

# Toronto Torah

## Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Mishpatim/Shekalim

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### The Story Behind the Laws

Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

While Parshat Mishpatim is mostly a legal code, a careful reader will find surprising allusions to the life of Moshe Rabbeinu. For example, the parshah states, "One who strikes a man, and he dies, shall surely be put to death. But one who did not lie in ambush, and G-d caused it to come to his hand, I shall provide a place to which he shall flee." (Shemot 21:12-13) Moshe starts his career by killing an Egyptian who was striking a Jew, causing Pharaoh to sentence him to death as a murderer. However, as Moshe is most probably justified in killing the Egyptian, he manages to find sanctuary in Midian. The Zohar (Mishpatim) as understood by the Ari z"l (Shaar HaKavanot, Shaar HaPesukim, Mishpatim) takes this allusion farther, arguing that Moshe was commanded to set up cities of refuge to protect **himself** from the blood avenger of the Egyptian he had killed! Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom (<http://bit.ly/2lmAbgs>) has noted that the connections continue, as the fate of an accidental killer is tied to the high priest (he is free to leave when the Kohen dies), and Moshe too is dependent on his protector and father-in-law, Yitro, the high priest of Midian. Several verses later, we find the law which prohibits a master from killing his slave, and the circumstances under which this is considered a capital crime. This law also connects to the above story, where an Egyptian strikes a Jewish slave, presumably with lethal force.

Immediately following that law, the Torah records "*ki yinatzu anashim* – if men shall fight" regarding a fatal

conflict. (Shemot 21:22) The word-root *n-tz-h* only appears three times in Chumash – the first of which describes the fight that Moshe breaks up the day after he killed the Egyptian. He sees two men "*nitzim*". This connection is made by Shemot Rabbah (Shemot 1, as understood by Yalkut Reuveni Mishpatim), which uses this allusion to prove that the men Moshe interrupts were seeking to kill each other.

However, perhaps it is not **Moshe's life** that is acting as the prologue to Mishpatim, but **all the stories of Parshat Shemot**. Once we see that starting with the second law in Mishpatim the Torah tells the story of Moshe from Shemot Chapters 2-3, the opening law of Mishpatim must be telling the story of Shemot Chapter 1 – the story of the enslavement of the Jewish people, whereby Mishpatim offers a veiled political-theological commentary on the entire Exodus narrative. The parshah opens with the laws of the Jewish slave. Specifically, it outlines that a Jewish slave should go free after six years, but if he "loves his master, wife, and children [given to him by his master]", he can remain a slave. However, as our Sages (cited by Rashi) understand it, the choice to remain a slave is a rejection of the ultimate goal of the Exodus – transforming the Jews from the slaves of Pharaoh to the slaves of G-d. For this reason, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai suggests, the slave who remains must pierce his ear – "The ear that heard at Har Sinai 'for the Jews are my slaves' has gone and acquired a master for himself!" This even has legal implications. According to halachah, workers generally retain the right to

renege on their commitments, lest they become temporary slaves, which would violate "*avadai heim, v'lo avadim la'avadim* – they are My slaves, not the slaves of slaves." (Bava Metzia 10a)

Perhaps the real question that Mishpatim deals with is whether the Jews will successfully become the servants of G-d by accepting His laws, or remain slaves to Egypt. In Parshat Beshalach, both before and after the splitting of the Yam Suf, the Jews express their desire to return to Egypt. In Yitro, however, G-d reveals Himself with the climactic statement, "I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt" – and there is no going back. The struggle for the Jews is whether they will accept the implications of that declaration and become G-d's people, or be unable to plunge into that relationship, always believing going back to Egypt is an option. In Parshat Kedoshim, G-d warns them not to engage in the acts of the Egyptians or the Canaanites – but rather be holy "because I am Holy". Time and time again, the Jews face the same challenge – will they allow themselves to become truly free and let go of their Egyptian masters, culture, and ideology? Will they embrace G-d? Or will they be scared into saying "I love my master," and though no longer under Pharaoh's whip, always remain his slaves?

