That the Torah doesn't simply state, "Do not utter a falsehood", underscores the severity of even slightly deviating from the truth. In fact, the great Chassidic master, R. Simcha Bunim, asserts that other than this command, there is no other place in all of Scripture where one is

enjoined from distancing from a sin.

Precisely because of this unusual formulation of the mitzva, Chazal were extraordinarily sensitive to any behavior or appearance - of commission or omission - that even remotely might lead to bias and error in judgment. Here are just a few examples from that discussion. (Shavuot 30b-31a):

"Chazal taught: And from where is it derived that a student who is an ignoramus should not sit before a judge to discuss the proceedings because he is apt to cause the judge to err in judgment? From the verse states: 'Distance yourself from a false matter.'

"From where is it derived that a student who is sitting before his teacher and sees a claim in favor of a poor person and a disadvantage for a wealthy person that he shall not remain silent but argue the proper case notwithstanding? From the verse states: 'Distance yourself from a false matter.'

"From where is it derived in a case where two individuals come to judgment, one dressed in rags and the other in wealthy garments, that the judges say to the wealthy person: Dress like the poor person or dress the poor person in garments like your own? From the verse states: 'Distance yourself from a false matter.'

"From where is it derived that a judge should not hear the statement of one litigant before the other comes to court, and that a litigant shall not explain the rationale behind his statements to the judge before the other litigant arrives? From the verse states: 'Distance yourself from a false matter.'"

That a judge had to be extremely careful that nothing might influence him - intentionally or otherwise - from rendering a judgment EMET LAAMITO - the definition of which requires that every apparent truth be fearlessly probed to ensure its absolute veracity - is rooted in a fundamental equivalence. To wit: The prophet declares (Yirmiyahu 10:10) that HaShem is truth - VASHEM ELOKIM EMET, and the Talmud follows by stating that EMET was chosen as the very seal of the Almighty (Yoma 69b). The Torah then decides to refer to a judge by Gd's Name, ELOHIM. The conclusion: that a judge, who shares Gd's Name must necessarily be a paragon of unvarnished truth. No wonder Chazal remark that he who judges thusly becomes HaShem's partner in Creation (Shabbat 10a) and merits the indwelling of His Presence (Sanhedrin 7a).

But this theological proposition that Gd is truth itself has a far wider application. For while the cases in the



Talmud narrowly deal with the judiciary alone, the ethic of avoiding any semblance of dishonesty by anyone is patently clear. And this, because of HaShem's attribute of absolute EMET, which challenges and obligates us - and not only the courts - to emulate Him! Such a mandate finds expression throughout Biblical and Rabbinic literature and in our liturgy. In the Torah, EMET becomes a prerequisite for qualified leadership and proper personal conduct and is an extolled ethical leitmotif, for example, in the books of T'hilim and Mishlei, where one is enjoined to speak truth in his heart (T'hilim 15:2) and acquire truth at all costs (Mishlei 23:23). And the list of references goes on, all with the common theme, admonishing and instructing us to be scrupulous about ensuring that our speech and action conform to the highest standards of EMET.

It becomes thus imperative that we understand how the yetzer hara to lie finds expression in many overt and subtle ways. In fact, there is research to the effect that on any given day, a person may utter over 150 falsehoods. We are not necessarily talking about outright lies, but the little untruths that we excuse to avoid embarrassment or because we are convinced no one will ever know the fabrications we indulge in. Being late for an important meeting because you were simply too lazy is excused

by the "white lie" of, "I was caught in a traffic accident". Caught speeding, the officer is told, "it's a medical emergency." Asking for a discount by falsely claiming you're a senior citizen, or claiming a free plane ticket for an underage child when that fact is simply a lie.

And then there are the far more "under the radar" lies when we are even oblivious to the lie itself. Behaving religiously, for example, when the unconscious motive for so doing is to impress others. How many of these self-deceptions do we indulge in, often without so much as a tinge of guilt, refusing to own-up to the real motivation behind our religious or general conduct and sadly fooling ourselves in the process.

