

**פ' משפטים • PARASHAT MISHPATIM**

24th of Shevat 5771 • January 29, 2011 • Shabbat Begins: 4:38pm • Shabbat Ends: 5:44pm

**PARNESS HAYOM  
 SHEVAT**

These Days of Learning have been dedicated to the memory of the following by members of their family.

**2 Shevat** - Drazin Family in memory of mother, Gertrude Drazin (Gittel bat Harav Moshe Halevi z'l)

**9 Shevat** - Russell & Steven Samuels in memory of grandfather, Aron Eichenbaum (Shmuel Aharon ben Yisrael Lev z'l)

**11 Shevat** - Dr. Hyman Schipper in memory of David Jacob Rubenstein (Dovid Yaacov ben Yechekiel z'l)

**14 Shevat** - Mr. & Mrs. Aron Lieberman in memory of mother-in-law and mother Esther bat Shiah Zeileg, z'l

**17 Shevat** - Bobby Shaul in memory of father, Norman Shaul (Natan Zev ben Nachman Halevi z'l)

**28 Shevat** - Joannie Lieberman in memory of father, Zalman Singer (Zalman ben Yacov David z'l)

For more information on the KTM Parness Hayom Project, please call our office at 514 486 5718.

**TRIBUTE CARDS**

With your donation of \$18.00 or more KTM will send a card to mark the occasion of a birth, anniversary, engagement, marriage, speedy recovery, holiday greetings, birthday, or in memory of.



**Derech Eretz Before Torah**

Commenting to the beginning of Parashat Mishpatim, Rashi notes that this parasha begins with the words ואלה המשפטים ("And these are the statutes"), with the prefix "ו" ("and"). Rashi, citing *Chazal*, explains:

"ואלה" מוסיף על הראשונים. מה הראשונים מסיני, אף אלו מסיני.

"And these" - it adds onto the previous subject. Just as these (the Ten Commandments) were given at Sinai, similarly, these [the laws presented in Parashat Mishpatim] were given at Sinai."

It appears that *Chazal* here seek to teach us that our emotional attachment to the day-to-day halachic details presented here in this parasha, which might seem mundane, must have the same power as the experience of the *Aseret Ha'dibberot*, the divine revelation at Sinai. This is the meaning of Rav Yehuda's comment in the Talmud (Bava Kama 30a), "One who wishes to be pious should fulfill the laws in *Nezikin* [the order of the Talmud dealing with civil law]." We would have expected for "piety" to be expressed through more "heavenly" matters, our relationship with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*. But Rav Yehuda comes along and emphasizes that it is specifically the areas dealing with *nezikin*, civil law, which establish peaceful relations among people, that serve as the true barometer of a person's piety.

The *Sefat Emet* notes that as opposed to the Ten Commandments, which were given at Sinai directly from Hashem, when it comes to the civil laws in Parashat Mishpatim, the Torah emphasizes "אשר תשים לפניהם" ("that you shall place before them") - the obligation to establish a judicial system to arrange the fabric of social life. The scholars and judges - not Hashem - are the ones who determine the laws and proper modes of social conduct according to the needs and capabilities of society. This clear division between the words of Hashem on the one hand, and human decision-making on the other, gives rise to the concern that our religious commitment will not be the same to both elements. The Torah must therefore come along and declare that both are given to us from Hashem.

*Chazal* famously teach us, דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה - proper manners precede Torah. This is commonly understood as a chronological statement, meaning, that one must first learn *derech erez*, how to act properly in society, and only then proceed to study Torah. But in light of the *Sefat Emet's* comments cited above, we might say that beyond that, there exists a deep, fundamental connection between *derech erez* and Torah, which reflects an entirely different dimension of Torah learning. The more a person involves himself in perfecting society through *derech erez*, to that same extent he will perfect himself and gain greater understanding in Torah.

The conclusion, then, is that we must build within ourselves an equal, deep-seated commitment to both these areas of *avodat Hashem* - the area of interpersonal relations, and the area of one's connection to Hashem. Only an equal emotional connection to both areas will result in the complete, genuine servant of the Almighty.

**Shabbat Shalom, Rav Nadav Levin, KTM**

**AL HAPEREREK**

**A weekly learning Nach program.**

How many times have you wanted to learn tanach and stopped at yehoshua perek 5?

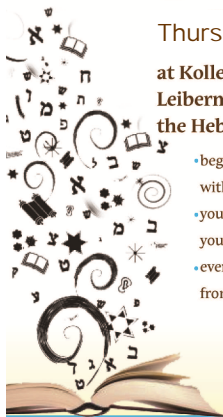
If you love tanach, and have always dreamt of learning the entire tanach,

**come join us!**

Thursdays, 8:30-9pm

at Kollel Torah MiTzion  
 Lieberman Beit Midrash of  
 the Hebrew Academy

- beginning of the week, you will receive an email with a personal study sheet.
- you can learn it any time by yourself, your family or with a chavruta.
- every Thursday there will be a review shiur from 8:30pm - 9pm of the 2 perakim of the week.





# The Living Beit Midrash

A Vibrant Community Learns Together

MONDAYS—THURSDAYS, 8-10PM (MAARIV 9PM)

For more information on other learning opportunities, please contact us.

Mon., 8-9pm • Sefer Derech Hashem • Rav Raphael Afilalo

Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am • Women's Beit Midrash

Tuesdays, 8-9pm • Parashat Hashavua • Rav Nadav Levin

Tues., 9:15-10pm • Masechet Brachot • Rav Nadav Levin

Thursdays, 8:30-9pm • Nach Program • Rav Nadav Levin  
(see front for more details)



**\*\*\*NEW CLASS\*\*\* SEFER DERECH HASHEM**  
with Rabbi Raphael Afilalo—Mondays, 8-9pm

Derekh Hashem -The Way of G-d, was written in the early 18th century by **Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto** (Ram'hal). The Way of G-d is a highly systemized analysis of Jewish concepts and thought.

Some of the concepts covered are: The existence of G-d, The purpose of creation, Good and evil, Free will, Levels of souls, This world and the afterlife, Serving G-d, The goal of observance, Power of the Torah, Prayer, The Jewish people among the nations, and more.

In this profound and illuminating work, the goal of the Ram'hal is not to explain basic Jewish concepts, but to give a clear and intelligent overview of their meaning and fundamentals.

When these ideas are understood and put into their proper context, they now become applicable to our daily life. Believing is not enough, knowledge and understanding must also be present; as he states in his introduction:

*"Every Jew must believe and know that there is a first existence, primal and eternal, which brought all things into existence and continues to sustain them. This is G-d."*

**Rabbi Afilalo is the Director of pastoral services at the Jewish General Hospital and is the spiritual leader of the Ram'hal synagogue. A new Sephardic synagogue situated in the Beth Israel Beth Aaron synagogue.**



For CEGEP & University Students  
Tish the Season to be Jolly....

Come enjoy a night of Torah, singing and drinks with old and new friends!

Friday, January 28, 2011 @ 9 pm  
Home of Rav Nadav and Dorit Levin  
7026 Guelph Ave. in Cote St. Luc.

For more information, email Vicky and Chana  
at mibereshitmtl@gmail.com



## The Kollel Bachurim's Corner by Moshe Mendelson

In last week's parasha, we heard about Hashem's dramatic revelation to *Am Yisrael* at *Ma'amad Har Sinai*. This was a spiritual-metaphysical experience that was so powerful that each Jew experienced it independently. This week's parasha, which is among the longest in the entire Chumash, contains a long, exhausting list of over fifty different *mitzvot*. In this list we find details about prohibitions related to murder, kidnapping, curses directed against authority figures, damages caused to person or property, prohibitions of idolatry, the obligation to assist the poor and feeble, returning lost items to their owners, and even avoiding causing harm to animals.

The juxtaposition between these two *parashiyot* is perplexing. What could be the reason for God to so quickly "lower" *Am Yisrael* to such a "low" level of trivialities, of practical, day-to-day details, after the remarkable spiritual experience of *Ma'amad Har Sinai*?

While our first impression is that these two *parashiyot* are the diametric opposites of one another, in truth, they are not all that different from each other. They simply represent two sides of the same proverbial coin. The spiritual elevation achieved at *Ma'amad Har Sinai*, significant as it was, does not solve any problem in the practical world. This also explains why one cannot achieve an exalted spiritual level by simply isolating himself and meditating on a mountaintop, or through intensive study in a remote, exotic monastery. True spiritual elevation is achieved through day-to-day engagement in the routine of life, with all that this entails.

The Jewish nation is not commanded to detach itself from the world or to withdraw from life. Au contraire! We are commanded to refine and elevate our lives to a higher spiritual plane - to sanctify the mundane. On Friday night, for example, we hold in our hands a cup of wine, and use it not for intoxication, but rather for "*kiddush*" - to sanctify and exalt the Shabbat, and thereby increase our enjoyment of this special day. And, of course, we do not forego on the physical enjoyment of wine, and we drink and delight in its sweet taste.

Judaism teaches us that we can find spirituality in the kitchen, in the office, in the games we play with our children - essentially, everywhere. But if this is really true, then why did we need *Ma'amad Har Sinai* in the first place?

The answer is simple: because a powerful spiritual experience serves as the "fuel" that gets our "engines" going. We have all experienced at some point in our lives a moment of deep insight - whether it was an intellectual understanding of something, or an ascent to the peak of a mountain. But this feeling lasts for only a brief period of time.

The Rambam explains this phenomenon by way of a metaphor. Imagine that you've gotten lost in the middle of the night. It is pouring rain, and you're practically drowning in mud, up to your knees. The momentary flashes of lightning provide some light to help you find your way. The flashes of light last for a very brief moment, but that flash suffices to guide you in the proper direction.

Similarly, the Rambam explains, a single flash of inspiration can suffice to put a person in the right direction for many years.

The Torah teaches us that in order to strengthen the impact of a "flash of inspiration," we must turn it into something concrete in our lives. The spiritual insight must find practical expression in the day-to-day realities that we experience.

This is the reason why after the prohibition of "You shall not steal" presented in the previous *parasha*, we find a detailed, practical outline of the punitive measures to be taken against thieves. The fact that yesterday we were uplifted does not guarantee us that we will be able to maintain this spiritual elevation tomorrow. It is only by fulfilling the laws in daily life that we can hope to continue moving forward and raise ourselves to even greater heights.



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Kollel Torah Mitzion has a faculty of graduates from Hesder Yeshivot in Israel who come here to serve as teachers and role models in our community. The core of the Kollel is the Beit Midrash which features a full schedule of classes as well as a drop-in center with a warm atmosphere where all, regardless of background, feel comfortable.