

## SCHEDULE

### שבת קודש

Mincha Erev Shabbos 5:21 PM  
~Friday Night Learning 7:45 PM

Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush 8:30 AM

Sof Zman K'S- מ"א 9:05 < גר"א 9:41

Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos 5:20 PM

Maariv 6:30 PM

### Sunday

Shacharis ראש חודש 8:30 AM  
~ Followed by Shiur



Mincha / Maariv 5:30 PM

### Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

#### Shacharis

Monday מלא מלא 6:35 PM

Thursday 6:40 AM

Tues, Wed, Fri 6:45 AM

Mincha (Mon-Thur) 1:45 PM

Maariv (Mon-Thur) 9:45 PM

Thursday Night Shiur by Rabbi Teichman after Maariv

## SPONSORSHIPS

### Kiddush

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### Shalosh Seudos

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On the Birth of

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מזמרה

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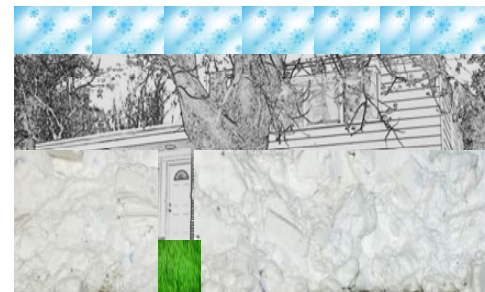
שבת קודש

פרשת משפטים

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מברכים חודש אדר

# אהל משה



*Rabbi Zvi Teichman*

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# RABBI'S MESSAGE

## Stolen Glances

This week we are introduced to the משפטים, *civil law*, that govern our rights and obligations to our fellow man.

The very first presentation in this series of laws relates the case of an individual who committed a theft and was unable to repay, we therefore sell him as an עבד, *a indentured servant*, enabling him with the money he receives for his service to compensate his victim.

This device is used solely to pay back in cases of stealing but not to fulfill any other monetary obligation such as damages or unpaid debt or wages. Why is this law unique to the גנב, *thief*, alone?

Of all the regulations enumerated throughout this portion from murder, damages to property and physical assault, is this the “headliner” of all these many rules?

The very first sin was an act of “גניבה” *theft*. אדם הראשון, *Adam*, was told not to take from the Tree of Knowledge. In his desire for that special divine quality of “knowledge” one acquires from eating from this tree, he felt he was entitled to possess it and therefore proceeded to consume it’s fruit and as they say “the rest is history”. In order to “pay” for this act of larceny he was sentenced to a life of עבדות, *bondage* to the challenges of survival in a new world and the laws of “nature” where he would have to “work” his way towards the ultimate “compensation” to his Creator. One who abuses one’s divinely sponsored stay in גן עדן, *the Garden of Eden*, by grabbing that which he was not granted is destined to be placed in a situation that will now rehabilitate him from that distorted sense of “entitlement”. Here things will not come easily and naturally by the simple whim of his desire. Man through his need to toil will come to appreciate that which Hashem benevolently dispenses to those who accept “His” will. Only one who senses “duty” rather than “rights”, will be privileged to survive happily in this new camouflaged relationship with Hashem.

The first individual to receive the appellation עבד, *slave*, was חם, Cham the son of נח, Noach. Realizing after the flood that only he and his two brothers were to repopulate the world he took advantage of his father who had lapsed into a drunken stupor and proceeded to sterilize him in order to quell any possibility of new “competitors” being produced and contend with his quest to own the world. He and his progeny were eventually condemned by G-d to become “slaves” to his brothers so that he would forever be shackled to “duty” and recover from his “overdose” of unrightful “claimed privileges”.

ויגד (בראשית ט, כב), *and Cham saw...and told*. Cham looked at his fathers disgrace and derisively reported it to his brothers. Instead of respectfully looking the other way Cham felt he was entitled to see. In place of guarding his tongue he allowed himself the privilege of mocking his father. We commemorate this idea in the Torah allowing for the freeing of a Canaanite Slave whose master knocked out his “eye” or permanent “tooth”, for it was the roving eye and the teeth that did not contain the sharp tongue that got Cham into slavery in the first place.

Despite our being cast out of “Paradise” we continue to delude ourselves into thinking we control our own destiny of physical success in this world. We claim rights and privileges based on our “talents”, “wealth” and “power” or simple “urge”. When we lose our perspective that we are obligated to carry out the will of Hashem and instead snatch at opportunities to ingratiate ourselves in prohibited pleasures and off limits pursuits, we are “stealing” from Hashem once again.

The Talmud (see ברכות ה.) says that the יסורים, *difficulties* we face in attaining “our” objective is G-d’s way of bringing us back into focus. This lost sense of control and frustration we experience in not achieving our ambitions is similar to that of a slave who has diminished control and choice in life and is subjected to the directive of his owner. When we accept this notion we are on the way to recovery in correcting our relationship with Hashem and will merit his munificence once again.

This is why we begin our introduction to these set of ordinances with the “thief” of entitlement. It is this skewed view of the world that leads to all the other crimes in imposing “our will” against all who interfere with our interests!

The special commemorative reading this week of פרשת שקלים, the portion of the Torah that describes the command during the days when the Temple stood, for each Jew to contribute a מנחת השקל, *half Shekel coin*, poor and rich equally, not more or less, which served to fund the communal sacrifices that were brought there on behalf of the nation, underlines this theme as well. Wealth was distributed unevenly not due necessarily to one’s unique merits, business skill nor privilege. Each one of us has specific roles in the mosaic of Jewish experience, complementing each other in fulfilling G-d’s will. No one should feel that his role is more significant than anyone else. We therefore give equally to reassert the primacy of “duty” over “entitlement”, lest we forget and lose that which we are fortunate to receive.

The Megillas Esther records how Haman sought to “buy” the rights to the Jews as “slaves” from King Achashveirosh, with “ten thousand silver talents”. The Baalei Tosafos (מגילה טו) say this total equaled the cumulative “half Shekel” all Jews (600,000) give in the course of their lives. What was the purpose of his purchasing them as slaves if his ultimate goal was their utter annihilation?

Perhaps Haman sought to emphasize their status as עבדים, *slaves*, to accentuate their loss of direction in fulfilling their noble purpose in overcoming selfish interest and seeing the hand of Hashem in their successes. They were undeserving of the special relationship with Hashem and his intervention to save them.

The Talmud (שם יג) states that in the merit of our “Shekalim” that preceded Haman’s we were saved. It wasn’t simply our tendering of coins but the concept behind them.

When we live our lives without asserting our sense of entitlement both from man or Hashem and dispatch our duties unconditionally without expectation of material recognition only then will we merit success in our mission and the heralding of the coming of Mashiach!

באהבה,  
צבי טייכמן

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## THANK YOU!



We would like to thank the many individuals who pitched in shoveling snow from the walkways and roofs, and keeping the building *up and running* during the blizzard of 2010.

There are too many to name, and some who simply stepped up and did what needed to be done anonymously, you know who you are, and we appreciate it!

## FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING

