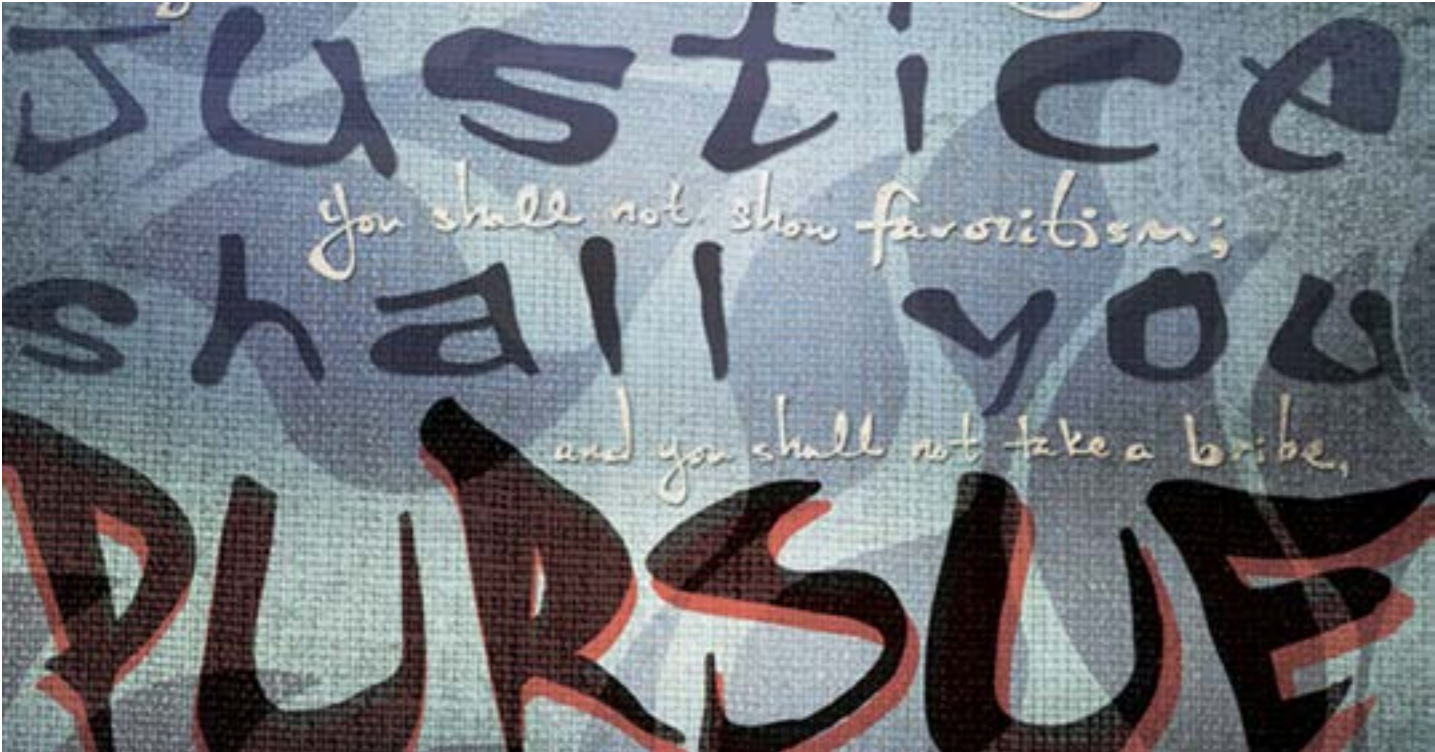


Shearith Israel  
SPANISH &  
PORTUGUESE  
Synagogue of Montreal  
Est. 1768

# SHABBAT BULLETIN

August 14, 2021 | 6 ELUL 5781



## Parashat Shoftim

*Business Not As Usual*  
By: Rabbi Maimon Pinto

Did you ever hear the saying, “It’s nothing personal; Business is business?” I certainly did, and it is wrong. The very fact we try to separate between who we are - good people that want to do what is right in the eyes of man and G-D - and the way we conduct business is a grave mistake.

This week’s Torah reading introduces the prohibition against the concept of “hasagat gvul” – unfair and immoral competition. The Hebrew words hasagat gvul mean overstepping or illegally infringing on one’s neighbor’s border. Just as it is wrong to move one’s border fence to gobble up a piece of ground of the neighboring lot, so too is it wrong to engage in unfair competitive practices to injure someone’s business to benefit one’s business enterprise. As naive and altruistic as this may appear at first glance, there is sound social and economic sense behind this Torah policy.

Let me explain what I mean.