But of all the falsehoods that people indulge in, perhaps the most egregiously overlooked, often undetectable and damaging, is the lie we tell ourselves; our reluctance to go deep and discover who we really are. When Polonius in Shakespeare's Hamlet (act 1, scene 3) instructs, "To thine own self be true", he was declaiming a fundamental moral imperative. But think for a moment: Doesn't this famous maxim beg the question? To wit: How can you be true to yourself without knowing who you are? Only once you've discovered the truth of who you are, can you be true to it, live by it, fashion yourself to conform to it!

All of which brings us back to the theo-ethical axiom which equates Gd with truth. If truth is ultimately to be found only in Gd, then to the extent that we connect with Gd, that is, become HaShem's companion and intimate fellow - only then can we merit the precious gift of self-discovery. And to begin to understand that connection requires that we appreciate the reality of soul which is this: that the spiritual reality of neshama is predicated upon the religious belief that the soul is "a portion of Gd from Above", and as such, becomes the spiritual channel through which the Divine flow can illuminate our self-mystery. And if that soul-reality is that which accounts for our uniqueness and singularity, then forging that linkage between ourselves and our Maker can ultimately give us the clarity - the acute mindfulness necessary - to know what "I" to be truthful towards.

Now, the religious strategies to create that Gd-man bond are well-known. The proactive initiatives of Torah study, prayer and chesed are time-proven, time-honored methods to arrive at that elusive goal of self-knowledge. But achieving that objective requires effort and patience. Toil and diligence for Talmud Torah, focused concentration for prayer, and personal sacrifice for the performance of acts of loving kindness.

But then, there are the other unwelcome paths to that self-discovery. Often man resists the call to "know thyself", with this stubborn aversion rooted in man's fear that to engage in such brutal truthfulness will inevitably beg the question: "Now what!? The tense encounter with his genuine "I" will likely insist upon some life-change, some character overhaul to which complacent man will typically hold out against. And then some personal storm bursts and the eventual upheavals and disruptions of life rain upon us, the failure and frustrations or, Gd forbid, worse, all of which forces us to confront and reexamine who we are and where we are heading. In a word, we are forced to come face to face with our true self! And in that moment of self-confrontation, we can either begin the arduous climb to personal truth and fulfillment, or fall into the void of a vain and futile existence.

And to think that such a glorious journey to fulfill our personal destiny and justify our existence all begins with compliance with the mitzva to "distance yourself from a false word."



# Afterthoughts

- Yocheved Bienenfeld

## VIHYITEM LI SEGULA

### You will be a treasure to Me

SEGULA is an unusual word, used only seven times in all of Tanach. Its accepted definition is that it refers to something treasured and unique. That is how HKBH sees us - that's what He wants us to be. Under what conditions would this be?

IM SHAMO'A TISHM'U B'KOLI... - If you hearken well to Me... you will be a treasure to Me. As Rav S.R. Hirsch explains: "If you really obey Me and continue in this relationship, then the fundamental condition for this is that you become a SEGULA... you must belong exclusively to Me".

Rav Moshe Tzvi Neria (Ner LaMa'or; p. 215) fills in a little background about this "gift" of being an AM SEGULA, by referring to the Gemara in Shabbat (86b). According to the Gemara, Moshe did not relay this message to the people when they reached the Sinai desert because of exhaustion from the journey. Why would this tiredness from traveling be so great that they would not be able to hear this news, namely, the VIHYITEM LI SEGULA verse that Moshe would say? On the contrary, this should have been an uplifting message.

However, when Moshe heard these

words from HaShem, he asked "what will the nations of the world say when they see that You have chosen the Jews over all the other nations? Gd's answer serves to validate Moshe's concern. HaShem responded: "Every generation with its troubles, every generation with its enemies of Israel; but EHYEH ASHER EHYEH, I will be with them in every trouble." Given this response, Moshe chose to allow the people to rest and, perhaps, to absorb the atmosphere of Har Sinai for a day before sharing this information with them. And although it was then clear to them what this SEGULA entailed, their response was All that HaShem has spoken, we shall do - NAASEH. We are ready to accept the Torah, knowing full-well the sacrifices that it will entail.

Beyond understanding the essence of what this SEGULA meant, my mind began to wander, as it usually does when I'm presented with an unusual word. I was drawn to the fact that there is a vowel called a SEGOL. And I wondered why would this vowel would have such a name? Is there any connection between the SEGOL and SEGULA? There should be. The form of two dots over one, basically forming the outline of a triangle, didn't help me much. The shape does resemble a cluster of grapes, an eshkol, whose root SHIN-KAF-LAMED, by the way, is a cognate meaning of SAMACH-GIMEL-LAMED.

Other than that, nothing. Then, I focused on the three dots, the triangular shape and the fact that the number three plays such an important part in Judaism.

Admor Dovid MiLilov points out that no matter how you turn around the SEGOL, it retains its shape, hinting to the fact that no matter the trials and tribulations of the Jewish people, even when we sin, we remain Jews inside and out. To me, this smacks a little of the message of SEGULA, as presented in the Gemara.

In his notes in Torah Sh'leima, Rav Kasher teaches that these three dots represent the three forefathers, in whose merit, we have been saved from numerous troubles, e.g. the sin of the golden calf.

Regarding the importance of the number three which figures quite prominently in our tradition, Rav Shimshon Pinkus, in his book on numbers, Birchot HaCheshbon, says that the number three represents strength. It implies an existence forever.

The Hebrew word for three is SHALOSH. The letter SHIN has three points and the middle letter LAMED is a multiple of three.

And more:

A Galilian told Rav Chisda: 'Blessed is HaShem Who gave the triad Torah (Ta-Na-Ch), to a triad people (Kohen,

Levi, Yisrael), through a third child (Moshe was the third child) in the third month (Sivan).

And there is more. What about: three holidays; three prayers a day; doing an act three times creates a chazaka; AL SH'LOSHA D'VARIM HA'OLAM OMEID - the world stands upon three principles (as a matter of fact, in the first chapter of Pirkei Avot, in 13 out of the 18 mishnayot, the Tanna lists three things as advice). Yes, and there are many more examples.

In the world of science, the three-sided shape of the triangle is considered the strongest shape there is, either in its original form or in multiples of that form. And consider this: The symbol that, for some reason, has represented the Jews for ages, the Magen David, consists of two triangles. When you connect their six points, you have a hexagon. Nature loves hexagons because they are the most efficient, stable and optimal shape for various purposes. Snowflakes are all hexagonal; bees create their hives through hexagons; six cyclones on the south pole of Jupiter form a hexagonal pattern around a central cyclone. How about the persistent hexagonal cloud pattern around the north pole of Saturn, which the scientists cannot explain. (Notice any similarities between the strength and importance of the hexagon and our Magen Dovid?)



Clearly, there is something special and unique about the number three, and its triangular SEGOL (whose letters, by the way are each a multiple of three). That must be it: Unique. And that's just what a SEGULA is. We are, indeed, a unique people. Let's only hope that we are unique in the way Gd wants us to be: "We must belong exclusively to Him." ❀

## Insights into Halacha - Rabbi Yehuda Spitz

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# Margarine, Misconceptions & Marit Ayin

*The origin of good old fashioned (or bad old - depending if one is health conscious) ordinary margarine is surprisingly fascinating. In the 1860s France, with the rising popularity and cost of butter (due to the universal constant known as the law of supply and demand), Emperor (Louis) Napoleon III made a contest offering a considerable prize to anyone who could create a satisfactory substitute for butter. Additionally, the contest rules stipulated that this substitute must be inexpensive enough for the common man (apparently this French leader wanted to keep his head), as well as have been able to be mass produced for*

*their Armed Forces. In 1869, chemist Hippolyte Mege-Mouries invented a substance he called "oleomargarine", now known worldwide as margarine, and won the substantial prize. Unfortunately for him, margarine never really took off in his lifetime, and after selling the patent in 1871, he died a pauper in 1880. However, as big a role the now- popular margarine plays in our daily lives, it interestingly plays a halachic role as well.*

There is a remarkable Rabbinic enactment known as "Marit Ayin".

*See Mishna in Sh'kalim (3:2) which bases it on the verse in Bamidbar 32:22 (Matot) VIH-YITEM N'KIYIM MEI-HASHEM U'MIYISRA'EL, "And you shall appear clean (sinless) before G-d and before (the people of) Israel." This isur is cited several times throughout the Talmud... Marit Ayin does not include worrying that someone might mistakenly think something permitted is prohibited; one need not concern himself with others' mistaken notions of what is prohibited or allowed, only actual halachic concerns. Although some commentators use the terms CHASHAD and MARIT AYIN interchangeably, see Shu"t Igros Moshe (O.C. 4, 82) who maintains that chashad is a Biblical prohibition while Marit Ayin is Rabbinic in nature, and explains the subtle differences between them.*

The most basic definition of this law is the prohibition of taking actions

which strictly speaking, are permitted according to halacha, but nevertheless give onlookers the impression that we are doing something halachically forbidden. In other words, although an observer has an obligation to judge others favorably (DAN L'CHAF Z'CHUT), nevertheless we still have an obligation not to do things that might raise an observer's suspicions. The expression might be "looks can be deceiving", but even so, one must make sure not to engage in questionable activities, or even questionable-looking ones.

One of the more famous applications of this rule applies to cooking (and/or eating) meat in (pareve) almond milk. Since this appears to an onlooker as cooking BASAR B'CHALAV, the forbidden mixture of meat and milk, it is therefore Rabbinically forbidden due to Marit Ayin. There is a solution, though, to place almonds down next to where the cooking/eating is being done, to show to all that there is no actual prohibition occurring.

Employing this logic, updated for modern times, would seem to imply that having a cold cut sandwich lathered with margarine might just be forbidden, due to Marit Ayin, as the margarine can easily be mistaken for butter! But if so, why is this not more widely known?

The answer lies with a silky situation. The Mishna rules that combining wool

and silk does not violate the Biblical prohibition of shaatnez (wearing a mixture of wool and linen), yet is forbidden Rabbinically nonetheless due to Marit Ayin, as such garments could easily be mistaken for shaatnez. Still, several centuries later, the Rosh, and even later, the Shulchan Aruch, ruled that in their times this was no longer an issue, as silk had become so common that it was easily recognizable, and no one would suspect a silk blend garment of being shaatnez. The Rama takes this ruling a step further and maintains that even a kanvas-blend garment, if it is commonplace, is also considered above suspicion; the Shach affirms that in his locale kanvas is common and therefore not-applicable to the law of Marit Ayin.

The renowned Kreisi U'Pleisi, Rav Yonason Eibeshutz, extrapolates and expands on this concept even further, applying it as a general halachic rule across the board: any time that the questionable object (or action) becomes commonplace, Marit Ayin no longer applies, as it will no longer arouse suspicion. The example he gives is if in a place where cooking in almond milk is the norm, then accordingly it would not be necessary to place almonds next to the pot, as the average onlooker would simply assume that one is cooking in pareve almond milk, and not real milk. Other later authorities, including the

Maharsham, and Yad Yehuda, have echoed Rav Eibeshutz's ruling.

In fact, this basis for being lenient in cases of Marit Ayin has been widely accepted by contemporary authorities as well; the only issue being how common that item has to be in order to be entitled to this exemption. There was a famous dispute recorded around a hundred years ago between the Pe'at HaSadeh and the Yigal Yaakov, regarding some novel egg-based desserts served at a wedding that looked remarkably dairy-like. Although both agreed with the Kreisi's approach, they disagreed as to whether such desserts were considered common enough in their day to negate the rule of Marit Ayin.

However, nowadays, with popular and familiar daily staples such as margarine, soy schnitzel, burgers, and hot dogs, non-dairy creamers, pareve ice creams and whipped desserts so commonplace, the vast majority of contemporary authorities assert that MEI'IKAR HADIN there no longer is a Marit Ayin issue with these products at all. Who would suspect a religious Jew of using dairy butter, milk or ice cream after eating meat, instead of assuming that the pareve alternative is being used? Although some maintain that it is still preferable to exercise caution and keep the container or wrapper on the table at the time of eating, nevertheless, they

agree to this halachic principle. That is why many do not even think twice about "buttering" their sandwich with margarine or having pareve "ice cream", or coffee with non-dairy "milk", even at a fleishig (meaty) meal.

This is an excellent example of halacha's adaptability to a changing world. The rule remains the constant, but its practical application is dependant on our great authorities' interpretation. So, to sum it up, although the creator of margarine never got to enjoy its questionable benefits, we at least can, both in the physical sense, as well as in the halachic sense.

*Regarding the permissibility of taking a drink, using the restroom, or being part of a business meeting in a non-kosher restaurant nowadays, see Shu"t Igros Moshe (O.C. vol. 2, end 40 s.v. u'vadavar) and Shu"t Minchas Asher (vol. 1, 67).*

*For any questions, comments or for the full Mareh Mekomot & sources, please email the author: [yspitz@ohr.edu](mailto:yspitz@ohr.edu)*

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**Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive**

guide, rather a brief summary to raise awareness of the issues. In any real case one should ask a competent Halachic authority.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz's English halacha sefer, "Food: A Halachic Analysis" (Mosaica/Feldheim) containing over 500 pages featuring over 30 comprehensive chapters discussing the myriad halachic issues pertaining to food, is now available online and in bookstores everywhere."



## GM - MISHPATIM

The well-known pasuk in Parshat K'doshim, Vayikra 19:3, states -

אִישׁ אָבֹוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת־שַׁבָּתִי  
תִּשְׁמְרוּ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

*Every man (person) shall fear his mother and his father, and you shall observe My Shabbats - I am HaShem, your God.*

It is taught from this pasuk, that although one must listen to his parents, if they say to do something that is not permitted by halacha (even Rabbinic law), then the child may not listen to his parents.

Here is a NPP (neat partial pasuk) from Parshat Mishpatim, Sh'mot 23:12 -

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה בַּעֲשִׂיָּךְ וּבַיּוֹם  
הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשָּׁבֵת (לְבַעֵן לְזִוּוֹ שְׂוִירָךְ  
וְלַזָּרְךָ וְלִנְפֶּשֶׁ בֶן־אֲמִיתָּהּ וְהַגֵּר:)

*Six days you may do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, (in order that your ox and your donkey shall rest, and your maidservant's son and the stranger shall be refreshed.)*

Just looking at the first half of the pasuk, we find the Mitzvat Asei (positive commandment) to abstain from Melacha on Shabbat. This mitzva is the other side of the coin of the prohibition of Melacha on Shabbat from Sh'mot 20:10 - LO TAASEH KOL MELACHA...

The Gimatriya of this NPP is 3878. The AL-BAM gimatriya is 2783. A pasuk in Parshat Yitro has a regular gimatriya of 2783. It's in the Aseret HaDibrot, Sh'mot 20:12 -

כְּבֹד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ  
לְבַעֵן יִאָּרְכוּן יְמֶיךָ עַל הָאֲדָמָה  
אֲשֶׁר־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ:

*Honor your father and your mother, in order that your days be lengthened on the land that HaShem, your God, is giving you.*

A long search resulted in a match between the AL-BAM gimatriya of a



neat partial pasuk and the regular gimatriya of a whole pasuk. Still, this match echoes the K'doshim pasuk above. Abstain from Melacha on Shabbat even if respect for your parents would suggest otherwise.

