



Ohr Yerushalayim News

אדר תשפ"א – משפטים – 13th February 2021 - Volume 13 - Issue 31

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel tov to Michael and Debbie Black on the birth of a grandson to Efraim and Miri Daniel

Chaim Aruchim

Chaim Aruchim to Charles Bursk on the petira of his father, Maurice Bursk. He can be contacted on charles_bursk@hotmail.co.uk or 07968 276295 The shiva ends on Shabbos morning

We wish Chaim Aruchim to Ben First who has Yahtzeit for his father on Sunday, 2nd Addar

ZY Gemach

With Purim round the corner, please consider to make a donation to our own ZY Gemach which makes loans and donations to shul members and the wider community.

You can do this via the Broom Foundation by going to <https://online.broomfoundation.org.uk/charity?1153306>

via Asser Bishvil Foundation by going to <https://online.asserbishvil.org.uk/charity?1153306>

or via Achisomoch Aid Company by scanning the barcode to the right.



Sealed and Delivered Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

This parsha is called Mishpatim. Simply translated it means ordinances. The portion entails laws that deal with various torts and property damages. It discusses laws of damages, of servitude, of lenders and borrowers, employers and laborers, laws of lost items and the responsibilities of the finder. Many of these mitzvos that are discussed in the section of Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat. But there are quite a few mitzvos mentioned that engage the purely spiritual quality of the Jew. Some of them deal with kosher restrictions, others with our relationship with the Almighty. One verse that deals with the requirement of shechita (ritual slaughter) begins with a prelude regarding holiness. "People of holiness shall you be to Me; you shall not eat flesh of an animal that was torn in the field; to the dog shall you throw it (Exodus 22:30). The question is simple. There are many esoteric mitzvos whose only justifiable reason is spiritual. Why does the Torah connect the fact that Jews should be holy with their prohibition of eating meat that was torn as opposed to ritually slaughtered? There are myriad mitzvos that require self-control and abstention. Can there be another intonation to the holiness prelude?

(I heard this amazing story a number of years ago from a reliable source; I saved it until I was able to use it as an appropriate parable to answer a scriptural difficulty. I hope that this is it!)

Dovid, a serious yeshiva student, boarded the last flight out of Los Angeles on his way back to his Yeshiva in New York. He was glad that they were going to serve food as he had left his home in a rush and did not get a chance to eat supper. Sitting next to him on the airplane, was a southern fellow who knew little about Judaism, and considered Dovid a curiosity. As the plane flew eastward, he bantered with Dovid about Jews, religion and the Bible, in a poor attempt to display his little bits of knowledge. Hungry and tired Dovid humored him with pleasantries and not much talking. He was pleased when his kosher meal was finally served. The kosher deli sandwich came wrapped in a plastic tray, and was sealed with a multiple array of stickers and labels testifying to its kosher integrity. His new-found neighbor was amused as Dovid struggled to break the myriad seals and reveal the sandwich, which unbelievably looked just as appetizing as the non-kosher deli sandwich the airline had served him.

"Hey," he drawled, "your kosher stuff doesn't look too bad after all!" Dovid smiled and was about to take his first bite into the sandwich when he realized that he had to wash his hands for the bread. He walked to the back of the plane to find a sink. It took a little while to wash his hands properly, but soon enough he returned to his seat. His sandwich was still on his tray, nestled in its ripped-open wrapping, unscathed.

And then it dawned upon him. There is a rabbinic ordinance that if unmarked or

From The Rov & R' Shaya

מחנה אדר מרבים במחנה, as Adar enters we increase in simcha. One of the ways we manifest this simcha is through Mishloach Monos, spending time with other families at Seudos Purim and accepting visitors into our home for shpieling. This leads to a real marbeh reius – an increase in friendship and a feeling of achdus amongst klal yisroel. Although this year we will not be able to do these activities as usual, we must attempt to ensure that we are still involved in being marbeh reius.

The Rambam says that more should be spent on matanos loevyonim than on mishloach monos. This year is a fantastic year to get this right. We will not be giving out as much mishloach monos as normal, and perhaps the money that is saved on mishloach monos can be given towards matanos loevyonim. The Rambam says "there is no greater simcha than being mesameach the hearts of the poor, orphans and widows". True Simcha is achieved through being mesameach others.

