



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on Parashat MISHPATIM

Year 23

by Dayan Abraham David

'Veele ha'mishpatim', the letter 'va'v' in 'veele' connects the contents of our parasha to the subject at the end of last weeks, which speaks about the altar in the Temple to tell us the Sanhedrin the highest court of law sits in the precincts of the Temple. To teach us that the civil laws contained in our parasha are different from the civil laws of the nations and are in fact G-d given from Sinai and therefore a service of the Almighty and not only for the smooth running of a country and people. Our '*Ben Adam le chavero*' our behaviour to our fellowman is answerable to G-d even though it is for the benefit of man. They are given in fact to improve ourselves and not only for the benefit of others. As the Torah teaches us '*Ki tereh chamor sonacha robetz tachat masaoh azov taazov emo*' we are obliged to help someone we hate unload his animal. The Talmud deduces that if we have a friend who needs help to unload his animal and someone we hate who needs help to load up his animal we should help the one we hate load up. Even if the animal of his friend is suffering with its load (and we care for the unnecessary suffering of animals,

tzaar baale chayim) we still load the animal of the one we hate, '*kede likof et yitzro adif*', so that we should work on ourselves and overcome our bad feelings. The Ramban explains this clearly quoting the Talmud that the mitzvot were given to us to cleanse and improve us as fire improves metal by burning out all the impurities '*letzaref et haberiot*'. We were given shechitah, which is the humane way of slaughtering, not just for the benefit of the animal but so that we should not become cruel by doing something cruel. For if it was only out of consideration for the animal why permit us to eat them at all? There are misguided people who ban the eating of animals and demand their protection by harming other humans and being cruel to them. This whole world is given to man so that he should serve and appreciate G-d with it. Unnecessary pain and suffering to animals is forbidden by the Torah, '*tzaar baale chayim deoraitah*' long before people made societies to protect them. This mitzvah like the others is not the result of our feelings which can change and be misguided as we have seen in recent history, in the holocaust when those sadists, murderers of little children went back home pampering their pets and soothing their discomfort. Our mitzvot are G-d given and answerable to G-d and not the dictates of our feelings.

G-d has given us the Torah to help us improve ourselves. We cannot rationalise these laws and apply them arbitrarily we follow them in public and in private for He is present everywhere. But within the parameters of the halachah we are obliged to delve into its understanding so that we can enhance its application. We are told in the Talmud that one of the questions that will be asked of us is '*Hevantah dava mitoch davar*' have you tried to understand further into the halachah. The Chofetz Chaim when he had to give reproach to another to correct him, would first bring him a gift, showing his caring for the other so that his reproach would be accepted as being seen to be given out of caring and love. For the concept of reproach '*hocheyach tocheyach*' is not just a formula to be said over to another but the purpose behind it is to help the other correct his wrong doing and for his good and not just for the satisfaction of the one who is giving it.

TORAH GEMS

The Parasha tells us about the Jewish slave an '*Eved Ivri*', who can only be sold for six years and is to be treated not as a Canaanite slave but only with respect and kindness. Yet we find one degrading aspect, his master can give him a Canaanite slave woman as a wife to beget children who will be slaves like her. As we know, a Jew is not permitted to a Canaanite slave so why is he degraded and permitted such an '*Issur?*' According to some commentators the '*Eved Ivri*' here is one who is sold as a slave by the Beth Din to pay for the fine and the

cost of returning what he stole and there is a lesson for him in it. The Torah tells us that at the end of the six years if he does not wish to leave his master, his wife and children, then the Beth Din take him to the door post of the house and pierce his ear with an awl as Rashi quotes: 'The ear that heard on Mount Sinai, '*Lo tignov*', do not steal, and did steal should thus be reminded of his sin. Then he is allowed to stay until the '*Yovil*' (50th year). The difficulty here is why this piercing now at the end of the 6th year and not at the beginning when he was sold. The Talmud tells us that G-d has given a person '*Chen*' a feeling of endearment for his homeland, his wife and his acquisitions. We see this in life, people feel love and nostalgia for their homeland even though it might not be an ideal place to live in. A husband has special feelings for his wife that others may not understand and an owner for his property. The thief who now has to part from his wife and children, even though these were given to him for a time by his master, feels he cannot do so and now wishes to remain as a slave. To him is given the message: 'Remember you stole and took away property G-d had given another, you broke off an attachment given by G-d', for this his ear is pierced. Even ithe '*Eved Ivri*' who chooses to go free feels the pain of detaching himself from a wife and children. According to those other commentaries that the '*Eved Ivri*', here is also one who has sold himself as a slave to pay his debts and having now become used to being dependent on his master for a living, does not wish to go free to face the challenge of life. The piercing of his ear by the door post which witnessed the salvation of the

