

In memory of all those brutally murdered in the war on Israel and the fallen soldiers of the IDF. Praying for the safe return of all the hostages.

בס"ד

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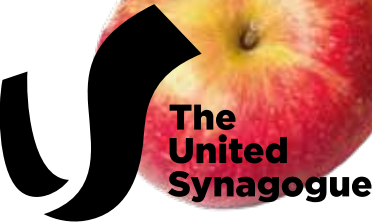
DAF HASHAVUA

משפטים | MISHPATIM

SHABBAT ENDS:

- London 5.54pm
- Birmingham 6.00pm
- Cardiff 6.09pm
- Dublin 6.16pm
- Edinburgh 6.00pm
- Glasgow 6.04pm
- Hull 5.55pm
- Leeds 5.56pm
- Liverpool 6.03pm
- Manchester 6.00pm
- Sheffield 6.00pm
- Southend 5.51pm
- Southport 6.06pm
- Jerusalem 5.59pm

**Rosh Chodesh Adar I
is this Friday and Shabbat**



SIDRA BREAKDOWN

מִשְׁפָּטִים MISHPATIM

6th Sidra in: שְׁמוֹת SHEMOT

By Numbers:
118 VERSES
1,462 WORDS
5,313 LETTERS

Headlines:
CIVIL LAWS,
YOM TOV,
REVELATION

MISHPATIM:
Artscroll p.416
Hertz p.306
Soncino p.471

MAFTIR:
Artscroll p.890
Hertz p.695
Soncino p.945

HAFTARAH:
Artscroll p.1208
Hertz p.944
Soncino p.1188

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – SHEMOT 21:1-19

The sidra contains many mitzvot, of which a selection has been included here. It starts with the laws of a Jewish servant. He is to work for six years, after which he can go free. Alternatively, he can decide to stay on as a servant forever.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 21:20-22:3

The penalties for physically injuring others are listed. An ox that gores a person to death is stoned. One may not dig pits in the public domain. Stealing an animal and then selling or slaughtering it incurs an extra penalty.

Point to Consider: *Why is there no death penalty for a person who kills a thief in self-defence? (see Rashi to 22:1)*

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 22:4-26

The laws governing guardians and borrowers of objects are listed – the level of responsibility for losing or damaging the object varies according to the nature of the contract. Special emphasis is placed on not mistreating a widow or an orphan. It is forbidden to take interest when lending money to the poor.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 22:26-23:5

The mitzvah of *pidyon haben* (redemption of the first born) is repeated. It is forbidden to eat an animal which died without *shechita* (kosher slaughter). One must not favour the destitute in court. A stray ox or donkey should be returned to its owner.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 23:6-19

A judge has to avoid showing favour or taking bribes. For six years the land is worked; in the seventh year (*shemittah*) it

is prohibited to work the land. The three pilgrim festivals – Pesach, Shavuot and Succot – are listed. There is a mitzvah to bring one's first fruits (*bikurim*) to the Temple. It is prohibited to cook meat and milk together.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 23:20-25

God says that He will send an angel to guide the nation in their conquest of the Land, helping them to destroy the host nations. They are warned not to emulate the idolatrous ways of those nations.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 23:26-24:18

The narrative now switches back to three days before the giving of the Torah (Rashi). Moshe builds 12 altars at the foot of Mount Sinai, one for each tribe, on which offerings are brought. Moshe sprinkles the blood of the offerings on the people, who famously proclaim "we will do and we will listen" (*na'aseh ve'nishma*). Moshe, Aharon, Nadav, Avihu and 70 elders see a very pure 'vision' of God. Moshe remains on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights.

MAFTIR – (BEMIDBAR 28:9-15)

The reading for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh is taken from parashat Pinchas and details the additional Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh offerings in the Temple.

HAFTARAH

The special haftarah for Shabbat Rosh Chodesh is the last chapter of the Book of Yeshaya (Isaiah). The world is God's "throne and footstool". Trying to appease God with insincere offerings will be punished, yet one who is truly "zealous regarding God's word" will be rewarded. Those who love and are loyal to Jerusalem will enjoy the messianic future, in which they will rejoice in the rebuilt city.



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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Rights & Wrongs



**RABBI
YONOSAN
GOLOMB**

Sheffield United
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As I write, Israel is being pursued in the International Court of Justice under the charge of genocide. Here is not the place to debate the absurdity of the claim but I focus on the question 'contrary to which law'?

This week's parasha deals with many laws. They can be grouped into three categories. **Chukim**

— laws that appear to have no knowable reason; **Edot**

— laws that we would not have without the Torah but we can understand them once God has instructed us and **Mishpatim** —

laws that we would have instituted even without the Torah as they are morally obvious.

The first verse instructs us to teach these *Mishpatim* to the point of "**lifneihem**" - that they should be clearly understood. Rashi (1040-1105) explains that God said to Moshe (Moses), "Do not think to say, 'I will teach them the law two or three times... but I will not trouble myself to explain the reasons...'; therefore, it says: '*asher tasim lifneihem*, which you shall set before them', like a laid table, with its food ready to be eaten." The *Mishpatim* must be taught thoroughly.

This begs the question, if these are laws that are morally obvious, why

is there a need to teach them in the first place? Moreover, why emphasise that they must be well taught?

Many years ago, at a meeting of the Council of Christians and Jews, I was asked by a non-Jewish minister, how do you answer the claim that God is not needed to teach us humans morality, since we can work it out ourselves?

My answer: in the autumn of 1943, SS Obersturmführer Konrad Morgen arrived in Auschwitz. He was no ordinary SS officer but a judge of the SS reserve and an examining

'crimes'. He also investigated Camp Commandant Rudolf Hoess for a different sort of corruption and the most bizarre case of all was against Maximilian Grabner who was held to account for not seeking the correct 'permission' from Berlin before executing prisoners'.

It is beyond insanity that Morgen considered the pilfering by the officers as corruption because the valuables should have been sent to the Gestapo, yet the latter's theft of these items from the murdered Jews was presumably

'legal'. Similarly, had Grabner indeed received the right 'permission' from Berlin then his executions would have been deemed 'in order'. And all this is against the backdrop of the gas chambers and crematoria of Birkenau

operating at an industrial scale. This too is presumably 'in order' and not the subject of Konrad's investigation - magistrate status notwithstanding.

If I, as a human being, am left to decide on matters of morality, there is no guarantee what my conclusions may be. Society's opinion on right and wrong is open to manipulation. Besides, even if I could decide, what gives me the right to dictate my decision to others?

Mishpatim need to be taught and taught well as coming from the one Being in a position to make absolute decisions and that is the Almighty. So why is anything right? Because God said so. Otherwise, I can confuse self-defence with genocide.



magistrate. His mission was to investigate corruption among officers. He and his men raided the lockers of many of the staff finding a fortune of gold, pearls, rings and money in all kinds of currencies. The culprits were subsequently punished for their

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War Weddings Post 7 October



**RABBI
BARUCH
DAVIS**

Daf Hashavua
Editor-in-Chief

When we and our new *mechutanim* arranged for our children to be married in late December, we could not have imagined the challenges that lay ahead, making a wedding at a time that Israel is in a difficult and protracted war.

There were two different types of challenges: practical – who would and would not be able to come, and spiritual – at a time of war, what is the correct tone to set at a *simcha* – should we even be having a *simcha* at such a time?

On the last point, answers came rapidly. Rabbi Doron Perez, CEO of World Mizrahi, has visited many of our communities in the UK, a dynamic leader, a true thinker and *mensch*. His two sons were in the army on 7 October. Yonatan was injured and hospitalised and Daniel, who was in a tank attacked by Hamas, declared missing. Tragically, he has since been declared a prisoner of Hamas. Yonatan was due to be married ten days later! With very powerful, mixed emotions, they went ahead with the wedding, inspiring thousands around the world with their strength.

My *Daf Yomi* shiur leader was due to celebrate his daughter's

wedding after Succot, but they did not know if it could go ahead as his future son-in-law had been called up. Then he was injured and hospitalised! The wedding did go ahead, although he was not able to dance. They withheld sending out invitations until the last minute and left 50 empty places, in the hope that his fellow soldiers might be allowed out for the evening. Thankfully, that did eventuate.



War weddings -
Rafi Davis with a
soldier friend

With this backdrop, our own issues were relatively trivial, but still with the theme of uncertainty. We had many guests coming from overseas: would their flights be cancelled? We had many relatives called up on 7 October, including one of our own sons, and our attention was almost completely taken away from the wedding for at least a

month. We were fundraising for his unit and others in the north and helping our daughter-in-law with the children. Would our soldier relatives, including our son, make it out for the wedding?

The bride and groom had many friends booked to come from the UK – would they still come? The roads were felt to be very dangerous at the outset of the war; would family members and friends be prepared to travel to Jerusalem and back at night? We ourselves declined a wedding invitation further afield.

In the end, most of our overseas guests and some family members were not able to attend. But the roads had become much safer, and the yeshiva boys and sem girls

made it a wonderful *simcha* to remember. We learned from the other weddings and our own: the strength of our people is that, even in difficult times, we celebrate what there is to celebrate and we continue to build new Jewish homes.

We felt that, at the *chuppah*, we needed to acknowledge the war and to get the balance right. We have a tradition that prayers said at a *chuppah* – particularly those of bride and groom – are especially powerful. We used the opportunity to pray for the welfare of our soldiers and the safe return of all hostages. During the evening, many of our son's friends who had been called up arrived and received a true hero's welcome!

We found it very difficult to maintain our efforts for the war while preparing for the wedding, *auf Ruf* and *sheva brachot*. With a sense of guilt, we had to put the former aside.

Now, after a truly uplifting *simcha*, we have resumed.

The Two Rabbis Called Yehuda ben Beteira

Tannaim and their Cities: Part 31 | Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira

This series of articles takes a closer look at the Tannaim (Sages of the Mishnaic era) mentioned in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 32b) and the locations which served as their Torah centres.



**DAVID
FREI**

US Director of External
and Legal Services and
Registrar of the London
Beth Din

The Talmud records the following unusual story of Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira's origin. On a visit to Rome, Rabbis Eliezer, Yehoshua and Rabban Gamliel entered an area where children were playing in the street, games relating to tithing produce. Realising this was a Jewish district, they sought hospitality and were invited to a home for a meal. As the meal was served, they noticed that before each dish was brought to the table, it was first taken into a bedroom. They enquired about this strange practice and were told by the host that he had an elderly father who had made a vow not to leave his room until he had met the Elders of the Jewish people. The visitors told their host to bring out his father. The father explained that he needed their prayers for his son and his wife to have a child. Rabbi Yehoshua, who was an expert in diagnosing deeper spiritual realities, took steps to rectify the situation. The son born to this couple was Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira. The Rabbis declared that, if they had travelled to Rome

simply to bring Rabbi Yehuda into the world, their journey would have been worthwhile.

Since this voyage to Rome and Rabbi Yehuda's subsequent birth and rise to greatness occurred after the destruction of the Second Temple, it is difficult to reconcile this incident with the case (in the previous article in this series) when Rabbi Yehuda tricked an Aramean impostor to ask for the tail of the Paschal lamb when visiting the Temple in Jerusalem on Pesach.

How could Rabbi Yehuda have been alive at the time of the Second Temple if he was born after its destruction? This led the Tosafot (early rabbinic commentators on

How could Rabbi Yehuda have been alive at the time of the Second Temple if he was born after its destruction? This led the Tosafot to conclude there were probably two rabbis called Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, one who lived before the Temple's destruction and one who lived well after that.

the Talmud, Menachot 65b) to conclude there were probably two rabbis called Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, one who lived before the Temple's destruction and one who lived well after that. This is reinforced by Rambam (1138-1204) in his introduction to the Mishna where he sets out the succeeding generations of *Tannaim*. He asserts that the first Rabbi Yehuda passed away before the Destruction in 70CE.

The second Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira also resided in Netzivin and was probably a direct descendant of the first one. He lived for many years, as we find in the *Midrash Sifri* (Parashat Re'eh 80) that Rabbi Elazar ben Shmua and Rabbi Yochanan HaSandlar, both students of Rabbi Akiva, were *en route* to Netzivin to learn Torah from Rabbi Yehuda. They dramatically stopped their journey when they reached Sidon (today in Lebanon) as the realisation that they were leaving Israel hit them. Their eyes filled with tears, they rent their clothing and returned to Israel, claiming that living in Israel was equivalent to keeping all the mitzvot.

Rabbi Yehuda is also attributed (see Midrash Shmuel 10) with blessing the father of the great *Amora*, Shmuel (c.165-254), that he would have a son as great as the prophet Shmuel (Samuel).