Competition is an accepted condition in our society. In commerce, sports, government, the arts, and sciences, competition is the fuel for the engine that drives our society forward. Without competition, we would be at the mercy of monopolists, cartels, and a controlled society that would stifle all progress, efficiency, or incentive for personal reward. The Talmud itself speaks highly of competition, at least in educational and scholarly matters, when it states that “competition amongst scholars increases wisdom and knowledge.” Nevertheless, like all seemingly positive attributes, competition should have its limits. Unrestrained, cutthroat, vicious competition is immoral, wrong, and eventually counter-productive to society itself.

The Torah expects us to conduct our business coherently and not to have split personalities. One for business and one for personal. And to be true to ourselves and others.

There is a very profound story by Harold Kushner in one of his books where he was sitting on a beach one summer day, watching two

children, a boy, and a girl, playing in the sand. They worked hard to build an elaborate sandcastle by the water’s edge, with gates, towers, moats, and internal passages. Just when they had nearly finished their project, a big wave came along and knocked it down, reducing it to a heap of wet sand.

He expected the children to burst into tears, devastated by what had happened to all their hard work, but they surprised him. Instead, they ran up the shore away from the water, laughing and holding hands, and sat down to build another castle.

At that moment, he realized that they had taught him and us an important lesson. All the things in our lives, all the complicated structures we spend so much time and energy creating, are built on sand.

Only our relationships with other people endure. Sooner or later, the wave will come along and knock down what we have worked so hard to build up. When that happens, only the person who has somebody’s hand to hold will be able to laugh.

Shabbat shalom

### SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut      End/Fin  
**7:46 pm      8:52**

#### SERVICE SCHEDULES

**Shabbat Services**  
Shahrit: 8:30      Mincha: 8:30  
**Sunday:      8:30 am**

**Parashat Shoftim** - Hertz page 820  
**Haftarah: Isaiah** - Hertz page 835

**SELIHOT**  
**6:30 a.m. every morning except Shabbat until Sept. 14 included.**

**Week Day Services:**  
**Shahrit:      7:30 am**  
Everyday Monday through Friday

**Afternoon/Evening Services:**  
**Mincha/Arvit :      6:00 pm**

#### CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

**SHABBOS, AUGUST 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
Schachris 9:30 a.m.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
Schachris 8:00 a.m.

### BEIT HAMIDRASH HELWANI WITH RABBI PINTO

**Monday through Friday**  
**8:40 am** - Hok L'Israel

**Dvar Torah**  
**Weekly Debate** - Sunday after services  
**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday**  
**8:25 am** - Halaka/Talmud  
**6:15 pm** - Jewish Wisdom

*Dear friends,*

*I am here for you. Whether you want to ask a question, consult, learn or just chat, you can call me on my mobile (514) 506-3164 or to my email [rabbi@thespanish.org](mailto:rabbi@thespanish.org)*

*I am available 24/6.  
Shabbat, emergencies only*

**Rabbi Maimon Pinto**

*To contact Hazan Daniel Benlolo:  
[cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org](mailto:cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org)  
(514) 892-2859*



### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"5% of people think; 10% of the people think they think; and the other 85% would rather die than think."*

Thomas Edison | Aish HaTorah

### OPINION

## Chevra Shaas Words From Rabbi Menahem White SHOFETIM 5781

Most of us by now are doubly vaccinated. Yet many of the doubly vaccinated still take wise precautions, for they know that it is still possible to be infected.

And that brings to mind the following: several years ago, when I was visiting my son and family, they gave me an interesting present, a sefer, by Rabbi Zilbershtein of Israel called ve-ha'arev na'. The author goes over the Torah, parasha by parasha, and deals with a contemporary halakhic problem that somehow relates to each parashah.

In this week’s lectionary, we read of a person ha-yarei’ ve-rakh ha-leivav, who is afraid to go to war. Our story took place

back in 2009, when Hamas rockets were falling daily on the cities of southern Israel (so what’s new?!!) A resident of one of the cities (let’s call him Shimon,) even though his house was fortified with all of the most up to date fortifications, nevertheless felt it would be safer to move his family tentatively to relatives in the north.

Meanwhile, a neighbour of Shimon’s (let’s call him Reuven) did not have a house with all of the protection offered by Shimon’s house. So, Reuven decided to move his family into Shimon’s safer, now empty house. In an age when not everyone had a cell phone, Reuven was not able to contact his friend Shimon to ask permission.

Eventually, the barrage of missiles calmed down, and Shimon returned to his home in the south. The question: is Reuven obligated to pay retroactive rent to Shimon?

After referring to several sources from Talmud and Shulhan Arukh, Rav

Zilbershtein came to the conclusion that Reuven was not obligated to pay rent. One interesting precedent that the Rav brings was that during WWI, when many communities in Eastern Europe were abandoned by their occupants, who were fleeing foreign armies, a prominent Romanian Rav ruled that a person who occupies a house that was temporarily abandoned need not pay the owner rent.

To the contrary, Shimon should be happy that Reuven was watching the house. The only items that should be reimbursed were expenses for water and electric.

And indeed, had Shimon been asked for permission, he would have been obligated to agree, based on the verse in Vayiqra “do not stand idly beside your brother’s blood.”

We pray that the month of Elul should usher in a period free from illness, and that there should be peace in Israel.

Shabbat shalom

## Mazal Tov To



**Bernard Madar, Hatan Torah** and **David Nathaniel, Hatan Bereshit** and **Gisele Rouben, Eshet Hayil**  
The *Religious Committee of the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue* wishes to congratulate the Hatanim and Eshet Hayil for the coming New Year 5782



Our members, **Doris & Eli Ambar** and **Yvette Battat**, on the upcoming wedding of their granddaughter, **Rebecca**, daughter of **Amanda & Michael Battat**, to **Brennan**, son of **Natalie & David Rashkovan**.



**Yehonatan Avraham Haimovici**, son of **Hazzan/ Dr. Joshua** and **Anne Haimovici** on being accepted to the prestigious *Yeshiva University/ RIETS semicha program/kollel*.



*Refuah Shelemah To David Haccoun.*

## Congregation Maghen Abraham

*Thoughts: Mayer Sasson - Shoftim*  
*"Judges and policeman you shall appoint in all your gates....." (16,18)*  
*"Judges and policemen"*

The commentators such as the "Shlah Hakadosh", Rabbi Haim Vital and others note that the Mitzvah of appointing judges is presented to the singular person and is directed to "You" as an individual and they therefore expand the scope

## Our Condolences To



**Norma Joseph & Joseph Family**, on the loss of **Rabbi Howard S. Joseph z'l** revered long time Rabbi of the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue and community leader for almost 40 years. The Spanish appreciates the service and guidance he gave the community since 1970 and welcomed his role as Rabbi Emeritus after his retirement.



Our members, **Ovadia Shebath & Family** and **Karen & Oren Gabbay**, on the loss of mother, grandmother & great grandmother, **Klara Leah Shebath z'l** - Israel.

of this requirement beyond the range of the basic requirements upon the communities to appoint Judges and a court system as well as law enforcement officers, in order to preserve the well being of the nation and bring to justice crimes and misconduct that may transpire in the daily life of a human community.

The system is also needed to settle disputes and disagreements that could not be sorted out between opposing parties and to provide a moral compass as well as a wholesome code of conduct based on the Torah's guidelines, for the community to follow.

The commentators go on to say that each of us has personal gates located in our head such as ears eyes nose and mouth. A Jew is required to discern and

examine the sights, scents and voices as well as the speech that go out and come into his personal gates. A Jew has to be aware that there are looks and glances as well as stares that are proper and permissible and at time even a Mitzvah and we must categorise them in their order of importance whether they are a sight of a Mitzvah or a sight of forbidden and corrupt scenery that should be avoided as they effect the soul to the detriment.

The same is true about hearing - Are we hearing worthy speech? Are we hearing segments expressions that are related to a Mitzvah or lessons of the Torah? Or are we hearing derogatory information and gossip? And when we open our mouth are we careful to examine what

continued on our website  
[www.thespanish.org](http://www.thespanish.org)

## Jewish Wisdom

*Parashat Shoftim*  
*Rabbi Maimon Pinto*

Tu peux courir mais tu ne peux pas te cacher

Moïse a ensuite averti le peuple juif de ne pas écouter les faux prophètes et a passé en revue les lois des villes de refuge. Quand quelqu'un commet un meurtre accidentel, ce coup de la providence divine indique que le meurtrier accidentel doit être exilé dans l'une de ces villes afin de se guérir d'un défaut intérieur qui, autrement, ne serait pas rectifié. Les proches de la victime sont autorisés à tuer le meurtrier accidentel à moins qu'il ne se soit enfui vers l'une de ces villes spécialement désignées comme villes d'asile.

Allégoriquement, la personne qui cherche à venger le sang de la victime est notre propre mauvais penchant. Il tente de nous amener à pécher, nous faisant ainsi subir une forme de « mort » spirituelle, c'est-à-dire une perte de vitalité dans notre vie spirituelle. La Rédemption messianique sera notre ultime refuge contre ce poursuivant, car le mauvais penchant sera annulé dans le futur messianique. De même, la future reprise du service du Temple offrira à tous ceux qui en ont besoin la possibilité d'achever leur expiation.

En attendant, l'étude de la Torah est notre refuge contre notre mauvais penchant, car la sainteté de la Torah a le pouvoir de neutraliser l'effet du mal sur nous.

Shabbat shalom

## Got A Question for Hazan Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny, Why is Israel sacred for Jews?

Dear reader, yet again the Jewish people and the Jewish nation is living through harsh and difficult times. To answer your question dear reader I look to the book written by Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer, What is a Jew?

He writes; The Hebrew Bible makes it clear that from the very beginning, Jews considered their destiny intimately and necessarily interwoven with the land of Israel. G-d tells the first Jew, Abraham, "Leave your land, the land of your birth, and go to the land that I will show you." The rest of the Torah assumes that the covenant between G-d and Israel includes the deeding of the Land of Israel to the people of Israel. Israel was charged with keeping G-d's ways there, under the threat that if its members sinned, they would pollute the Land, and the Land would "spew you out." Clearly, they held the Land to be sacred in and of itself, and therefore not to be profaned by evil or injustice. When the Southern Kingdom of Judah was destroyed, it was not the war with all its death and destruction that the biblical author remembered above all else. It was the fact that the Jews were taken out of the Land into exile, a fate worse than death to him, for as the Psalmist says of the exiles, "Our tormenters asked of us mirth: 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How shall we sing G-d's song in a foreign land?"

Later still, the Rabbis held that there were different degrees of holiness in the Land. The holiest place was the central room of the Temple sanctuary, called the Holy of Holies, where only the high priest was allowed entrance, and only on the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur. Holiness then radiated out in lesser and lesser degrees, the way ripples spread out from a rock thrown into the water. Around the holy of Holy of Holies was the Temple building as a whole, which was the second most holy site. Jerusalem, the city where the Temple stood, was slightly less holy than that, and eventually, the last ripple of holiness was the Land of Israel from border to border, all of which is certainly less sacred than the Temple, or even than Jerusalem, but is still holy – as opposed to territory outside the borders, which the Rabbis believed was not holy at all.

Jews therefore trace the idea of Israel's holiness back to our very origins. Unquestionably, Jews find something indefinably sacred about that land we call Israel. It is our homeland, just as our family abode and our synagogue are our homes.

May our prayers reach the heavenly heights and may G-d answer our prayers at this time by granting peace to our holy land so we may live in tranquility until the coming of the Messiah.

Until next time,

The following question was recently posed to me during an interfaith prayer.

## PARNASS HAYOM

**Shabbat 6 Elul - August 14 Août**  
In honour of **Claudia Aintabi** and **Karkoukly Families**.

**Sunday/Dimanche 7 Elul - Aug. 15 Août**  
**Rachel & Jim Archibald**, in honour of their grandchildren, **Jacob, Chloé, Zachary, Noah, Joshua, Micah & Isaac**.

**Tuesday/Mardi 9 Elul - Aug. 17 Août**  
Cong. **Maghen Abraham**, en l'honneur des **Talmidim du Beit Hamidrash Helwani**.

**Wednesday/Mercredi 10 Elul - Aug. 18 Août**  
**Famille Dadoun/McHugh**, la mémoire de **Daniel Avraham ז"ל**.

**Thursday/Jeudi 11 Elul - Aug. 19 Août**  
**Danielle Mashaal Family**, in memory of **Menashi Mashaal ז"ל**.

**David, James & Selman Khazzams' Families**, in memory of their mother, **Hilda E. Khazzam ז"ל**.

**Maurice Cohen & Famille**, à la mémoire de leur mère, **Sol Cohen ז"ל**.

**Friday/Vendredi 12 Elul - Aug. 20 Août**  
**Mme. Yvette Marsh**, à la mémoire de sa mère, **Renée Bensoussan ז"ל**.



## Upcoming Events



**Thursday, August 26 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
Ten Paths to God - Unit 9: Kiddush Hashem The Jewish Task - with Guest Panelists Rabbi Dr. Menahem White, Spiritual Leader, Chevra Shaas Congregation of S&P.  
Zoom ID 846 5677 7165 / Password: 058194



**Sunday, August 29 | (Save The Date)**  
Soccer Tournament - Parc Mackenzie-King  
Time to be confirmed. Trophy, fun, games!  
Contact: Marc Hadid [mhadid@mvapower.com](mailto:mhadid@mvapower.com)



**Monday, September 13 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
Chai Mitzvah Program  
Unit 6: Arc of the Fall Holidays  
Join on Zoom ID 526 438 1158 - Registration required.



**Thursday, September 23 | 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.**  
Ten Paths to God - Unit 10: Responsibility - The Jewish Future with Guest Panelists Arlene Madar Abitan & Alice Becker Lehrer  
Zoom ID 846 5677 7165 / Password: 058194



**S&P HIGH HOLIDAYS SEATS**  
Please call the synagogue office to reserve your seats if you are planning to attend services.  
Tel: (514) 737-3695 OR online: [www.thespanish.org](http://www.thespanish.org)



**COMMUNITY OF BABYLONIAN IRAQI JEWS HIGH HOLIDAYS SEATS**  
Please start sending your seat reservation if you are planning to attend services.  
INFO: Tel: (514) 737-3695 (x109 Linda)