This year we must attempt to reach out to others. We should think about who may appreciate a phone call, who may be lonely at this time and could do with a conversation over Purim. This is a time of being marbeh reius and this year we have the opportunity to perform it in different ways to other years. We must be creative to think of ways to be mesameach others while ensuring we remain physically safe.

Megillah

This year there will be multiple Megilla readings in shul. Anyone who will be attending a later Megilla reading can break their fast at nacht but should not wash for a meal until after hearing the Megila. Those who are unable to attend shul for Megilla reading should ask a Sheila regarding how to fulfil the mitzva.

Mishloach Monos

This year when people will be giving fewer Mishloach Monos in order to reduce congestion on the streets, we should bear in mind that the Halacha only requires that each man and woman give at least two foods to one other person.

Matanos Loevyonim

On Purim day, every man and woman should give a money gift to two different poor people. This should be done by giving money to the Rov's collection either in Shiul or at home who will ensure that the gifts are distributed on Purim day.

Seudas Purim

The Seudas Purim this year should begin before Chatzos. Chatzos in Manchester is at 12.22 PM.

Wishing everyone a פורים שמח!

Davening Times

פרשת משפטים

Zman Shabbos & Lighting
Mincha
Shacharis - Hashkomo
2nd Shacharis
סוף זמן ק"ש
1st Mincha
2nd Mincha
Motzei Shabbos
Ovos uBonim
Sun
Mon / Thurs
Tues / Wed / Fri
Mincha
Mincha & Maariv
Late Maariv

פ שקלים, ראש חודש אדר

4.58pm
5.03pm
7.30am
9.30am
9.57am
1.30pm
4.57pm
6.07pm
7.07pm
7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
1.15pm
5.10pm
8.00pm

unsealed meat is left unattended in a gentile environment, it is prohibited to be eaten by a Jew. The Rabbis were worried that someone may have switched the kosher meat for non-kosher.

Dovid felt that in the enclosed atmosphere of an airplane cabin, nothing could have happened. After all, no one is selling meat five miles above earth, and would have reason to switch the meat, but a halacha is halacha, the rule is a rule, and Dovid did not want to take the authority to overrule the age-old Halacha.

Pensively he sat down, made a blessing on the bread and careful not to eat the meat, he took a small bite of the bread. Then he put the sandwich down and let his hunger wrestle with his conscience. "Hey pardner," cried his neighbor, "what's wrong with the sandwich?"

Dovid was embarrassed but figured, if he couldn't eat he would talk. He explained the Rabbinic law prohibiting unattended meat and then added with a self-effacing laugh, "and though I'm sure no one touched my food, in my religion, rules are rules."

His neighbor turned white. "Praise the L-rd, the Rabbis, and all of you Jewish folk!" Dovid looked at him quizzically.

"When you were back there doin' your thing, I says to myself, 'I never had any kosher deli meat in my life. I thought I'd try to see if it was as good as my New York friends say it is!'"

Well I snuck a piece of pastrami. But when I saw how skimpy I left your sandwich, I replaced your meat with a piece of mine! Someone up there is watching a holy fellow such as yourself!"

The Pardes Yosef explains the correlation of the first half of the verse to the second with a quote from the Tractate Yevamos. The Torah is telling us more than an ordinance. It is relating a fact. "If you will act as a People of holiness then you shall not eat flesh of an animal that was torn in the field; to the dog shall you throw it. The purity of action prevents the mishaps of transgressions. Simple as that. Keep holy and you will be watched to ensure your purity. Sealed and delivered.

The Meat Of The Meeting Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read the parsha of Mishpatim. There are many different types of laws which the Torah commands us to follow. 'Chukim' are the laws which elude our understanding. They give us the opportunity to demonstrate our faith. We adhere to them because Hashem commanded us to do so. Period. Mishpatim are laws which make sense to us. Don't steal, don't murder, don't commit adultery. Our parsha, as indicated by its name, deals with mishpatim.