Strengthening Shlomo's Reign

Sefer Melachim (Kings) I: Chapter 2



**PNINA
SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and
US Educator

At the end of his life, King David gives his final instructions to his son Shlomo (Solomon). Firstly, he reminds him to always serve God and to keep the Torah. Secondly, he instructs him to punish Yoav, the general of his army, for twice disobeying David and shedding blood during peacetime.¹ Additionally, Shlomo is told to punish Shimi ben Geira, whose treasonous insults to David were left unpunished.² Shlomo is told by his father to use his own wisdom to decide the best form of action. Finally, David tells Shlomo to treat the children of Barzilai the Giladite with kindness, because he sheltered David when he fled from Avshalom.³

It is surprising that David instructs his newly-crowned son to execute individuals that David himself had not put to death. Spanish biblical commentator Rabbi Yitzchak Abarbanel (1437-1508) explains that David is in fact not telling Shlomo to execute them. Rather, he is warning Shlomo of their previous trickery to ensure

vigilance in the event of further conspiracies. We will soon see how Shlomo acts upon this advice.

King David, one of the greatest Jewish leaders of all time, then dies. This marks the end of a 40-year reign as king of Israel. Shlomo now needs to work quickly to solidify his rule before any rebellions occur.

Almost immediately, Shlomo's brother (and previous contender for the throne) Adoniyah approaches with a request: to marry Avishag the Shunamite, who had been King David's concubine before

his death. At first glance this may appear innocent. However, Shlomo interprets this as another attempt to usurp the throne, and orders his death for the crime of treason.

Following this, Shlomo dismisses Evyatar the Kohen from the priesthood, banishing him to a farm in the countryside. Technically, Evyatar is himself guilty of treason as he supported Adoniyah's failed coronation (see the previous chapter), but Shlomo holds back from killing him due to the special relationship Evyatar had with his father.⁴

Realising that he may be next, Yoav flees. Shlomo's men catch him, and he is put to death for his part in Adoniyah's rebellion, in addition to the many problems he caused David.

Finally, Shimi ben Geira is put under house arrest. He is told that if he leaves the city of Jerusalem he will be put to death. After a few years, Shimi does leave the city and is killed.

The opening chapter of Shlomo's rule is focused on his consolidation of power. He deals with those who pose real threats to his rule. Indeed, this chapter ends with the words: "Thus the kingdom was established in Shlomo's hands" (v. 46), emphasising his success in this area.

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¹ Yoav killed Avner (Shmuel II, chapter 3) and Amasa (*ibid.*, chapter 20) under the guise of friendship, and against David's wishes.

² See Shmuel II, chapter 16.

³ See Shmuel II, 17:27-29 and 19:33.

⁴ When King Shaul (Saul) attacked the Kohanim of Nov in retaliation for them having harboured David, Evyatar was the sole survivor of the city. Evyatar then spent many years with David as fugitives from Shaul.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT MISHPATIM

9-10 FEBRUARY | 1 ADAR I

An Ethical Society



**ELISHEVA
STANTON**

Tribe Madricha and Gap
Year Student

Bnei Yisrael (the Children of Israel) had been oppressed in Egypt for hundreds of years, being slaves with no liberty to make their own decisions and no justice. In Parashat Mishpatim, we learn about the ways to follow Jewish ethics and morals to create a fair society, after experiencing the complete opposite environment in Egypt.

Let us take one of the commandments in our parasha: "If the stolen object shall be found in his possession... he shall pay back

double" (Shemot 22:3).

Why does a thief pay back double?

When a thief steals £100, his intention is to gain £100 for himself at the expense of £100 to his victim. The punishments in the Torah are 'measure for measure'. Therefore, by paying double, the thief ends up losing £100 and making the victim gain £100. What is done to him is exactly what he planned to do to his victim.

Another mitzvah in Mishpatim is lending money to a person in need.

When we give someone a loan, it seems as if we are giving away something for nothing. That person is not giving us anything back immediately for the money we gave him, but of course we expect to get it back one day. We trust him, even

if he is a poor person.

God fulfils this commandment too. Like a person lending another some money, God 'lends' each and every soul the special strength and ability to fulfil His will.

As with a loan, the soul gets its strength 'for free.' But God expects that, in return, our soul will pay back the loan by using this strength to fulfil His will.

When we lend money, we do not tell the borrower how to use that money. It becomes his, and he can use it for whatever he wants. When God gives us a 'loan,' it also becomes ours. We can use the strength and power He gives us for anything we choose. We must do our best to make the right choices.

We must show God that we are worthy of this loan, and 'pay it back' by using the strength He gives us to fulfil His will.

Mishpatim Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to reveal words connected to the parasha.

- ① **IEBN ERLIASY**
- ② **HZVAMTI**
- ③ **TPGEY**
- ④ **ITHFE**
- ⑤ **ALESVS**
- ⑥ **AMHSMTPI**
- ⑦ **TMSNNCOEMDAM**
- ⑧ **ALEST**



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