

פרשת משפטים / Parashat Mishpatim

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32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d
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5

Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 21:1-24:18
הפטרה: Jeremiah 34:8-34:22 33:25-26
הברית: Matthew 5:38-42 17:1-11
החדשה

10 Christian D. Ginsburg's volume titled "Introduction to the Massoretico –
Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible" describes the principles which guided him
in the preparation of the Hebrew Bible. The extensive changes made are in strict
accordance with the Masoretic MSS., and the early editions of the Masoretic text
15 which were available to Ginsburg. In part one, Ginsburg spends considerable
time in his voluminous work to explain the outer form of the text that is relevant
to the Masoretic rules. In Part two, Ginsburg leaves the outer form of the text and
moves on to the Hebrew text itself to describe the condition of the text and how
much has been affected by the principles which guided him in the preparation of
20 the Hebrew Bible. In chapter two of part two Ginsburg speaks about the Dagesh
and the Raphe giving us some insight into the mindset behind the early editors of
the Hebrew bible. I felt there was an interesting and important observation to be
made here of the mindset which led Ginsburg to attempt the monumental work of
faithfully reproducing the Masoretic text with minimal departure from the
uniform practice of all the MSS available at the time. We pick up the discussion
25 from Ginsburg's Introduction on the discussion of the Dagesh:

30 *"From time immemorial, the custodians of the Hebrew Scriptures have
enjoined it most strictly that those who are engaged in public reading are
to exercise the greatest care to pronounce very distinctly every letter and
to impart to every consonant its proper value. But beyond this injunction
they have attached no visible sign to any particular letter, which in their
estimation might preclude its being weakened or absorbed by another
letter in close conjunction therewith. At a later time, however, one or two
isolated purists resorted to the expedient of putting a Dagesh into letters
35 in certain positions to safeguard their distinct pronunciation. Hence,
Yekuthiel the Naktan states that in some MSS, the letter Nun at the
beginning of the name in the phrase בן-נון the son of Nun (see *Devarim /
Deuteronomy 32:4*) has a Dagesh. Yekuthiel does not give the reason for
this abnormal position of the Dagesh, it is manifest that the purist who
40 inserted it thereby intended to guard this Nun at the beginning of the word
against being absorbed or weakened in pronunciation by the Nun which
ends the preceding word."*

Dagesh

n. diacritical mark in the Hebrew alphabet which is a dot inside a Hebrew letter for modifying its sound (Hebrew grammar)

Raphe

In Hebrew orthography the rafe, also raphe, ([ra'fɛ], Hebrew: רפה, meaning "weak, limp"), is a diacritic : a short horizontal overbar placed above certain letters to indicate that they are to be pronounced as fricatives.

45 Here Ginsburg is noting the beginning of the tradition on the addition of the
Dagesh by purists to ensure the proper pronunciation of the Hebrew text. The
Masoretic rules were established to ensure the preservation of the text. Early
editors not only agreed with but took it upon themselves to help readers for the
purpose of ensuring the oral transmission of the text with the use of the Dagesh.
50 Without a doubt, we can be assured that G-d has preserved for us the scriptures
we have today through the extraordinary care that was exercised by the scribes /
copyists in the transmission of the Holy Scriptures.

The mindset I want to draw our attention to is that of the sacredness of the
Holy Text. It was the importance of G-d's word in its application for our lives
and in revealing G-d's will that led men such as Ginsburg to preserve the Hebrew
55 Scriptures as he did. The extreme care taken in the transmission of the Hebrew
Text should draw our attention to the uniqueness of the Tanach. This uniqueness
should motivate us to seek what G-d desires to reveal to us through his Holy
Word, the Hebrew Scriptures. In this week's parsha, Parashat Mishpatim, we find
mentioned the important commandment to observe the festival of Pesach
60 (Passover), the festival of first fruits, and the ingathering at the end of the year.
The proximity of the three within the text I feel has special meaning and
significance. In light of the uniqueness of the Sacred Text I feel we should look
at this a bit closer.

שמות 23:14-18

14 תִּזְכְּרוּ לֹא יִשְׁמַע עַל-פִּיָּהּ: שְׁלֹשׁ רִגְלִים תִּהְיֶה לִּי
15 בַּשָּׁנָה: אֶת-חֲגֵי הַמִּצְוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל
מִצְוֹת כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָהּ לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב כִּי-בֹ יֵצֵאת
65 מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא-יֵרָאוּ פָנַי רִיקָם: וְחֵג הַקָּצִיר בְּכוּרֵי
מִעֲשֵׂיךָ אֲשֶׁר תֹּרַע בַּשָּׂדֶה וְחֵג הָאֶסֶף בְּצֵאת הַשָּׁנָה
17 בְּאֶסְפָּךָ אֶת-מִעֲשֵׂיךָ מִן-הַשָּׂדֶה: שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה
18 יֵרָאֶה כָּל-יִזְכְּרֶךָ אֶל-פָּנַי הָאֵלֶּן וַיְהִי: לֹא-תִזְבַּח עַל-
19 חֶמֶץ דָּם-זִבְחִי וְלֹא-יִלֵּין חֶלְבֵּי-חֲגִי עַד-בִּקְרָה: רֵאשִׁית
בְּכוּרֵי אֲדָמָתְךָ תָּבִיא בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא-תִבְשַׁל
נְדִי בְּחֵלֶב אִמּוֹ:

70 The festival of Pesach (Passover), first fruits, and the ingathering all have a
very important connection as being symbolic of things to come of a prophetic
nature. These three feasts are Torah pre-figurative events which point to G-d's
later works in history. Think about that as we continue in our study on the
connection between these feasts. Now, there are three pilgrim feasts Pesach,
Shavuot, and Sukkot. A pilgrim feast was one in which the men had to present
themselves before G-d at the place "ha'makom" where he will establish his name.

Shmot / Exodus 23:14-18

23:14 'Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. 23:15 'You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. 23:16 'Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. 23:17 'Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord God. 23:18 'You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning. 23:19 'You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord your God. You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother. (NASB)

75 Throughout the Torah there is a thematic connection to the word “ha’makom.” In
“Ha’sipur” (the story) of the “akeyda” (see *Bereshit / Genesis 22*) the Torah uses
the word “makom” to describe that site where G-d establishes and makes his
name known to all the nations of the earth.

80 The pilgrim feast of Shavuot for example is mentioned in the portion of
scripture at *Shmot / Exodus 23:17*. Shavuot in ancient times, the feast of Weeks,
is the Jewish holiday celebrating the harvest season in Yisrael. Shavuot which
means “weeks” refers to the timing of the festival which is held exactly 7 weeks
85 after Pesach. Shavuot is known also as “Yom Habikkurim” or “the day of first
fruits” because it is the time the farmers of Yisrael would bring their first harvest
to Yerushalayim as a token of thanks giving to G-d. Shavuot also commemorates
the anniversary of the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moshe and the
Yisraelites at Mount Sinai. Shavuot is also the time G-d sent his Holy Spirit
down to rest upon the disciples (see *Acts 2:1-5*). With all of these connecting
90 events around Shavuot, it is not surprisingly Shaul wrote of a connection to the
Messiah and that of the first fruits and the resurrection in *1 Corinthians*:

1 Corinthians 15:20-23

95 *15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of
those who are asleep. 15:21 For since by a man came death, by a man
also came the resurrection of the dead. 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so
also in Christ all will be made alive. 15:23 But each in his own order:
Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,
(NASB)*

100 The yearly feasts are in reality statutes forever throughout the generations of
Yisrael. The Lord says that in the kingdom he will put His Spirit within His
people and cause them to walk in His statutes and judgments and do them.
Additionally, I want you to notice something here from the literary structure of
the book of Romans. While studying the scriptures occasionally it can be
105 advantageous to read the book such as Romans and write out what is said in
outline form. If we outline the book of Romans looking for these events Pesach,
Shavuot, and Sukkot we find something very interesting. Outlining the book of
Romans it appears Shaul wrote this letter between Pesach and Shavuot. By
comparison of *1 Corinthians 5:5-8 and 16:7-8* it appears the text alludes to this
110 conclusion. Have a look at the following verses.

1 Corinthians 5:5-8

115 *5:6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens
the whole lump of dough 5:7 Clean out the old leaven so that you may be
a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover
also has been sacrificed. 5:8 Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with
old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the
unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (NASB)*

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1 Corinthians 16:7-8

125 *16:7 For I do not wish to see you now just in passing; for I hope to remain with you for some time, if the Lord permits. 16:8 But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; (NASB)*

130 Shaul probably wrote this letter between Pesach (5:6-8) and Shavuot (16:7-8) during the season for presenting the first fruits of the harvest at the Temple (see *Shmot / Exodus 23:14-19, Vayikra / Leviticus 23:9-15*). We can conclude that Shaul sees in the events and prescriptions of the Torah pre-figurative events, examples, and warnings pointing to G-d's later workings in history (see *1 Corinthians 9:9-10, 10:1-11, Galatians 4:21-5:1*). Is it not surprising that he sees Yeshua's resurrection as the first fruits of the larger harvest to come (see *Romans 15:9, John 14:3, 19-20, Romans 8:29*); the larger harvest being Yeshua's return for His children, the body of believers which remain here on earth.