"V'aileh ha'mishpatim (21:1)" – and these are the mishpatim. Why does our parsha begin with the letter 'vuv' which means 'and'? According to Rashi it connects these mishpatim to last week's parsha. Teaching that, just as the previous parsha's commandments were from Sinai, so too, these mishpatim are from Sinai.

It's fascinating to note that these laws are sandwiched between the Torah's two accounts of Sinai. Last week's parsha, Yisro, concluded with the 'aseres hadivros' (the ten commandments). Our parsha, after delineating fifty three different mitzvot (commandments) concludes with, "V'el Moshe amar a'lay el Hashem (24:1)" – And Moshe was told to ascend (Sinai) to Hashem. According to Rashi, this actually took place on the fourth day of Sivan, before the 'aseres hadivros'!

Why were these mishpatim placed in the middle of the Torah's transmission of the events at Sinai?

Let's first attempt to understand another difficulty. We are a composite of two separate beings – a spiritual being contained within a physical being. Hashem, on the other hand, is totally removed from any trace of the physical. He exists in a domain and realm that is totally beyond us and our perception. How can we connect to Him?! That unlikely union was made possible only through the giving of the Torah. The Talmud reveals the essence of the revelation at Sinai by defining the first word of the 'aseres hadivros' using a method called 'notrikon'. Each letter of the word becomes a word in and of itself. The word 'anochi' – spelled 'aleph', 'nune', 'chaf' and 'yud' (meaning, I) is broken into four words, each beginning with one of those letters. 'Ana nafshai chasavis yahavis' – I, My essence, I have written and given. I have made Myself available. I'm accessible. Through the Torah given at Sinai, we have the meeting point. We can connect. (It's interesting to note that many of the different customs at Jewish weddings are based on events at Sinai – the wedding between Hashem and Klal Yisroel.)

It is clear that these mishpatim were placed in the midst of the Sinai events because they are 'the meat' of 'the meeting'. The 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha' (I am Hashem your G-d – the opening words of the aseres hadivros) is an intrinsic part of the mishpatim and our observance of the mishpatim must reflect that 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha'. Both in the way that Hashem involves Himself down in our day-to-day events and in the way that we strive to elevate ourselves up to the heights of spirituality there is and must be this synthesis.

Let's deal with each of these links. The Talmud states that when three judges convene for judgment, the Shechina (Hashem's presence) is with them. Why is this necessary? The Nesivos Sholom quotes the Zohar which states: "Aileh ha'mishpatim – da hee raza d'gilgulta". Meaning, these are the judgments – in here is contained the secret of 'gilgul'. 'Gilgul' is the Hebrew term for reincarnation. The idea that after death, a person's neshama (soul) might return to this world in a new human body in order to accomplish something that had been neglected or to correct an error that had been done. How does this apply to the mishpatim – the laws?!

He tells a famous story involving the Baal Shem Tov – the founder of Chassidism. A

person had been to a Rabbinical court which had decided against him, obligating him to pay the disputed sum of money. He approached the Baal Shem Tov with the following dilemma. I accept that any judgment reached by these judges is true as it reveals the will of the Torah and thereby, the will of Hashem Himself. At the same time, I know that I don't owe him the money! The judges based their decision on the testimony given before them, but I know the truth – I was there – I don't owe him money. How, he asked the Baal Shem Tov, can these two truths be resolved!

The Baal Shem Tov explained to him that in a previous 'gilgul' he had owed this person money. When one leaves this world owing another money, he must return in order to settle this debt. The judges were (I assume unwaveringly) obligating him to pay the sum of money which wasn't owed based on the present litigation but was, in fact, the epitome of an old debt.

Both were truths. He didn't owe and he did owe. Mishpatim contain the secret of 'gilgul'. The Shechina is with the judges. The 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha' is an intrinsic part of the mishpatim and all that transpires in our every day lives. Seemingly unfair and inexplicable events might be the very reason why we are presently here in this world and might be our ticket to the next. "V'aileh ha'mishpatim." The letter 'vuv' – 'and' – connects the two. Both are from Sinai. The mishpatim are smack in the middle of the events of Sinai. Together they produce the meeting point of heaven and earth, the marriage between us and Hashem.

