

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT MISHPATIM

1ST ADAR 5781

12TH & 13TH FEBRUARY 2021

VOLUME 31 ISSUE 16

BNEI
AKIVA
UNITED KINGDOM



בס"ד



*This week's edition of Shabbat Lashem is sponsored in memory of Sir Gavin Lightman (Gershon Ben Hirsch and Gittel).
Father of Daniel Lightman and grandfather of Gavriella and Yishai Epstein-Lightman.*



TO BE STRANGERS

YONA DAVIS
SHEVET AVICHAJ

This week's Parasha has fifty-three mitzvot. However, two passukim particularly stand out. In שמות כב:כ - וגר לא־תוֹנֶה Hashem instructs Bnei Yisrael - "ולא תלחצוּנוּ כִּי־גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: " - "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt". This point is repeated again later on in the parasha (שמות כג:ט) where it says "וגר לא תלחץ ואתם ידעתם את־נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים: " - "You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt." Although these two passukim are not necessarily counted as a mitzvah, they still teach us an important lesson both as a nation and also as individuals.

What is significant about these passukim is setting in which Hashem chooses to first instruct Bnei Yisrael in this matter. Parashat Mishpatim follows on from the giving of the Aseret HaDibrot (10 Commandments) at Har Seenai, the splitting of the Yam Suf and Yetziat Mitzrayim. The feeling of being a stranger in a foreign land is still fresh in the minds of the Bnei Yisrael, and Hashem instructs them to remember this feeling in order to be the best they can be. This lesson is something that we as a people have had to learn over and over again as throughout the generations, Bnei Yisrael continued to be persecuted whilst being strangers in a strange land. Rabbi Lord Sacks zt'l in his

book Essays on Ethics explains that in order to enter Eretz Yisrael and to build a society and a state, the Bnei Yisrael needed to truly understand the feeling of being stranger in a foreign land in order to treat those that were strangers in their land equally and fairly.

As we enter the month Adar, and Purim begins to approach, we once again see Bnei Yisrael learning the lessons of being strangers in a strange land. Rabbi Lord Sacks highlights the role of emotions such empathy, sympathy, knowledge, and rationality which, in certain situations enable those who are different from one another to live together in peace and harmony without conflict. As far as we are aware, at the beginning of Megillat Esther, this peace and harmony exists. However, as Rabbi Sacks points out, moments of change and disruption leads to anxiety and fear, which in turn leads to problems for those who are strangers. Within Megillat Esther, we see this as Haman rises to power and as the events progress, the people turn against Bnei Yisrael.

Overall, I believe that these two passukim are relevant to our lives today, not just as members of Bnei Yisrael but as individuals in 2021. In addition to the fact that we are technically strangers in a strange land here in the UK, the majority of the global population are currently strangers in a metaphorical land. We are all living in a world that is foreign to us all, and it is more important than ever to remember to be kind, as we all know the feeling of being a stranger in this strange world.

**YONA WAS ROSH OF ALEPH WINTER MACHANE
IN LONDON 5781.**

London	In: 16:55 Out: 18:04	Oxford	In: 16:56 Out: 18:08	Leeds	In: 16:52 Out: 18:07
Manchester	In: 16:58 Out: 18:10	Bristol	In: 17:02 Out: 18:14	Liverpool	In: 16:59 Out: 18:13
Cambridge	In: 16:49 Out: 18:02	Birmingham	In: 16:57 Out: 18:10	Jerusalem	In: 16:47 Out: 18:02

SANCTIFYING THE INTERPERSONAL

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



Last week we read about the Divine revelation, about how the entire nation became prophets, about the grandeur and majesty of Ma'amad Har Sinai – and we would have expected at least some of the excitement to continue. Yet in this

week's parsha we come crashing down back to the mundane details of everyday life. Parshat Mishpatim contains a detailed list of 53 mitzvot discussing fields and donkeys, slavery and vows, theft, and lost objects. Why is this the follow up to the ten commandments?

This question has bothered the commentators for centuries. Many note that this week's parsha begins ואלה המשפטים – beginning with the letter “vav”, indicating that there is a connection between the laws that preceded with the laws that now follow.

Rashi, in his opening comments on the parsha asks more specifically - למה נסמכה פרשת דינין לפרשת מזבח?

Why was this Parsha placed here, after the command about the Mizbeach? What is behind the connection between the Mizbeach and the Mishpatim?

Perhaps the answer can be found at the end of the Parsha (which chronologically took place at the beginning) when the ceremony of entering the brit took place – Bnei Yisrael entered the covenant with Hashem and uttered the famous words “na'aseh venishma”. As part of that brit, korbanot were brought and their blood was split up – half went onto the mizbeach and half was sprinkled on the people.

Rashi asks how this split took place. How was Moshe Rabbeinu able to divide the blood exactly in half? The answer that Rashi gives seems a little strange – he says that a malach (an angel) came and split it for

him. Why was it necessary? Why did an angel have to come and divide it precisely down the middle? Was it so critical to measure out the two halves of blood exactly?

