

# Parsha Press

## PARSHAT MISHPATIM

### Give and Return Batya Matla Hertzberg



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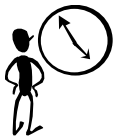
*Parshat Mishpatim* includes numerous commandments regarding the lending of money. One, (22:25) states, “if you will take your fellow’s garment as security (*chavol tachbol*), until the sun sets you shall have returned it to him.” Rashi notes the *kefel lashon* there and proceeds to explain it – it is incumbent upon the lender to take the collateral and return it at night, take it again and return it again etc, even if it must be done several times, to ensure that the borrower has a proper garment. Rashi additionally provides a parallel situation. Our *neshamot* go up to Hashem each night and give an account of themselves. It is then realized that we are “in debt” to Hashem, but nevertheless He returns our *neshamot* to us in the morning. Hashem does this every day, over and over again. This provides the opportunity for us to learn we must take and return the collateral from a debtor as Hashem takes and returns our *neshamot* to us.

There are two interesting facets to this *dvar Rashi*. First, the aspect of emulating Hashem, learned out from the famous phrase (Devarim 13:5) “*acahrei Hashem Elokeichem teileichu...u’vo tidbakun*” Hashem, your G-d, shall you follow...and to Him shall you cleave. In a *Gemara* in *Sota* (14a), Rabbi Chama bar R’ Chanina asks a troubling question. How is it possible to walk after G-d? Is He not a consuming fire? Rather, the commandment speaks of emulating the ways of Hashem. Just as He clothes the naked (Adam and Chava), so too we should clothe the naked. Just as He visited the sick (Avraham), we must also visit the sick. Just as He comforted the mourning (Yitzchak), we must also comfort the mourning. Just as He buries the dead (Moshe), so too we must bury the dead. However, our parsha (continued)

### Ve'elieh: The Descent that Elevates Dr. Tzipora Meier

*Parashat Mishpatim* opens with the words *Ve'eilah*. That opening clearly connects this *parasha* with the last one, *Yitro*. Rashi, in fact states that the *vav* is saying in effect, “Continuing with what I was saying earlier.”

The *Sfas Emeth* questions this explanation. After all, what do *mishpatim*, which seem so mundane, which deal with hitting people and kidnapping and lending money and returning lost animals, have to do with the lofty revelation that took place at *har Sinai*? The *Sfas Emeth* explains that the Torah makes this connection



Shabbat Starts:  
5:00

### News From Israel

The High Court of Justice has approved IDF plans to pave a bypass road reconnecting Jerusalem with Rachel's Tomb located on the outskirts of Bethlehem. Citing the principle of religious freedom, the High Court rejected petitions submitted by the Arab municipalities of Bethlehem and Beit Jala and 18 local Arabs. The petitioners claimed that the road would restrict their freedom of movement and help Israel annex Rachel's Tomb. The Court held that the route, which has already been changed several times in response to previous petitions, does not significantly harm the petitioners' rights. The justices also ruled the Jews are entitled to freedom of worship, and the IDF is responsible for defending that freedom.

(arutzsheva.com)



### Ve'elieh: The Descent that Elevates (cont.)

to highlight the fact that these statutes which are essentially rational are just as much a part of the revelation at Sinai as the *aseret ha'dibrot*. They are binding on us, not because they seem to make sense to us, but because they are part of the *bris* with *haShem*.

My husband, however, presented me with a different approach, developed by Rav Soloveitchik in *The Halakhic Man* which might answer this question. The Rav asks, what does Godliness have to do with the mundane world? He explains that *halakha*, which includes both the rational *mishpatim* and the *chukim*, brings G-d into our ordinary and commonplace lives. By regulating the lives of people, the way we interact with others, the way we do commerce, the way we speak, *halakha* raises us to a higher level, the level of *kedusha*. When we live by the laws of the Torah, we become *kadosh* through our surrender to *haShem* in the day to day matters of our lives. We become *avdei haShem* and that already is a different way of living our lives.

A number of years ago, a newly converted woman spent *Shabbos* at our home. I was intrigued by the fact that she had converted and asked her why she had done so. She said that she had been involved in many religions and they were all about "holiness" detached from the human experience. Some religions demanded asceticism, others spoke only about salvation. However, Torah allows us to achieve *kedusha* as we live our lives in this world. Torah life is the only one that brings religion down to the world thereby elevating man to another level.

### When You Lend Money... Atara Feinberg and Megan Leifer

"אם כסף תלווה את עמי את העני עמך לא תהיה לו כנשה לא תשימון עליו נשך."

"When you lend among My people to a poor person who is with you, you shall not be to him as a usurer, you shall not place upon him interest." (22:24)

In Parshat Re'eh, the Torah stresses our obligation to lend money to those in need. This is why Rashi comments that the word "אם" in our pasuk means *when* rather than *if*. But if this were so, why would the Torah use a word that almost always means *if*?

The phrase *if you lend money* suggests that a person, on his own, takes the initiative to offer a poor person a loan. This person is surely doing it for the sake of a mitzvah and wouldn't think to make the poor person pay interest.

Therefore, by saying *if* when the Torah means *when*, the Torah is telling us to always take this approach when lending money. Even if we do the mitzvah because it is required of us, like giving money to an enemy, we should act as if our motives are pure. This is why we should never think of taking interest from the borrower. The desire to perform this mitzvah should be instilled in us so that we would do it as any other decision we would make on our own.