*USFUNEI T'MUNEI CHOL is the working title of my hopeful book of Gimatriya Matches. The title translates to Hidden in the Sand. That's how I feel about my Gimatriya searches. Like walking along the beach with a metal detector. Beep-beep-beep. Lean down and find something. Usually, nothing of note. But sometimes you find something special.*

## GM - SH'KALIM

Here is a Gimatriya Match between the NISTAR gimatriya of a pasuk and the regular gimatriya of a different pasuk.

In Sh'mot 30:13, from the beginning of Ki Tisa, which is also from Parshat Sh'kalim, we find the mitzva of the MACHATZIT HASHEKEL.

וְהָיָה | יְתֵנוּ כָּל־הָעָבֵר עַל־הַפֶּקֶדִים  
בְּמוֹצֵיט הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ  
עֲשִׂירִים גֶּרָה הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּמוֹצֵיט הַשֶּׁקֶל  
תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה:

*Everyone included in the census must give a half shekel. This shall be by the sanctuary standard, where a shekel is 20 gera. It is half of such a shekel that must be given as an offering to God.*

**Longish pasuk with a relatively high**

**gimatriya - 5921.**

Searches with large gimatriyas do not usually return many other p'sukim that match. In fact, 5921 showed only one match, a pasuk in Melachim Bet that did not lend itself to an interesting comment.

But the NISTAR gimatriya of the above pasuk did result in an interesting match.

The NISTAR gimatriya of Sh'mot 30:13 is 5722. Two p'sukim in Tanach have that gimatriya. One presented an interesting match - Divrei HaYamim Alef 21:17 - First, the context.

The perek tells of David HaMelech who ordered a census of the people be taken. It was a direct count - not with a half-shekel or other means of indirect counting. G-d got angry (so to speak) and a plague cost thousands of lives. David admitted that he had sinned and begged G-d to punish him but not the people. The pasuk in question -

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִיד אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים הֲלֹא אָנִי  
אֲמַרְתִּי לְבָנֹת בָּעָם וְאֲנִי־הוּא אֲשֶׁר־  
חָטְאתִי וְהָרַע הָרַעוּתִי וְאֵלֶּה הַצֹּאֵן מִה  
עָשׂוּ יִהְיֶה אֲלֵהִי תִהְיֶה נָא יְדָךְ בִּי  
וּבְבֵית אָבִי וּבְעַמֶּךָ לֹא לְבִמְצָה:

*And David said to God, "Did I not say to count the people? Then I am the one who has sinned, and I have committed evil, but these sheep, what have they done? HaShem, my God, I beg that*



*Your hand be against me and against my father's house, but not against Your people for a plague."*

We are not just dealing with a match of gimatriyas (two different kinds), but specifically, with a Torah pasuk that states the mitzva, and a match to its NISTAR value that shows the dark side of the mitzva - the tragedy that occurred when it was disregarded.

## RED ALERT!

### MISHPATIM

*by Rabbi Eddie Davis (RED)  
of the Young Israel of Hollywood -  
Ft. Lauderdale (Florida)*

### DIVREI TORAH

- Having this Parsha immediately after the Ten Commandments sends an important message for those of us who live in a democratic republic. What we see here is the close connection between religious law and the secular social law that governs a society. In America, we are raised with the principle of the Separation of Church and State. There is a strict wall separating the two. In Torah Judaism there is absolutely no such Separation. The four sections of the Shulchan Aruch show the full scope of Jewish law in the post-Temple time. Orach Chayim deals with daily life, Shabbat, and holidays. Even

HaEzer deals with marriage, divorce, and family law. Yoreh Dei'a deals with dietary laws, mourning, and conversion. Choshen Mishpat deals with civil law, finance, and damages. So we see that these sections deal with virtually all aspects of Jewish life. And this is merely a shortened version of our Code of Jewish Law. Every aspect of our lives is covered within our religious code.

- The first paragraph in this Parsha deals with the laws of a Jewish slave. It is difficult for us to understand that the Biblical concept of slavery is extremely different from the terrible description of what slavery was in the secular world. The American treatment of the Black slave is not what we read about in the Torah and Talmud. The Torah could never sanction the American system. I cannot comprehend a picture of a Seder table in the Orthodox Jewish home in the American South in the mid-nineteenth century, where they would read the Haggada, celebrating the liberating Exodus from Egypt, and being waited on and served by Black slaves, and not notice what is wrong with this scene. In the Jewish idea, if there is only one pillow in the house, the Jewish master must give it to his slave before using it himself.

- Regarding a Jew owning a non-Jewish slave, the law is different. The master is permitted to hit his non-

Jewish slave, but he may not be cruel or excessive in the beatings. If the master knocks out a (permanent) tooth, the court will force the master to free the slave. The Ibn Ezra comments that this is true if he causes the loss of any organ. The non-Jewish slave is considered his property. The Jewish slave is considered a servant, but the master may not hit him. In this regard, he is considered a free man. If the master injures his Jewish slave, he is required to pay all the compensatory damages, just as if he were a free man.

- The Torah specifically states that in a bodily injury, the sinner is required to pay medical expenses (21:19). The double verb used to describe the medical healing tells us that the doctor must treat the patient. We might have raised doubts as to whether it is allowed to alter Hashem's plan to have the victim suffer the hurt involved in the case. After all, we might have said that Hashem wanted the victim to be injured. That's why He permitted it to happen. That it happened was a product of Hashem granting free will to all people, even sinners. Now we expect the doctor to do his best to cure and heal this person. In today's society, we raise the question if the doctor has the right to give up on any person. In general, it is acceptable for that to happen if the person is in the

throes of dying and not living.

- In the 1950s, some Yeshiva Rabba'im approached Rabbi Moshe Feinstein with the following question. Our Yeshivas were teaching only 7 of the 63 tractates of Talmud, including Bava Kama, which deals with "my ox gored your ox". The American students never see an ox outside of a zoo! Let us teach the Americans the tractates that deal with laws of Chol HaMoed and the laws of mourning, for example. Rav Moshe was agitated with their request. He said that they were missing the point if they felt that Bava Kamma was just dealing with oxen. They need to emphasize that this tractate was teaching them that ADAM MU'AD L'OLAM. Man is fully responsible for all his actions. Rav Moshe was touching on an American society that stresses possession of money. They need to study business laws and concepts of society, including the American quote: if you break it, you now own it! And these are concepts in this tractate.

- Our system of Torah justice for thieves and the like is specified in this Parsha. When a thief enters your house, he is aware that the owner will attempt to protect his property and assets. The thief is prepared to kill the owner if he is confronted. Therefore, if the owner kills the thief in self-defense, he is free from

liability. There is a complete list of different types of thieves in our society, and the Torah gives enough cases for us to analyze each case. It is possible to judge differently a thief who is starving because he is so poor. But most thieves are the professional type. Those thieves have chosen this as their method to make a living. They have to be dealt with in a stricter fashion. When an owner kills a thief, we might consider what happens to the thief's family, his wife and children. They now will suffer. No human system of justice is perfect. We all need Hashem's assistance in creating a Torah society.