Let's now see how our mishpatim must reflect the 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha'. After the 'aseres hadivros' we were told, "shuvu lachem la'o'ha'leichem" – return to your tents. In a practical sense, the show is over and there won't be an encore. In a halachic sense, we learn that the marital relations which had been forbidden for three days prior to the 'aseres hadivros' were once again permitted. The Kotzker Rebbe explains it in a different way. Return to your tents! Bring it back with you! It's easy to be on this level while hearing and seeing the word of Hashem. Now apply it and maintain it while back in your tents. Make it a part of your everyday life.

In truth, the way to maintain these mishpatim on a consistent basis is by keeping focused on 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha'. The passuk states: "Mi'd'var sheker tirchok (23:7)" – from falsehood distance yourself. The Talmud (Makkos 24A) states that Rav Safra fulfilled King David's words (Tehillim 15:2) that one must speak truth even in one's heart. Rashi relates the event through which Rav Safra earned this accolade. He had an item for sale and was approached by a potential buyer while he was reciting the Shema. Involved in his prayer and being unable to respond, Rav Safra seemed to be ignoring him. Thinking that the offer was too low, the buyer repeatedly raised his bid, only to be stonewalled again and again. After making his final exorbitant offer, which happened to coincide with the prayer's end, Rav Safra nodded in agreement. The buyer began to count out the money only to be told that the price would be original amount offered. Rav Safra explained to this astounded buyer that in his heart he had agreed to the original offer. Accepting any more money than that would be dishonest. He spoke truth in his heart.

Only a person with a firm, tangible feeling of 'Anochi Hashem Elokecha' would be able to live life accordingly. We all know on an intellectual level that we'll gain absolutely nothing through dishonest means. Why would Hashem reward a person and have him benefit through rebellion against His word? That's on an intellectual level... When the possibility of profit is before us, we tend to ignore that obvious fact and act somewhat differently. 'Return to your tents'... Apply it to every day life. Connect the 'Anochi' to the mishpatim.

Rav Shalom Shwadron zt"l would tell a story of a Mashgiach of his, Rav Elya HaCohen Dushnitzer. (He had previously been Mashgiach in the Chofetz Chaim's Yeshiva in Radin.) He owned an orchard which he wished to sell. His son had received it as a marriage dowry but it proved to be a very unfortunate venture (the orchid, that is, not the marriage). Rav Elya bought the orchard to help his son but soon saw that it wasn't worthwhile to keep it. The expenses far exceeded the income. He asked the students to pray that he'd successfully sell it as he was getting older and didn't want to leave this world being in debt.

One student had recently gone into real estate and was approached by a visiting American who was looking to purchase an orchard in Israel. He told him that he knew of one for sale and a meeting was set. On the bus ride to the orchard, Rav Elya tried his hand at 'sales'. "You should know that the Talmud states that if one wants to lose his money he should hire workers and not watch over them. If you'll be in America, it doesn't make sense to buy the orchard." The American nodded his head and didn't say anything. Rav Elya continued, telling him that a number of trees were bad and didn't produce any fruits. The buyer maintained that he was still interested in buying. "There is also an area surrounded by rocks which have stunted the growth of the oranges." The buyer just nodded his head.

Once they reached the orchard, Rav Elya, explaining that seeing was greater than hearing, immediately brought the buyer to see the bad trees. The buyer suddenly looked at his watch, pulled some pills from his pocket and swallowed one. "What is that for?", Rav Elya asked. "Oh it's nothing", he replied. After several concerned inquiries, he explained to Rav Elya that he had a heart condition for which he needed to take this certain medication every few hours. "With your condition you shouldn't buy it. You won't be here to oversee it and it will cause you aggravation. There is no way that I can sell it to you." He took hold of his hands and gave him a heartfelt blessing for a full and speedy recovery. Despite the buyer's protests, Rav Elya refused to sell it to him.

A Torah-true version of 'sales'. Clarity. Anochi Hashem Elokecha. A case where we can judge Judaism by the Jews. You've got to love such a man.