



CONGREGATION TIFERETH BETH DAVID JERUSALEM

Shabbat Bulletin

שבת פרשת שופטים
ו אלול ה'תשפ"א

Shabbat Parshat Shoftim
August 13 - 14, 2021 / 5781

Please print this bulletin before Shabbat.

Rabbi
Yechezkel Freundlich

Chazzan Sheini
Rev. Amiel Bender

President
Josh Orzech

6519 Baily Road, Côte Saint-Luc, Québec H4V 1A1 Canada • 514-489-3841 • www.TBDJ.org • director@tbdj.org

SHABBAT SHALOM • שבת שלום

Shabbat Parshat Shoftim

Haftara: Yeshayahu 51:12 - 52:12

When davening at home, it is preferable to do so at the same time as the rest of the community.

Friday, August 13

4:00pm Daf Yomi on Zoom
6:25pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv - Tent
6:37pm Plag Hamincha
7:00pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv - Main Sanctuary
7:47pm Candle Lighting
8:06pm Sh'kiah

Shabbat, August 14 / 6 Elul 5781

8:00am Shacharit - Tent
8:45am Shacharit - Upper Social Hall
9:26am Sof Zman Kriyat Shma
9:30am Shacharit - Main Sanctuary
10:00am Kef Club Programs for Kids - Tent
6:36pm Plag Hamincha
6:50pm Daf Yomi with Rabbi Freundlich - Upper Social Hall
7:40pm Mincha and Maariv - Tent and Main Sanctuary
8:04pm Sh'kiah
8:53pm Havdala
9:30pm Musical Havdala and Kumzits with Rev. Bender on Facebook
9:45pm Daf Yomi on Zoom

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to **Talia & Naftoli Jacobs** and their families on the birth of their daughter Shoshana Miriam on Shabbat, August 7. Sharing in their simcha are Shoshana's grandparents Julie Martz and Tim Oberlander, Tamar & Norman Blumenthal and Lori & Arye Jacobs, her great grandparents Fradie Martz, Hindy & Baruch Saks and Chaya & Simon Jacobs and many delighted aunts, uncles, and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time are Shoshana Lefkowitz z"l and Cornelia Hahn Oberlander z"l.

Mazal Tov to **Jane & James Rogozinsky, Renee & Marty Lieberman, Danielle & Eddy Rogozinsky** and **Susan Lieberman** and their families on the birth of their daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter Mia Rose on Friday, August 6. Sharing in their simcha are big sisters Sydel and Eve, great grandparents Barbara & Abe Rogozinsky, Simone Benarroch and Raphael Rouimi and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins.

Mazal Tov to **Sari & Shlomo Drazin, Ruth Drazin** and **Rozanne Polansky** and their families on the engagement of their son and grandson Ari Drazin to Rebecca Appel of New York. Sharing in their simcha are Rebecca's parents Michelle & Yehuda Appel, her grandparents Miriam & Shlomo Appel and Fern & Willy Nathanson and many delighted siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families.

Mazal Tov to **Sharon & Lorne Dubrofsky** and **Ruth Goodman Dubrofsky** and their families on the engagement of their daughter and granddaughter Tanys Dubrofsky to Izak Nagar, son of Mona & Nir Nagar. Sharing in their simcha are many delighted siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families.

Mazal Tov to **Sharon & Robert Hecht** on their 50th Wedding Anniversary! Ad 120!

Mazal Tov to **Ariela Cotler** on being selected to become the next National President of Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University.

Condolences to **Saul & Esther Handelman** on the loss of Saul's beloved sister Nancy Bohbot z"l who passed away on Tuesday, August 10. Funeral took place on Wednesday, August 11.

SPONSORSHIPS AND THANK YOUS

Kiddush is co-sponsored by **Talia & Naftoli Jacobs** and family in honour of the birth of their daughter Shoshana Miriam, and in appreciation of Rabbi and Rebbetzin Freundlich.

Kiddush is co-sponsored by **Leon Serruya** and family in memory of Leon's beloved parents Rachel & Salomon Serruya z"l (Rachel bat Yehuda v'Yamna - 8 Elul and Shlomo ben Haim Hananya v'Hanina - 13 Elul).

Seudah Shleesheet is co-sponsored by **Esther & Andy Csillag** in memory of Andy's beloved mother Klara Groszman-Kertesz z"l (Sarah Rachel bat Yakov HaKohen - 23 Tamuz) and in memory of Esther's beloved father Eugene Rosenfeld z"l (Yehoshua Yakov ben Yekutiel Yehuda - 7 Elul).

Seudah Shleesheet is co-sponsored by **Alexandra & Aryeh Magilnick** to mark the conclusion of the daily recitation of Kaddish for Aryeh's beloved father Judd Magilnick z"l (Yitzchak Tzvi ben Yehoshua Moshe - 5 Tishrei).

Rabbi Freundlich's drashot on Shabbat are sponsored by **Sharon & Robert Hecht** in honour of their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

This Shabbat Bulletin is sponsored by **Monica & Joe Gauze** in honour of the recent aliya to Eretz Yisrael of their children Cyma, Perry, Gilad and Tamar Katz.

Rabbi Freundlich's *Lunch & Learn Parsha Shiur* on Wednesday, August 18 is sponsored by **Karen & Abba Brodt** and by **Pinna & Abe Brodt** in memory of Abba's beloved father and Abe's beloved brother Sholem Brodt z"l (Harav Sholem ben Yosef Yekutiel Zishe v'Sara Rivka - 10 Elul).

SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT WEEK

Mincha is at 7:45pm Sunday to Thursday

Shacharit

8:00am Sunday to Friday and
9:00am on Sunday

6:50am on Monday & Thursday

7:00am on Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

Candle Lighting is at 7:36pm
on Friday, August 20

For our full calendar, go to www.tbdj.org.

ELUL INSPIRATION SERIES WITH RABBI YECHAZKEL FREUNDLICH

FIRST LECTURE OF THREE:

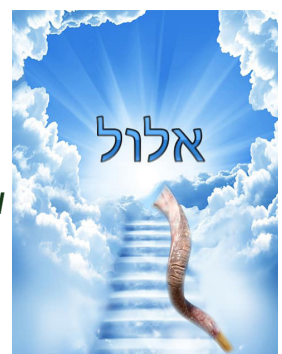
FOR THE LOVE OF MITZVOT

Exploring the connection between the month of Elul, Shmittah, and whether we should all buy land in Israel to fulfill a mitzvah.

MONDAY, AUGUST 16, 8:15PM

UPPER SOCIAL HALL AND ON ZOOM

Zoom link will be provided in email next week.



Challenged by Our Questions and Dilemmas

One morning last week I reviewed Mishnah 19 from Pirkei Avot's Chapter Four with the men in shul:

רבי ינאי אומר: אין בידינו לא משלות הרשעים ואף לא מיסורי הצדיקים

Rabbi Yannai said:

It is not in our power to explain either the tranquility of the wicked or the suffering of the righteous.

In a facetious moment after reading the Mishnah in Hebrew and translating it into English, I said to those assembled: *If Rabbi Yannai didn't have the power to explain this I don't know what you fine gentlemen expect from me!* I then offered Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch's idea which is brought forth in the ArtScroll commentary: *We cannot know for sure if what befalls each of them - the wicked and the righteous - is indeed a blessing or a calamity. We must therefore abstain from passing judgement in either case and not permit our own short-sighted view of events to influence our decision...* In other words, understanding this age old dilemma which Rabbi Yannai did not have the power to explain belongs to Hashem and not to us...

The topic of this Mishnah is something that is unsettling to us and has challenged generations of Torah giants and scholars. I am not sure to what extent I understand the words of Rabbi Hirsch. I do understand though that at face value, we don't gain an understanding of this dilemma from the Mishnah. Rather, the dilemma is stated and we are informed that there is no explanation. After reading Rabbi Yannai's words one would eagerly continue reading the Mishnah to find out what a rabbinical authority of his eminent stature would be able to tell us about this age old philosophical dilemma even without his offering an explanation. Rabbi Yannai wrote the words: אין בידינו - *It is not in our power...* His words are written in the plural sense implying that he, who lived in the presence of great sages, was not alone in not being able to explain this dilemma. It is quite probable that his fellow rabbis and peers were perplexed about this topic as he was. What were Rabbi Yannai's colleague's thoughts considering the tranquility of the wicked or the suffering of the righteous? Why did he state that this dilemma was not in their power to be explained? Rabbi Yannai was a venerable sage who lived in the presence of, and was a student of, Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi - the editor of the six orders of the Mishnah. He was prominent both as a Halachist and an Aggadist. His name is mentioned numerous times in the Babylonian Talmud (176) and in the Jerusalem Talmud (254). Yet, Rabbi Yannai admits that the answer to this dilemma is beyond him. It is of note that this is the only Mishnah edited into Pirkei Avot where a sage concedes that an explanation to something which he discusses is beyond him. Rabbi Yannai states the inability to explain the dilemma but he doesn't explain why he can't explain it... Maybe it is because he himself didn't understand why the world sometimes works in a way where there is tranquility for the wicked and suffering for the righteous? I don't know...

I should note that it is possible that Rabbi Yannai was referring to the difficulty in explaining this dilemma on a level that the average person would be able to understand. Rabbi Yannai and his colleagues were erudite scholars and their knowledge and level of Torah learning was of the highest degree. These scholars with their supreme level of learning and their connection to and fear of heaven may have understood the idea of the tranquility of the wicked or the suffering of the righteous on Torah learning levels that are beyond us, incomprehensible and unattainable to us on our level of learning and therefore difficult to be put into words for us to understand...

This Mishnah indeed stirs the coals in our lives. It speaks of a scenario that we come across all too often in our interactions with our world, in the media and more. I believe that explaining the tranquility of the wicked or the suffering of the righteous is a question and a dilemma which is inexplicable for us as the explanation emanates from the divine judgement of our Father in heaven. It is a matter of our deeply rooted faith in Hashem that is the key to our understanding precisely this when contemplating this existential Mishnaic dilemma. I realize that while we cannot understand it and find it hard to accept this dilemma, we do accept that everything in our world happens under Hashem's watchful eye and that there are reasons for everything that happens.

....continued

We are not alone as we strive to come to terms with this Mishnah. We read in the Torah that Moshe Rabeinu approached Hashem - once - with a question which is a variation of the idea in our Mishnah. The Talmud in Brachot 7a teaches us: *Moshe requested that the ways in which God conducts the world be revealed to him, and He granted it to him, as it is stated: "הוֹדִיעֵנִי נָא אֶת דְּרֹכֶיךָ וְאֵדַעְךָ" - Show me Your ways and I will know You* (Exodus 33:13). *Moshe said before Hashem: "Master of the Universe, why is it that the righteous prosper, the righteous suffer, the wicked prosper, the wicked suffer?"* Hashem's answer is prompt, difficult and complex - one which I cannot attempt to try to explain... The words are deep and require an intense level of understanding... *Hashem said to him: Moshe, the righteous person who prospers is a righteous person, the son of a righteous person, who is rewarded for the actions of his ancestors. The righteous person who suffers is a righteous person, the son of a wicked person, who is punished for the transgressions of his ancestors. The wicked person who prospers is a wicked person, the son of a righteous person, who is rewarded for the actions of his ancestors. The wicked person who suffers is a wicked person, the son of a wicked person, who is punished for the transgressions of his ancestors.* King David asks a similar question in Psalm 94:2 *Until when shall the wicked - oh Hashem - until when shall the wicked rejoice?* Most of the book of Job deals with the idea of צדיק ורע לו רשע וטוב לו - how is it that the righteous have bad things happen to them while the wicked have it good?

We do not learn any answers to the dilemma posed in the Mishnah. There is however in this Mishnah a message of - *What we may learn from not having the answers to our questions and dilemmas...*

Here are some of the things that I believe we can learn from this inexplicable Mishnah:

- We learn that this dilemma has been problematic for us from time immemorial.
- We learn that our approach to existential dilemmas like this one is not unlike that of generations of thinkers that precede us.
- We learn that there are things in this world that are inexplicable to us.
- We learn that we do not necessarily need answers for all of our questions.
- We learn that when there are no answers at hand, it may be useful to think about why there are no answers.

Is it frustrating not to have answers to our questions and our dilemmas? I used to think so. However, learning Talmud over the years has helped me develop a different perspective on the idea of unanswered questions and unsolved problems. In the Talmud there are many מחלוקות, many differences of opinion on the numerous issues which are learned and debated in the many tractates. Sometimes there is no ruling and the result is תיקו (a tie in Hebrew) - no decision. I used to be frustrated by this. Here we delve into intense and difficult in-depth learning - sometimes for days, if not weeks, at a time - and we are informed after this magnanimous learning effort that there is no solution?! Why bother learning all of this when we don't solve the problem that the Talmud poses? As I grew older and I progressed in my learning I came to appreciate the Talmudic thought processes of our eminent rabbis and scholars and their way of developing the arguments that are brought forward. Our learning is enhanced from the arguments themselves: Why does one school of thought feel the way they do contrary to the other school of thought? What were the rabbis on both sides considering as they argued their positions and stances concerning the issues brought forth? In general, the wisdom of the Talmud teaches us how to think and how to understand the deep and cogent arguments and ideas even if they do not present answers to the questions and dilemmas at hand.

מכל מלמדי השכלתי - *From all of my teachers I have learned.* We learn from everyone and from everything that happens in our lives. While learning may not provide us with the answers to our many questions, learning is essential in helping us understand that sometimes we don't need to understand what we can't understand and that there is plenty to learn from not understanding.

Assuming all of you out there understood that, I wish you a Shabbat Shalom!

Rev. Amiel