- When it comes to lying, not telling the truth, that is stated later in K'doshim (Vayikra 19:11). Here in this Parsha, the Torah states "Distant yourself from a false word" (23:7). Lying is a straight forward, easy to understand prohibition. Yet the Talmud itemizes a few cases where not telling the absolute truth is permitted (Yevamot 65), for the sake of peace. One classic example is when Hashem altered Sara's response to Hashem's message when He told her that she was going to conceive at an elderly age. We can arrive at a startling conclusion in how we respond in many situations where bending the truth can be acceptable, in order to maintain a more peaceful relationship with other people. This is a subject that deserves much more

attention that this column can provide. Just be aware that the Torah's language is precise and allows for interpretation.

- MIDRASH. The area of seduction is misunderstood without the Oral Law (Ketuvot 39b). If a man seduces a girl under the age of twelve and a half, he should marry her. But the girl and her father have the right to refuse the marriage. If any of the three parties veto the marriage, the seducer is required to pay a fine to the girl's father, plus pay for damages and the humiliation he inflicted upon her.

## Questions by RED

### From the text

1. Why would a Jewish master give a non-Jewish female slave to a Jewish slave for a "wife"? (21:4)
2. What three items is a husband required to provide for his wife? (#2:10)
3. The Torah itemizes 2 body parts that if a Jewish master destroys one of them of a non-Jewish slave, the slave automatically goes free. What are the two body parts? (21:23,24)
4. If an ox gored and killed a man, and it was the 4th time the ox gored someone, what is the punishment for the owner of the ox? (21:29)
5. What was Bnei Yisrael's response

to entering into the Covenant between Hashem and Bnei Yisrael? (24:28)

### From Rashi

6. What are the two reasons a Jew could become a slave? (21:2)

7. A Jew injures a fellow Jew. What 5 things must he compensate his victim for? (21:25)

8. Why is a thief to pay 5 times the value of an ox that he stole and then killed or sold? (21:37)

9. Why does the Torah state we should dispose of non-kosher meat by giving it to a dog? (22:30)

10. Who were the young men who ministered and took care of the sacrifices to finalize the relationship between Hashem and Bnei Yisrael? (24:5)

### From the Rabbis

11. If a Jew has the choice of buying a Jewish slave or a non-Jewish slave, whom should he buy and why? (Or HaChayim)

12. A person injured his neighbor, and he now is required to pay medical expenses. Can the victim pocket the money and forgo the medical treatment? (Ramban)

13. What did Yehoshua do to earn the privilege of being Moshe's successor? (Our Sages)

### Midrash

14. A Jewish slave who wants to continue as a slave after 6 years, has his ear bored at the doorpost. Why by the doorpost?

### Haftara - Sh'kalim (Shmuel Bet)

15. The evil queen Ataliya killed all the members of her royal family. Who was the only survivor of her terrible misdeeds?

### Relationships

a) Merari - Machli

b) Amram - Uziel

c) Chushim - Guni

d) Na'ama - Sheim

e) Adam - Enosh

### ANSWERS

1. In order to gain more slaves in his domain.

2. Food, clothing, and marital relations

3. An eye or a tooth.

4. The owner is executed.

5. NA'ASEH V'NISHMA. We will do and we will listen (obey, understand)

6. He can sell himself because he had become extremely poor. Or the court can sell him because he was a thief, and they need funds to pay the victim

7. Damages (loss of value), compensation for lost work, medical expenses, humiliation, and pain.

8. Because the victim lost an ox that

is a productive laborer in his field.

9. A reward for not howling at the Jews when they exited Egypt.

10. The firstborn young men of Bnei Yisrael.

11. A Jew. If a Jew is in distress and must sell himself, a fellow Jew should help him.

12. No, he may not.

13. Yehoshua accompanied his teacher Moshe to the mountain and waited at the foot of Mt. Sinai until he returned.

14. Because the door symbolized giving him his freedom.

15. Her grandson Yeho'ash.

## **Relationships**

a) Father & Son

b) Brothers (sons of Kehat)

c) First Cousins  
(son of Dan and son of Naftali)

d) Mother & Son

e) Grandfather & Grandson