Points to Ponder

Mishpatim 5782

**וְאֵ֨לֶּה֙ הַמִּשְׁפָּטִ֔ים  These are the Mishpatim (21:1) - Rashi** explains that the word “V’Ela” comes to add to the original 10. It teaches us that just like the originals were from Sinai so too, these are from Sinai. What is the connection? **Rav Nissan Alpert ztl.** explained that the message is clear. Serving Hashem is not just about bringing Korbanos and davening (though these are important), it is about serving Him in business and in life, the chance to connect to Sinai in every action, aspect and moment of our lives. **Rav Cham Yaakov Goldvicht ztl.** would add that that there is a specific stress on the Mishpatim because within the Mishpatim, like the reasonless Chukim, there is a commitment that turns man into a “Cheftza Shel Avodas Hashem.” That even when we are doing so because it makes sense but we do it because it is the word of Hashem, even that is fulfillment. **Rav Yerucham Levovitz** adds that this is why we needed Maamad Har Sinai even if the Jews had already received “Dinim” in Marah. It reminds us that Mitzvos are not just what we DO, they set a tone for the people we are and the people we want to continue to be.

**כִּ֤י תִקְנֶה֙ עֶ֣בֶד עִבְרִ֔י If you purchase a HEBREW slave (21:2)** - Why the stress on Hebrew and not Yisraeli? **Ibn Ezra** suggests that the word Ivri  implies that the person came to a commitment as our grandfather Abraham did when he went to learn from Beni Eiver. **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl.** added that the word Ivri  means that we can come from different places but our connection is in the fact that we subscribe to the same Torah foundations and laws and nothing can take that connection away.

**וְרַפֹּ֥א יְרַפֵּֽא You should certainly heal him (21:19) -** The Yirushalmi (Taanis 3:6) explains that we have an obligation to honor doctors based on this possuk. The problem is that in other sources, Chazal notes that the best of the doctors go to Gehinnom. How do we show honor to those going to Gehinom? **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl**. explained that it is similar to how people tend to look at a person who is dependent on assistants. We tend to pity the person on his dependence. However, when we learn that the person is a millionaire, our pity melts in favor of admiration. We can take one we would consider “weird” and label him “eccentric” and take the “thrifty” person and label him “cheap”— all depending on context. The same is true here: If the doctor spends all his days working on improving lives, he is deserving of honor. If not, the doctor is not deserving of praises since he is only interested in paychecks.

**אִם־כֶּ֣סֶף | תַּלְוֶ֣ה אֶת־עַמִּ֗י   If you have money, lend it to the poor among you (22:24) Rashi** notes that one should consider himself among the poor when approaching the question of how to and if to, lend money to the poor. Why? There is a general theme that Hashem wants us to maintain even in the business aspects of our lives. He wants us to consider the Godliness of loans, of assistance and donation in everything that we do. When we put on Tefillin, we remind ourselves that Hashem is in front of us as we wear the Tefillin, **Rav Yerucham Levovitz ztl.** adds that the same needs to be there when we contemplate a loan to a fellow Jew or any other Chessed undertaking. **Rav Volch** adds that too often today we only consider the job of mitzva performance and not enough of the purpose of these opportunities — that we foster better relations Bein Adam L”Chaveiro — in the process.

**וַיִּקַּ֤ח משֶׁה֙ חֲצִ֣י הַדָּ֔ם Moshe took half the blood (24:6) - Rashi** explains that a Malach came and split the blood exactly into half. **Rav Hunter ztl.** explained that the Luchos too, are exactly equal. The idea of Kerisus Bris, of establishing a covenant, demonstrates that we are 50-50 equal partners in the process. It shows that there is equal loyalty to the deal on both sides. Here, the Bris was with Hashem  and the equality is in our devotion to mitzvos between us and Hashem as being equal to the mitzvos we commit to, between man and man. One without the other is not Torah. The demand on the exact Half demonstrates that when we commit, we commit to everything equally.

**נַֽעֲשֶׂ֥ה וְנִשְׁמָֽע Naaseh V’Nishma (24:7)** – The Novi speaks of the Kolos (the voices) we look forward to hearing in the future – of Choson and of Kallah. **Rav Schachter Shlita** asked where there was supposed to be a voice from the Kallah. After all, at weddings we do not have the voice of the Kallah. She says NOTHING? Rav Schachter responded with one of the Derashos of the **Baal Hatanya** who explained that the voices here refer to those from Maamad Har Sinai where Bnei Yisrael were like a Kallah. Just like at that time the Bnei Yisrael responded Naaseh V’Nishma, so too, in the future, at the time of Moshiach, the Jewish nation will also respond with some form of Torah acceptance. That is the voice of Kallah of which we speak.

**וְתַ֣חַת רַגְלָ֗יו כְּמַֽעֲשֵׂה֙ לִבְנַ֣ת הַסַּפִּ֔יר And under His legs were like the Sapphire (24:10)** - Why were the bricks like sapphire and not mud and stone? **Rav Belsky ztl.** explained that when we see things as mere dirt and stone, that which is to be discarded, Hashem often looks at these things as great things. Often in life, that which man is ready to discard as refuse and waste is actually much diamond in the rough.

**Haftara**

**אָֽנֹכִ֗י כָּרַ֚תִּי בְרִית֙ אֶת־אֲב֣וֹתֵיכֶ֔ם בְּי֨וֹם הֽוֹצִאִ֚י אוֹתָם֙ מֵאֶ֣רֶץ מִצְרַ֔יִם מִבֵּ֥ית עֲבָדִ֖ים**  **I made a covenant with your fathers on the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt (Yirmiyahu 34:13)** - Why is it so important to teach the lesson of setting the slaves free at the moment of Maamad Har Sinai? **Rav Chaim Shmuellevitz ztl.**suggests that it is hard to let something or someone go away for nothing. However, at the moment that someone realizes what freedom means on a personal level, s/he is more inclined to share that experience with others in a similar predicament. Hence, it was at that moment of freedom that Hashem taught the lesson of sending the slaves free to highlight the point of appreciating and sharing the freedom.