Good Shabbos!

## Give and Return (cont.)

brings another example of how this tenet can be put into practical use. Just as Hashem takes and returns our *neshamot*, we must also take and return a fellow Jew's collateral if it is necessary to him.

Another interesting aspect of Rashi's comment here is the taking and returning of our *neshamot*, described in our daily prayer, *Elokai, Neshama...* In his *sefer, R*" Shimon Schwab explains the incredible kindness Hashem has done for us to create our *neshamot*, place them within us, and constantly return them to us. The *tefila* reads "...*ata v'rata*," you have created it. R' Schwab explains that this creation is one of *yeish mei'ayin*, something from nothing. The following phrases explain how each *neshama* is personal and unique to the person to whom it belongs, and how Hashem keeps our *neshamot* within us, providing us with the capacity to live. One day Hashem will take our *neshamot* from us and our bodies will live no longer. However, Hashem will return them in the future, just as He returns them each morning. Our sleep and awakening is comparable to *techiyat hameitim*, like it says in *Gemara Brachot* (57b) that sleeping is 1/60 of death. So, we use our daily awakening as a foundation for our *emunah* in a final *techiya* (R' Schwab).

Clearly, the *kefel lashon* in the law of returning a garment has much significance both in a practical and a theoretical sense, in regard to *Halacha* and *Emunah*. We must take a lesson from Hashem to provide others with their necessities, as we must understand that Hashem will one day finally restore us just as he awakens us every morning. Shabbat Shalom.

### "Quote of the Week"

"A candle loses none of its light by lighting another candle"

-Unknown

### SHMIRAT HALASHON

"A person must carefully ponder all his ways, especially the way in which he speaks."

**Chofetz Chaim:  
A Daily Companion**

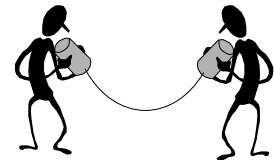
## Story of a Gadol Mindi Werblowsky

There was a young man who managed to survive the horrors of the Holocaust and arrived safely on the shores of Eretz Yisrael. However, he was the sole survivor of his family. He began to study in a yeshiva in Tel-Aviv and shortly after became engaged. When it came to the Shabbos of his *aufruf*, he was embarrassed to celebrate it at his yeshiva, thinking that it would appear odd that he had no family members in attendance. Therefore, he opted to spend the Shabbos in the Pension Reich hotel in Yerushalayim.

That weekend the Ponevizher Rebbe and Rabbi Reuven Katz (of Petach Tikva) were also staying in that hotel. When they noticed the young man alone on Shabbos they became distressed and inquired about his health. The young man reddened and then explained that he would shortly be wed and was on vacation alone to escape premarital jitters. The ever-perceptive Ponevizher Rav asked the man if this Shabbos was his *aufruf*. The young man hesitated and after turning an even deeper shade of red admitted that it was.

The next morning when the chassan opened his door he found the two rebbeim waiting outside to escort him to davening. The chassan objected saying that he was walking to the distant outskirts of Bayit-Vegan but the rebbeim would not be swayed. They linked arms with the chassan and escorted him all the way to davening. To the passersby on the street it appeared as though the man was being escorted by the *mala-chei hashares*. Good Shabbos!!!

-Adapted from *Builders* by Rabbi Hanoch Teller



## FAST FACTS on Hashavas Aveida By: Chaya Green

- ❖ Returning a lost object to a Jew is a *mitzvat ase* and if you keep the object and do not return it, not only are you transgressing this mitzvah but you are also transgressing two mizvot *lo taasay*- “You may not ignore,” and “Do not steal.”
- ❖ Even if the owner of the item is a *rasha*, it’s still a mitzvah to return his object to him
- ❖ If you know who lost the item, you are obligated to take care of it until it is returned to its owner
- ❖ If you are not aware of who lost the item, you must announce and say, whoever lost something should come and give signs to claim it
- ❖ This mitzvah even applies on Shabbos and even if the object is a “*davar sheassor bitiltul*”-an object that is not allowed to be moved on Shabbos

Based on an article from Torah Lada’at – Rabbi Matis Blum

### Mazel Tov



To Yael Haar and Sima Sosnowik on the engagement of Yael’s Brother Josh to Sima’s sister Dora Chana (SKA ‘02)

To Shira Markovits on the birth of her Niece

**February 5**  
Rivka Fogel

**February 7**  
Chanita Engelberg  
Sharon Tsadik

**February 8**  
Michelle Zomber  
Mindy Koren

### Parsha Quiz



פרשת משפטים  
עליות חמישי וששי  
פרק כ”ג—ו:יט’

פשוט

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Principal

**Dr. Tzipora Meier**  
Associate Principal

**Rabbi Yosef Zakutinsky**

Dir. of Admissions and Student Programs

291 Meadowview Avenue  
Hewlett Bay Park, New York 11557  
(516) 374-7195  
Fax (516) 374-2532  
Email info@skahalb.org

**Mrs. Sandi Pomerantz**  
Assistant Administrator

**Rabbi Jeffrey Rothman**  
Assistant Administrator

**Mrs. Elisheva Kaminetsky**  
Dir. of Religious Guidance