[jjziring@torontotorah.com](mailto:jjziring@torontotorah.com)

### OUR BEIT MIDRASH

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**We are grateful to  
Continental Press 905-660-0311**

***Chayei Shanah (The Life of a Year)*  
Rabbi Adin Even Yisrael (Steinsaltz)  
Yediot Acharonot Chemed Books**

*This is a review of the Hebrew edition. An English edition exists as well, "Change & Renewal: The Essence of the Jewish Holidays & Days of Remembrance".*

**About the Author**

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz was born in Jerusalem in 1937, to a family which did not observe traditional Judaism. In his youth, he came to observance, studied in Chabad yeshivot, and became close with the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Rabbi Steinsaltz established Mekor Chaim - an elementary school in Jerusalem and a yeshiva high school in Kfar Etzion - as well as a yeshiva for advanced studies in Tekoa. He also heads the Israel Institute for Talmudic Publications, and the Steinsaltz Center in Jerusalem. Rabbi Steinsaltz was awarded the Israel Prize for Jewish Studies in 1988, and he was honoured

with the first President's Prize in 2012.

**About the Book**

*Chayei Shanah* is a collection of holiday and calendar-themed speeches drawn from the writings and addresses of Rabbi Steinsaltz. The book includes all of the traditional festivals alongside special occasions like the 19<sup>th</sup> of Kislev (the annual beginning of the Chassidic calendar) and the 18<sup>th</sup> of Elul (the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the first Lubavitcher Rebbe).

**The Goal of the Book**

The title of the book is meant to highlight two fundamental, but almost contradictory human drives, which are both present in the Hebrew word *shanah* [year]. The word *shanah* refers to something which repeats itself in a fixed cycle, but *shanah* also refers to change, and the birth of a new existence.

The main goal of the book is to combine these two drives and develop a spiritual meaning for the concept of the holiday, while leaving room for

change. So Rabbi Steinsaltz explains in his introduction to the book, "The festivals and occasions are also cyclical, and they are also vulnerable to being swallowed up by routine. Just as weekdays merge into a flow without special significance, so can happen to festivals. Rosh HaShanah is like every Rosh HaShanah; Pesach is like every Pesach; and so all of the other days. But halting activities, the marking of the event, gives us an opportunity for a different perspective, an altered view of the flow of life, and sometimes on the destinations and paths with which we live. Therefore, these are opportunities - sometimes for self-examination, sometimes for a changed perspective, sometimes for an awakening to joy, sometimes for a sense of pain, but in the end - an added element of life."

Rabbi Steinsaltz is currently recovering from a stroke; his Hebrew name is Adin ben Rivkah Leah.

[yperez@torontotorah.com](mailto:yperez@torontotorah.com)

# Israel's Chief Rabbis: *Rabbi Moshe Hedaya*

# Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

***Rabbi Moshe Hedaya*  
*Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Eilat (1956 - present)***

Born in Aleppo, Rabbi Moshe Hedaya came to then-Palestine with his family when he was just three months old, in the 1930's. He was raised among rabbis; his well-known uncle, Rabbi Ovadia Hedaya, was a leading halachic authority and author of the monumental *Yaskil Avdi* collection of responsa. A cousin, Rabbi Shalom Mordechai Hedaya, was a renowned kabbalist and head of the kabbalistic Beit-El yeshiva in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Hedaya trained under Rabbi Shimon Ehrenreich as a *mohel*, and served in this capacity for more than fifty years, beginning in 1955. His rabbinic career began in Dimona, and then Yerucham, but in 1956 Israel's Chief Rabbis, Rabbi Yitzchak HaLevi Herzog and Rabbi Yitzchak Nisim, sent Rabbi Hedaya to Eilat to strengthen religious observance there.

Rabbanit Esther Hedaya, wife of Rabbi Hedaya, has also been very active in community leadership in Eilat. She was the second woman to head the Mafdal list of candidates for a regional council; the first was Rabbanit Menuchah Charlap. Her platform included improving religious observance by municipal institutions and establishing new daycare options for the children of working women.

Life in Eilat can involve unique halachic considerations, and Rabbi Hedaya has addressed them. In one example, Rabbi Hedaya authored an article on embarking on cruise ships on Shabbat. (Techumin 10, 1989) He has also been engaged on the national scene; he was one of thirty municipal Chief Rabbis who participated in electing Israel's national Chief Rabbis in 2013. Rabbi Hedaya is no stranger to controversy;

in 1979, he served as a witness for a wedding performed by a Reform rabbi at Kibbutz Yahel, which was Israel's only Reform kibbutz at the time. Then-Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren claimed, and Rabbi Hedaya confirmed, that the Reform rabbi had not officiated, but had only read the ketubah. Israel's Progressive movement responded by threatening legal action against Rabbi Goren and Rabbi Hedaya unless Rabbi Goren would recant.

In 2014, Rabbi Dov Lior of Yeshivat Beit-El published a responsum claiming that Eilat is not part of halachic Israel. Because the talmudic sages applied a rabbinically-defined impurity to land outside of Israel, Rabbi Lior contended that kohanim should not travel there. [He did permit travel and settlement by non-kohen Israelis in Eilat, though, because one may leave Israel for economic reasons, and Eilat serves as an important economic hub for the State of Israel. Even if one is not personally in Eilat for commercial reasons, one is still supporting the Israeli economy in Eilat. (<http://bit.ly/2LzG4Gy>)] Rabbi Hedaya responded forcefully, pointing to Rabbi Eliezer Waldenberg's responsum on the topic, and the positions of such rabbinic leaders as Rabbi Zvi Pesach Frank, Rabbi Yitzchak Herzog and Rabbi Ben Zion Uziel, all of whom confirmed Eilat as part of halachic Israel. He also noted the greater political considerations involved in excluding Eilat from halachic Israel. For further support, Rabbi Hedaya pointed out that Rabbi Ovadia Yosef had visited Eilat in the 1980's and had approved Rabbi Hedaya's practice of observing only one day of Yom Tov, consistent with the practice of Israelis.

[torczyner@torontotorah.com](mailto:torczyner@torontotorah.com)

**Biography**  
**Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner**  
 Adam Friedmann

Yitzchak Hutner was born in 1906 in Warsaw, Poland, to a family with roots in both Hassidic and Lithuanian Jewry. He studied in the Slabodka Yeshiva and was part of a delegation of 150 students who traveled in 1924 to what was then the Mandate of Palestine to establish a branch of the yeshiva in Chevron. He studied there until 1929, when the yeshiva was forced to relocate to Jerusalem following the Chevron massacre. During his time in Israel Rabbi Hutner forged a relationship with Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook, who was then the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. The latter had a significant impact on Rabbi Hutner and would write an approbation for his first book, though a significant philosophical distance would develop between them. After leaving Chevron, Rabbi Hutner returned to Europe. He studied philosophy at the University of Berlin, and was married.

In 1935, he moved to Brooklyn, New York, and took up a teaching post at the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School. Eventually he was offered a position at the high school of Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin. Rabbi Hutner would stay associated with the yeshiva for the rest of his life, eventually becoming head of the entire yeshiva. Initially, he worked on building up a post-high school beit midrash program for students, which eventually served hundreds of students.

Rabbi Hutner's best known books are the volumes of *Pachad Yitzchak* in which he rewrote the contents of the *ma'amarim* that he presented on special occasions. Borrowing from Chasidic influences, these *ma'amarim* were spiritually charged discourses blending halachic and philosophical topics. They were accompanied by group singing, celebration, and, occasionally, instrumental music. The goal of these presentations was to arouse the students in a way that would enable them to properly absorb the profound messages. Though the speeches were delivered in Yiddish, *Pachad Yitzchak* is mostly written in modern Hebrew. The work draws extensively on the writings of the Maharal of Prague, as well as various halachic and kabbalistic sources.

Rabbi Hutner nurtured many illustrious and highly successful students until his death in 1980.

[afriedmann@torontotorah.com](mailto:afriedmann@torontotorah.com)

**Torah and Translation**  
**On Mocking Idolatry**  
**Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner, Pachad Yitzchak Purim 1:3-4**  
 Translated by Adam Friedmann

בהלכות ליצנות שנינו: כל ליצנותא אסירא, חוץ מליצנותא דעבודה זרה. והלא ברור הוא דהיתר של ליצנות נאמר בכל פרטיו של צד הרע, דבודאי מותר להתלוצץ מכל משהו של רע, ומכל בחינת עול. ואם כן, למה נקטו חכמים הדוגמא להיתר זה דוקא חטא של עבודה זרה?...

עלינו לדעת, שלכוח זה של הכרת החשיבות נמצא בנפש התנגדות גדולה. יש בה בנפשו של אדם נטייה חריפה לזלזול. לעומת כוח-הכרת החשיבות, נמצא הוא בנפש מהלך שאינו רוצה לסבול שום חשיבות, ובזילותא ניחא ליה. שמו של הכוח הזה, המתפרץ בחזקה, להפקיע את עצמו מידיה של החשיבות הוא: ליצנות. מדת הליצנות העצמית, כפי שהיא נמצאת בנפש בשרשה, ענינה הוא למצוא את הפרצה בכל בנין של חשיבות על מנת לסתור את כל הבנין, מתוכה של פרצה זו. זה לעומת זה. שאיפתה של כוח ההילול היא להרבות חשיבות בעולם, ולעומתו שאיפתו של כוח הליצנות היא להרבות זלזול בעולם...

והנה אם נעמיד לפנינו את השאלה: מה הוא המקום אשר בה המציא האדם את החשיבות יותר גדולה לשקר היותר גדול? בלי ספק, שהתשובה על זה תהא: עבודת אלילים, כי אין לך חשיבות יותר גדולה מן העבודה, ואין לך שקר יותר גדול מן האליל. באופן, דאצל העובד את האליל כוח ההילול נצח אמנם את כוח הזלזול, שכל עצמה של עבודה אינה אלא מציאות של הילול. אבל כוח ההילול פועל כאן בשטח של היפך האמת. ונמצא, שעבודה זרה היא פסגת כוח ההילול בצד הרע.

וזה הוא פשר דבר שבהיתר הליצנות נקטו חכמים לדוגמא חטא זה של עבודה זרה דוקא. בודאי דהיתר הליצנות נוהג הוא בכל פרטיו של צד הרע. אבל הלא אותו ה"רע" הניזון להדיא מן הכוח ההפכי של כוח הליצנות, הוא אותו ה"רע" אשר שמו הוא עבודה זרה. ועל כן, דבר טבעי הוא לעובד ד', ליחד את כוח הליצנות נגד חטא עבודה זרה דוקא.

In the laws of mockery it is taught: all mockery is forbidden, except for mocking idol worship. But it is clear that the permission for mockery is stated regarding all bad things, because it is certainly permitted to jest regarding any bad thing, and any aspect of sin. If so, why did the sages specifically use the example of the sin of idol worship?...

We must know that this drive to ascribe value [to things] encounters great adversity in the soul. A person's soul has a strong inclination towards scorn. Against the drive for value-recognition, there is found in the soul an inclination which does not wish to accept any value, and which is satisfied with scorn. The name of this drive, which breaches boundaries with its strength, to remove itself from the grip of value is: mockery. The essential characteristic of mockery, as it is found in the soul at its root, seeks to find the breach in each edifice of value in order to destroy the entire edifice, by means of this breach. And opposite this is the desire of the drive for exaltation, to increase value in the world, and against it the desire of the drive for mockery is to increase scorn in the world...

Let us present ourselves with this question: What is the area in which man has ascribed the greatest value to the biggest lie? Without a doubt the answer will be: idol worship. Because there is no greater ascription of value than worship, and there is no greater lie than the idol. In the case of the idol worshipper the drive for exaltation has defeated the drive for scorn, because the essence of worship is none other than the presence of exaltation. However, the drive for exaltation here operates in the realm of the opposite of the truth. We find that idol worship is the zenith of the drive for exaltation operating in a wicked way.

And this is the reason why, in the realm of permitted mockery, the Sages used the example of this sin of idol worship specifically. Certainly the permission for mockery applies to each instance of wickedness. However the bad which is nourished explicitly from the drive which is the opposite of mockery, is that bad whose name is idol worship. Therefore, it is natural for the servant of G-d to specially use the drive for mockery against the sin of idol worship in particular.

## The 613 Mitzvot: #581, 582—The Honeymoon

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Devarim 24:5 states regarding a newly married man, “He shall not go to the army, and it shall not place any obligations upon him for any matter. He shall be free for his household for one year, and he shall gladden the woman he has married.” Sefer haChinuch sees two mitzvot here: 1) Not to take the groom from his home (Mitzvah #581) and 2) For the groom to gladden his bride during this first year (#582).

Husbands are obligated to do many things to gladden their wives; a man may not travel far away on business without his wife’s permission (Shulchan Aruch Even haEzer 76:5), and he must sit down to dinner with her (Rama Even haEzer 70:2). The “honeymooning” mitzvah is uniquely important, though; as Sefer haChinuch explains, remaining at home for the first year creates a natural intimacy between husband and wife, and so it establishes their lifelong focus upon each other.

### Weekly Highlights: Feb. 25 — Mar. 3 / 29 Shevat — 5 Adar

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
<b>שבת Feb. 24-25 Pre-Purim Shabbaton at TCS (Aish Thornhill)!</b>				
<b>Fri. 8:30 PM</b>	<b>R’ Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Drinking on Purim</b>	<b>90 Hetherington Cr.</b>	<b>Oneg</b>
<b>Derashah</b>	<b>R’ Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>This is Our Time!</b>	<b>TCS</b>	
<b>After musaf</b>	<b>Adam Friedmann Mrs. Ora Ziring R’ Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>Hallel on Purim? A Gift of/and Friendship Is Esther a Role Model?</b>	<b>TCS</b>	
<b>Seudah Shlishit</b>	<b>Adam Friedmann</b>	<b>The Joy of Purim</b>	<b>TCS</b>	
<b>Before minchah</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Daf Yomi	BAYT	<b>Rabbi’s Classroom</b>
<b>After minchah</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara Avodah Zarah	BAYT	<b>Simcha Suite</b>
<b>Sun. Feb. 26 Rosh Chodesh Adar</b>				
<b>8:45 AM</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>10:00 AM to 11:20 AM</b>	<b>R’ Mordechai Torczyner Rebbetzin Devorah Vale</b>	<b>The King’s Cup Removing Your Mask</b>	<b>Shomrai Shabbos 585 Glengrove</b>	<b>Midreshet Yom Rishon For Women</b>
<b>Mon. Feb. 27 Rosh Chodesh Adar</b>				
<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>Adam Friedmann</b>	<b>Divine Revelation</b>	<b>Terraces of Baycrest</b>	
<b>8:30 PM</b>	Adam Friedmann	Gemara Arvei Pesachim	Clanton Park	<b>Men</b>
<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>R’ Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>Pre-Purim 1: Shushan Purim in Ramot?</b>	<b>Shomrai Shabbos</b>	<b>Men</b>
<b>Tue. Feb. 28</b>				
<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>R’ Mordechai Torczyner</b>	<b>The Purim Costume</b>	<b>Adath Israel</b>	<b>Women; there is a fee info@adathisrael.com</b>
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Ezra: Approved!	Shaarei Shomayim	
<b>Wed. Mar. 1</b>				
<b>2:30 PM</b>	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Narratives of Vayikra	carolleser@rogers.com	
<b>8:00 PM</b>	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	
<b>8:30 PM</b>	Yaron Perez	Parshah: הפרשה ואני	Shaarei Shomayim	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>Thu. Mar. 2</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim: Enter Amon	49 Michael Ct.	<b>Women</b>
<b>Fri. Mar. 3</b>				
<b>10:30 AM</b>	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Refunding Ribbit	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<b>Advanced</b>

**This week, our Men’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Yeshivat Or Chaim offers:**  
**Tuesday 8:30 AM, Nefesh haChaim, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring**  
**Friday 8:30 AM, Yeshayah, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

**This week, our Women’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Ulpanat Orot offers:**  
**Tuesday, 9:30 AM to Noon, Laws of Kashrut/Chullin, Mrs. Ora Ziring**  
**Wednesday 9:30 AM to Noon, Hilchot Bein Adam laChaveiro, Mrs. Ora Ziring**  
**Thursday 9:30 AM to Noon, Netivot Shalom on the Parshah, Mrs. Ellieza Perez**