The answer, as explained by Rav Yitzchak Hutner in Pachad Yitzchak is that indeed it was. This was the moment that Bnei Yisrael were entering the brit. This was the defining moment of the essence of Torah that they were about to accept and so it had to be done in a way that reflected what that Torah was all about. And Torah includes two components – the Mizbeach where half the blood was sprinkled represented bein adam laMakom (our relationship with Hashem). The people,

on whom the other half was sprinkled represented bein adam lechaveiro (our relationship with our fellow man). Both are equally important. Both had to have exactly half. Take either component away and the Torah is not complete.

Rav Hutner points out further that this message is expressed in the tablets received at Sinai too. The first five commandments were between man and Hashem. The second five were between man and man. Whenever

the word Luchot is written in the Torah it's missing a vav, meaning it could also be read in the singular. There were two tablets but they were like one – both bein adam leMakom and bein adam lechaveiro were necessary and equal.

Now we can understand the depth behind Rashi's question, and it's answer. Parshat Mishpatim, with the details of how we interact with society at large, is juxtaposed with the mitzvah of the Mizbeach, the symbol of how we interact with Hashem. Lest we think that Torah is only about what we do in the Beit Mikdash or Beit Midrash, we are forced to remember that it's also about how we treat our friends and our neighbours.

ואלה המשפטים – far from the petty and the mundane, the details of Mishpatim - the guide for how to create a holy society, are the perfect continuation of the revelation at Sinai.

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BRINGING THE SHECHINA DOWN TO EARTH

GEMMA DENBY | SHEVET TZION



This **שַׁבָּת** is known as “**שַׁבַּת שְׁקָלִים**” (the **שַׁבַּת** that falls either before/ on **ראש חודש אָדָר**) and we will read **פְּרֻשַׁת מִשְׁפָּטִים**.

The Hebrew word “**מִשְׁפָּטִים**” translates as “Laws”. **פְּרֻשַׁת מִשְׁפָּטִים** contains 53 of the 613 commandments of the **תּוֹרָה**, therefore, it is no coincidence that the **פְּרֻשָׁה** begins with the words “**וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים**” - “**These are the rules that you shall set before them**”.

Last **שַׁבָּת** we read **יְתָרוֹ**, experiencing the historic, momentous revelation at **הַר סִינַי** whereby **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** received the **עֲשֻׂרַת הַדְּבָרוֹת** and now, here we are in **מִשְׁפָּטִים**, Hashem enforcing laws upon **יִשְׂרָאֵל**. The transition from **יְתָרוֹ** to **מִשְׁפָּטִים** seems somewhat dramatic. It is

as if **יִשְׂרָאֵל** are being forced to push aside the spiritual loftiness that they might have felt/still be feeling from **הַר סִינַי** and transition to the role of a judge serving in a court of law, thereby attaining an understanding of how as human beings we can perpetuate the fundamental ideas that **יִשְׂרָאֵל** heard on **הַר סִינַי**. A question that one might ask is how can we do this? We must apply the **עֲשֻׂרַת הַדְּבָרוֹת** to our daily lives, this is much easier said than done. The laws that are mentioned in **מִשְׁפָּטִים** are the blueprint that Hashem has provided us with, the game plan that sets out how we are going to ensure that we live life in accordance and compliance with the **עֲשֻׂרַת הַדְּבָרוֹת**.

The theme of the **עֲשֻׂרַת הַדְּבָרוֹת** in **יְתָרוֹ** is merely an introduction to these laws and legislations that we are being introduced to

in **מִשְׁפָּטִים**. I would like to therefore suggest that rather than labelling the turning point between **יְתָרוֹ** and **מִשְׁפָּטִים** as “dramatic”, we should see **מִשְׁפָּטִים** as being the perpetuation of the revelation that we experienced last week. To some extent, this week’s **פְּרֻשָׁה** could be perceived as comforting, these laws that are being imposed upon the nation are the hands of G-d reaching out to us, escorting us on our journey through life.

The name **מִשְׁפָּטִים** is certainly relevant for the first half of the **סִדְרָה** which places a great emphasis on the laws. However, it is somewhat difficult to understand how the

TO SOME EXTENT, THIS WEEK’S PARASHA COULD BE PERCEIVED AS COMFORTING, THESE LAWS THAT ARE BEING IMPOSED UPON THE NATION ARE THE HANDS OF G-D REACHING OUT TO US, ESCORTING US ON OUR JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE.

name of this **סִדְרָה** is fitting for the second half of the **פְּרֻשָׁה**. There is a very profound message to be taken from this. The **מִשְׁפָּטִים** were taught (at the beginning of the **סִדְרָה**) following **מִתַּן תּוֹרָה** (at the end of **יְתָרוֹ**), this was to highlight

the idea that not only do the **עֲשֻׂרַת הַדְּבָרוֹת** emanate from **הַר סִינַי**, these **מִשְׁפָּטִים** also stem from the revelation that took place on **הַר סִינַי**.

According to the Vilna Gaon, following the events at **הַר סִינַי**, the next command from Hashem to **יִשְׂרָאֵל** should’ve been to build the Temple, after all the ambition of the Temple was to “house” the **שְׁכִינָה** that had descended to earth at the revelation on **הַר סִינַי** - this descent revolutionised the one-time event at **הַר סִינַי** into a constant, ongoing **קֶשֶׁר** between man and G-d. Why then was the building of the Temple disrupted by the laws in **מִשְׁפָּטִים**? According to the Vilna Gaon the performance of these **מִשְׁפָּטִים** achieves the same objective as the Temple - bringing the **שְׁכִינָה** to earth.

GEMMA IS CO-ROSH AT EDGWARE SVIVA 5781.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Applications are open for **Summer Machane 5781!** Join us from **2nd-15th August** and enjoy a fantastic Bnei Akiva experience full of fun, friends and Ruach! Sign up today at bauk.org/camps or email camps@bauk.org for more information.

- **Svivot are continuing!** Look out for updates and virtual events from your local sviva or visit www.bauk.org/svivot.

- **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** Coronavirus has hit Bnei Akiva hard, costing us over £150,000. Our Mazkirut, Bogrim and Madrichim have been working tirelessly to put on a range of fantastic programming for our youth, from Machane Aviv last Spring, to a celebration of Israel like no other on Yom Ha'atzmaut, a packed summer of programming for over 400 children, and Winter Machane. Please support our **Yad Achim Campaign**. Visit bauk.org/yad-achim for more information and to donate.

- Keep an eye out for **exciting virtual events** for all ages! **Stay Safe > Stay Inspired > Stay BA**

- **Join over 200 Chaverim at our National Shabbat Ha'Irgun!!** Each Sviva across all our local communities will be running a special Shabbat Ha'Irgun this year. Open to all children in **Years 1-10**, you can join your Madrichim for a weekend full of **activities, Tochniot, Ruach and more** on the **19th-21st February!** Every child will receive a **special Shabbat**

Ha'Irgun activity pack delivered straight to your door with games, presents, challenges and messages from the Bnei Akiva community. Whilst you'll sign up with your local Sviva and have activities with your favourite Madrichim, you'll also get to join in with the whole country for some awesome National events throughout the weekend. **Sign up by Sunday just £5 a person at bauk.org/shabbat-hairgun.**

- We're delighted to announce **Limmud Mercazi 5781!!** Join us for an evening where we unite through learning in memory of the victims of the Mercaz haRav 5768 terror attack, and all other terror attacks on the Jewish people, as we hear from leading speakers in the Jewish community. Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/limmud-mercazi>.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiaktivauk)** to stay informed of our online content!

- To receive weekly copies of **Shabbat Lashem**, sign up for our mailing list at bauk.org/contact.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

Limmud Mercazi

Join us for an evening where we unite through learning in memory of the victims of the Mercaz haRav 5768 terror attack, and all other terror attacks on the Jewish people.

FEATURING LEADING SPEAKERS FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

14/02/2021 | 8:30-10:15 PM

REGISTER AT <https://tinyurl.com/limmud-mercazi>

BNEI AKIVA

National Shabbat Ha'Irgun
Years 1-10

JOIN YOUR SVIVA FOR THE FIRST EVER NATIONAL SHABBAT HA'IRGUN

19th-21st FEBRUARY

Enjoy an action packed weekend with your friends and Svivot around the country, and get a special Ha'Irgun Pack delivered straight to your door!
£5 per child

SIGN UP TODAY
www.bauk.org/shabbat-hairgun

ACTIVITY PACK - MUSIC - RUACH - GAMES - TOCHNIOT - AND MORE!

National Shabbat Ha'Irgun Schedule

FRIDAY
19TH FEBRUARY

LOCAL SVIVA ACTIVITIES 8:30 PM
FAMILY KABBILAH SHABBAT 8:00 PM
SHABBAT COMES IN LEEDS 9:06 PM
SHABBAT COMES IN LONDON 9:07 PM
SHABBAT COMES IN MANCHESTER 9:12 PM

MOTZEI SHABBAT
20TH FEBRUARY

SHABBAT GOES OUT LEEDS 8:00 PM
SHABBAT GOES OUT LONDON 8:12 PM
SHABBAT GOES OUT MANCHESTER 8:23 PM
FAMILY MUSICAL HAVDARAH & HIFKAD 8:45 PM
PIRITY 9:15 PM
CONCERT WITH SPECIAL GUEST BERTIE GREEN 7:30 PM
MYSTERY TOCHNIT (YEARS 6-10) 8:00 PM

SUNDAY
21ST FEBRUARY

SURPRISE TOCHNIT (YEARS 1-5) 10:30 AM
ZINER ZUMBA 9:30 PM
FOLLOWED BY CLOSING CEREMONY

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