Jewish first born in Egypt at the time of Makat Berachot reminds him that a Jew must put his faith in G-d and not in humans. For we must be free to serve G-d and not sell ourselves to other human beings for security, however difficult life seems. When he originally sold himself he needed the money and had no way out, but now it is only because he has more faith in his master than in Hashem, his ear is pierced to remind him that at Sinai he had undertaken servitude to G-d and not other human beings. He is degraded with a slave woman because he has given up some of his ability to serve Hashem by selling himself as a slave.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

The *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Orot Ari* in *Sefat* said over this story. Rabbi Mordecai Eliyah z"l was most careful about saying *Tikun Chazot* but he always did it in private. Once I came to visit the Rabbi after *shaharit* with some others and he took us into his office at home. When he opened the door of the house leading to his office (not the main entrance) we noticed a cushion by the door, we wondered what it was there for. The Rabbi read our glances and thoughts and he explained: "I shall tell you why the cushion is still on the floor. Last night as I prepared to say *Tikun Rachel* which is usually said on the floor by the door (we mourn the destruction of the Temple), I put the cushion down by the door and when I wanted to sit down my back got caught and I could not bend. I stood up and thinking

maybe I had not sat down correctly, I attempted to sit down again, but again my back got caught and I could not sit down on the floor. I sat on a chair and began to think "Why is this happening?" Maybe I have done something wrong, the Rabbis tell us in the *Talmud* if something unfortunate happens to a person he should check his deeds to find out what he did wrong. Then I remembered that according to the "*Ben Ish Hai*" one should not say *Tikun Rachel* not only on *Rosh Hodesh* but even after the "*molad*" which is the time when the new moon begins to wax even though it cannot be seen and *Rosh Hodesh* has not begun. I picked up the calendar and I saw that last night at midnight "*chazot*" the "*molad*" had passed. I felt that from heaven they had stopped me from doing *Tikun Rachel* at the wrong time according to the *Ben Ish Hai*. I did not try to bend again to pick up the cushion."

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

Parashat Shekalim & Hodesh Adar

1. About this time of the year we are obliged to read 4 special Parshiot in the Torah, Shekalim in Parashat Ki Tisa, Parashat Zachor in 'Ki Tetze', Parashat Parah in 'Chuchat' and Hachodesh in 'Bo'.
2. Parashat Shekalim we read on Rosh Hodesh Adar if it falls on

Shabbat or the Shabbat before Rosh Hodesh Adar as it is this year. When there are 2 Adars it will be on before Rosh Hodesh Adar Sheni.

3. We read Parashat Shekalim to remind us of the half Shekalim which were collected in Adar for the communal offerings in the Temple beginning in Nisan which was the New Year for this purpose.
4. We take out 2 Sefarim on this Shabbat. From the first we read the parashat Hashavuah completing it with mushlim followed by a kaddish. We then read from the beginning of Ki Tissa from the second Sefer. For the mufter and the special Haftorah on the subject, we say another Kaddish after the mufter.
5. Mi Shenichnas Adar Marbim be simcha. We increase our feelings of simcha as we enter Adar, which is a happy month for us. So if a person has a lawsuit with a non-Jew it is a good time to have it. An advice on how to increase your happiness is to make others happy.

***one hour after Shabbat terminates.
There will be refreshments and prizes.***

***If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush
Please contact
Monty Sassoon 07787 571313
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724***

We have a regular Youth Minyan organised by Jason Ibrahim and Jordan Moses followed by a kiddush

SHABBAT TIMES

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| Shabbat commences | 4:49 pm |
| Shabbat terminates | 5:58 pm |
| Mincha Erev Shabbat | 4:35 pm |
| Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat | |
| Shacharit | 8:30 am |
| Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit | 4:25 pm |
| Shacharit Weekdays | 6:50 am |
| Shacharit Sundays | 7:00 am |
| Mincha | 1:30 pm |
| Arbit | 7:45 pm |

***Avot Ubanim
Motzei Shabbat***