Conclusion

140 Three times yearly our forefathers went up to the Temple in Yerushalayim to bring the fruit of their soil as a thanksgiving offering to the Lord. The three festivals symbolically lay out the foundation of the coming messiah. In the Torah the connection is the sheaf. The sheaf in the Torah is used to typify a person or persons (see *Bereshit / Genesis 37:5-11*). In the festival of the first fruits, G-d
145 commanded the people to bring a sheaf of the harvest (*Vayikra / Leviticus 23:10*). The Hebrew word for "sheaf" is "omer." The omer is defined as "a measure of dry things, containing a tenth part of an ephah." The definition of an omer being a tenth part of an ephah is found in *Shmot / Exodus 16:36*. An epha contains 10
150 omers of grain. Remember three times a year G-d commanded the people to come to Yerushalayim to celebrate the festivals of Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot. All three of these festivals are agricultural harvest festivals. Pesach is the barley harvest, Shavuot is the wheat harvest and the final harvest was to come at the end of the year during the festival of Sukkot which is the fruit harvest. The harvest represents all who would put their emunah (faith) and trust in the Messiah
155 Yeshua. The nation of Yisrael was familiar with the concept of first fruits and the first born. The concept of first fruits and the first born is a major theme in the Torah:

Shmot / Exodus 13:2

160 *13:2 'Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me.' (NASB)*

Shmot / Exodus 22:29

165 *22:29 'You shall not delay the offering from your harvest and your vintage. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:8-10

170 *26:8 and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an*
outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders; 26:9
and He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land
flowing with milk and honey. 26:10 'Now behold, I have brought the first
175 *of the produce of the ground which You, O Lord have given me.' And you*
shall set it down before the Lord your God, and worship before the Lord
your God; (NASB)

The sheaf in the Bible is used to typify a person or persons. Yeshua will return to
earth during his second coming as King over all the earth. He will also bring the
180 sheaves (believers) with Him (see *Tehillim / Psalm 126; Yerimayahu / Jeremiah*
31:9-14; Joel 3:11-13; Zechariah 14:3-5; Mattiyahu /Matthew 13:37-39; Mark
4:26-29; Hebrews 12:1; Jude 14; Hitgalut / Revelation 1:7).

In ancient times the importance and sacredness of the Holy text led righteous
185 men to the work of preserving the Scriptures with extreme care. Found within the
text we find one of the purposes for the three mandatory festivals of Pesach,
Shavuot, and Sukkot were designed not only to thank G-d for his blessing but also
to point to the future events which the Lord has planned to do from since the
foundation of the earth. The prophecy finds its immediate application to not only
190 the days of the Messiah but also for us today. In our waiting for the final harvest
feast we are waiting for the second coming of the Messiah Yeshua. The logical
conclusion is stunning if the feast days are symbolic of the future events. What
G-d had in mind presents us with the high place of authority the scriptures have
not only in our lives but throughout history and time drawing all back to the
195 Messiah Yeshua. This week's parsha and including our conclusion here raises an
important issue. The legitimacy of the feast days pointing to the Messiah Yeshua
is in fact not doing away with the Torah but is recognition that the Torah
anticipated the High Priestly mandates and fulfillment of those mandates within
Yeshua the Messiah. Not only have men dedicated their entire lives to the
200 preservation of the text, righteous men have died laying down their lives to
protect these texts throughout history. Would you be willing to lay down your
life to protect the Bible? Have you reached the point in our life where you can
say that you recognize the sacredness of the Holy Scriptures? What does this
mean for you today? What is G-d leading you to do right now?

205 In the act of being obedient to the Lord, according to the Holy Scriptures, we
are in effect laying down our lives and bringing honor to G-d. Studying the Torah
we realize our short comings before a Holy G-d. Through the realization of our
unholiness before G-d we realize the need for a redeemer, the redeemer which
pre-figuratively has been revealed to us in the Torah. Do you desire today to
210 know the Messiah, savior, and redeemer Yeshua as the three harvest feasts point
to? Faith in the Messiah Yeshua is only the beginning of a life long journey with
the Lord. You can begin a new and exciting life right now today by placing your
faith and trust in Yeshua the Messiah as savior and redeemer. Lets' pray.

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Heavenly Father,

220 I believe there is no other way of salvation apart from faith in Yeshua the
Messiah. Today Lord I ask that you help me with my faith because I am having
trouble believing. I believe the Holy Words in the Scriptures which point to the
Messiah and I believe Yeshua is the sacrifice for my sins. I believe through Him I
am declared righteous on the basis of His shed blood. I ask Lord for you to send
225 your comforter to me, your Holy Spirit to indwell me so that I can begin a life of
holiness so I may bring glory to your Name and declare the authority of the Word
in my life. Help me Lord to live a life as you have detailed in the Torah and all of
Scripture. I thank you Lord for your mercy and praise your Name forever and
ever.

230 I pray all of these things in Yeshua's name. Amen

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Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

260 הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever