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**Shoftim in a Nutshell**  
(Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9)

**Anshei Lubavitch Congregation**

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

*Adult education:*

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

*Youth Outreach:*

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

**Shabbos – Parshas Shoftim**

**Erev Shabbos – Sep 6 – Elul 6**

Candle Lighting ..... 7:03 pm

Mincha ..... 7:05 pm

**Shabbos Day – Sep 7 – Elul 7**

Shacharis ..... 9:30 am\*

Torah Reading ..... 10:35 am

Rabbi Neubort’s Drasha ..... 11:10 am

Kiddush ..... 12:10 pm

Gemara (2-31 Summit) ..... 6:00 pm

Shiur & Shalosh Seudos ..... 5:55 pm

Mincha ..... 7:00 pm

Rabbi’s Drasha ..... 7:25 pm

Shabbos Ends ..... 8:01 pm

*\*Latest morning Shema is 9:39 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

**Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):**

**Minyan**

Shacharis ..... 6:15 am

Mincha ..... 1:45 pm

Maariv ..... 9:15 pm

**Classes**

Chassidus, Mon-Fri ..... 5:55 am

Halachah, Mon-Fri ..... 1:40 pm

and at 9:25 pm

Torah Studies ..... Mon. 7-8:00 pm

Tuesday Talmud ..... 9:30-10:00 pm

Wednesday Mishna ..... 8:30-9:15 pm

Moses instructs the people of Israel to appoint judges and law enforcement officers in every city. “Justice, justice shall you pursue,” he commands them, and you must administer it without corruption or favoritism. Crimes must be meticulously investigated and evidence thoroughly examined—a minimum of two credible witnesses is required for conviction and punishment.

In every generation, says Moses, there will be those entrusted with the task of interpreting and applying the laws of the Torah. “According to the law that they will teach you, and the judgment they will instruct you, you shall do; you shall not turn away from the thing that they say to you, to the right nor to the left.”

Shoftim also includes the prohibitions against idolatry and sorcery; laws governing the appointment and behavior of a king; and guidelines for the creation of “cities of refuge” for the inadvertent murderer. Also set forth are many of the rules of war: the exemption from battle for one who has just built a home, planted a vineyard, married, or is “afraid and soft-hearted”; the requirement to offer terms of peace before attacking a city; and the prohibition against wanton destruction of something of value, exemplified by the law that forbids to cut down a fruit tree when laying siege (in this context the Torah makes the famous statement, “For man is a tree of the field”).

The Parshah concludes with the law of the “eglah arufah” — the special procedure to be followed when a person is killed by an unknown murderer

murderer and his body is found in a field—which underscores the responsibility of the community and its leaders not only for what they do, but also for what they might have prevented from being done. ❖

*This week’s  
Kiddush is  
sponsored by  
the Shul.*

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**Join us each  
weekday morning  
Mon-Fri  
as we delve into  
the mysteries of  
Chassidic concepts.  
5:55 am  
followed immediately by  
Shacharis.**

**Thank You to:  
Boaz Kapitanker  
for reading the Torah  
and to our  
Kiddush and Security  
Volunteers**

**Halachic Zmanim  
Shabbos, September 7  
Daylight Savings Time**

Earliest Tallis ..... 5:31 AM  
Latest Morning Shema .... 9:39 AM  
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) ..1:27 PM  
Plag Hamincha ..... 6:03 PM  
Earliest Evening Shema .... 7:48 PM

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201-254-9190.

## Chassidic Masters

### “The Judge and the Refugee”

*Based on the teachings of  
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

In the Torah section of Shoftim (Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9) we read of the cities of refuge, to which a man who had killed accidentally could flee, finding sanctuary and atonement. The chassidic masters note that Shoftim is always read in the month of Elul—for Elul is, in time, what the cities of refuge were in space. It is a month of sanctuary and repentance, a protected time in which a person can turn from the shortcomings of his past and dedicate himself to a new and sanctified future.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe analyzes an important feature of the cities: they were only to be found in the land of Israel, even though the judges and officers who executed Torah law were to be appointed wherever Jews live. Why does the law extend everywhere, while refuge belongs to the Holy Land? And what does this imply for the month of Elul, our place of spiritual refuge in the calendar of the Jewish year?

#### A Paradox

Sifri interprets the opening verse of our Parshah, “You shall set judges and officers in all your gates,” to apply to “all your dwelling places,” even those outside Israel. It then continues: One might think that cities of refuge were also to exist

outside the land of Israel. Therefore the Torah uses the restrictive expression “these are the cities of refuge” to indicate that they were to be provided only within Israel.

Nonetheless, Sifri says that someone who committed accidental homicide outside the land of Israel and fled to one of the cities of refuge would be granted sanctuary there. It was the cities themselves, not the people they protected, that were confined to the land of Israel.

The fact that Sifri initiates a comparison between the “judges and officers” and the cities of refuge indicates that they have a relationship to one another. It is this: The judges who applied the law and the officers who executed the sentences did not aim at retribution, but at the refinement of the guilty. And the aim of the cities of refuge was to impose on the fugitive an atoning exile—atonement in the sense of a remorse which effaces the crime until he regains his original closeness to G-d’s will.

We might then have thought that if this safeguard, this place of atonement, was available in the holy environment of the land of Israel, it would be all the more necessary outside its borders, where it was easier to fall into wrongdoing. And yet only judges and officers were to be provided beyond Israel’s borders—only the agents of the law, not its refuge.

## Transcendence or Empathy

There are two phases in teshuvah, or repentance. There is remorse over what has been done, and commitment to act differently in the future. These are inextricably connected. For the only test of sincere remorse is the subsequent commitment to a better way of life. To be contrite about the past without changing one’s behavior is a hollow gesture.

This is the deeper significance of the law that the city of refuge is found only in the land of Israel. For a man could not atone while clinging to the environment which led him to sin. He might feel remorse, but he would not have taken the decisive step away from his past. For this, he had to escape to the “land of Israel,” i.e., to holiness. There, on its sanctified earth, his commitment to a better future could have substance.

Judges, however, could be appointed outside the land of Israel. For it is written in Ethics of the Fathers, “Do not judge your fellow man until you come to his place.” A court which sits in the land of Israel cannot know the trials and temptations which exist outside, or the difficulties of being loyal to one’s faith in a place of exile. The land of Israel is a land where “the eyes of the L-rd your G-d are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.”

*(continued on next page)*

It is a land of divine grace. One cannot judge a man by its standards if that man lives outside its protection.

So judges had to be drawn from the same environment as their defendants. They had not only to know what he had done; they had to experience for themselves the environment which brought him to it.

Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch (the second Chabad rebbe) was once giving private audiences, when he interrupted them for some time before continuing. It transpired that a man who had had an audience wanted the rebbe's help in setting right a particularly degrading act he had done. The rebbe later said to one of his close disciples that one must discover some analogous quality in oneself, on however refined a level, before one can help someone to remedy his sin. His interruption of the audiences had been to attempt to find in himself this point from which he could identify with the sinner.

It was this principle that lay behind G-d's command to Moses when the Israelites had made the Golden Calf: "Go, get yourself down, for your people have dealt corruptly." For at that moment, Moses was inhabiting the spiritual heights of Mount Sinai, neither eating nor drinking, divorced from the world. The Israelites were degraded through their sin. But by telling him to "go down" to "your people," G-d created a bond between Moses and the people, on the basis of which Moses was able to plead on their behalf.

### **Three Degrees of Refuge**

Although all the cities of refuge were to be in the land of Israel, they were not all in the same territory. There were the three in the land of Israel proper—the Holy Land. Three were in the territories east of the Jordan, where "manslaughter was common" (Talmud, Makkot 9b). And when in the messianic era "the L-rd your G-d will enlarge your borders," three more will be provided in the newly occupied land.

This means that every level of spirituality has its own refuge, from the relatively lawless eastern territories to the Holy Land, and even in the world of Moshiach. And this is true spiritually as well as geographically. At every stage of one's religious life, there is the possibility of some shortcoming for which there must be refuge and atonement. Even if a person never disobeys G-d's will, he may still not have done all within his power to draw close to G-d.

This is the task of the month of Elul. It is a time of self-examination, when each person must ask himself whether what he has achieved was all that he could have achieved. And if not, he must repent, and strive towards a more fulfilled future. Businessman and scholar—the one who has lived in the world and the one who has spent his days under the canopy of the Torah—both must make Elul a time of self-reckoning and refuge.

It is the way of the Western world to make Elul, the month of high summer, a time for vacation from study.

The opposite should be the case. It is, above all, the time for self-examination, a time to change one's life. And the place for this is the city of refuge in the "Holy Land," which, in the geography of the soul, is a place of Torah.

Each Jew should set aside Elul, or at least from the 18th onwards (the last 12 days, a day for each month of the year), or at any rate the days when selichot are said, and make his refuge in a place of Tora

A refuge is a place to which one flees—that is, where one lays aside one's past and makes a new home. Elul is the sublimation of the past for the sake of a better future. And it is the necessary preparation for the blessings of Rosh Hashanah, the promise of plenty and fulfillment in the year to come. ❖

### **A Hearty Yasher-Koach to Our Anshei Security Committee**

**They continue to help keep our shul safe, while also learning the latest in legal protection tactics.**

**They also train in First-Aid and other medical options**

**And you can be a part of it. We can use any help you're willing to offer. Please contact Jordan Rockowitz at [rockowitzj@gmail.com](mailto:rockowitzj@gmail.com) with questions or to volunteer your time.**

## From Our Sages

### ***Judges and officers you shall place at all your city gates . . . (Deuteronomy 16:18)***

The human body is a city with seven gates—seven portals to the outside world: the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth. Here, too, it is incumbent upon us to place internal “judges” to discriminate and regulate what should be admitted and what should be kept out, and “officers” to enforce the judges’ decisions . . .

-- (Siftei Kohen)

### ***Justice, justice shall you pursue (Deuteronomy 16:20)***

Why does the verse repeat itself? Is there a just justice and an unjust justice? Indeed there is. The Torah is telling us to be just also in the pursuit of justice—both the end and the means by which it is obtained must be just.

-- (Rabbi Bunim of Peshischa)

### ***According to the law they instruct you and according to the judgment they say to you, you shall do; you shall not diverge from the word they tell you, either right or left (Deuteronomy 17:11)***

Even if this judge tells you that right is left and that left is right. How much more so, if he tells you that right is right and left is left!

-- (Sifri; Rashi)

## Community Events

Sept. 15 – **Friendship Walk and Celebration**, Sunday, September 15 at Votee Park, in Teaneck. 10:00 am = Registration 10:30 = Walk, 11:00 = Fair. [www.NJFriendshipWalk.com](http://www.NJFriendshipWalk.com)

Sept. 8 – **Paint Night by Paint By Me**. Meet your inner artist replicating the event’s featured painting. No previous art experience necessary. Each participant will go home with a painting they can be proud of (done solo, or part of a couples painting). **DARCHEI NOAM**. Early bird pricing (by 8/18): \$35/pp or \$30/pp for groups of 2+. After it is \$45/pp or \$40/pp for groups of 2+. BYOB, dessert & refreshments will be served. RSVP by Sept. 1 at <https://dno.am/paintnight>

Sept. 14-21 – **Yom Tov Food Auction**, Sign up by Sep 14, Bidding Sep 15–21 — Calling all cooks and bakers! Have a specialty item you are known for or just want to help out your fellow community members in their Yom Tov preparations? Sign up to contribute to the Yom Tov Food Auction to benefit the Yoetzet Halacha Program! Sign up to cook or bake at [dno.am/yhp/auction](http://dno.am/yhp/auction) by 11:59 p.m. Sep 14. Bidding will then be open from 10:00 a.m. Sep 15 – 11:59 p.m. Sep 21 at [dno.am/yhp/bid](http://dno.am/yhp/bid) Posted by Congregation Darchei Noam.

Sept. 15 – **Make Your Own Pizza @ EJ’s**, Sunday, Sep 15, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. — Ready for a SUPER school year? Make your own pizza at EJ’s in Teaneck! \$8 per child. (Parents could order food separately if they want) Super hero costumes strongly encouraged! RSVP by Wednesday Sep 11 at [dno.am/superpizza](http://dno.am/superpizza). Sponsorships available. Posted by Congregation Darchei Noam.

### **HELP MAKE THE PATERSON MINYAN**

**NEXT MINYAN:** Shabbat, September 14 = Parshat Ki Tetzei

Where: Federation Apartments, 510 E. 27th Street/12th Ave in Paterson, NJ  
(beginning at 9:00 a.m.)

Your participation helps benefit Jewish senior citizens from all backgrounds.  
Consider also making the Minyan also for Rosh Hashanah September 30/October 1  
beginning 9:00a.m.

Visit: [www.patersonshul.org](http://www.patersonshul.org) or contact [JerrySchranz@gmail.com](mailto:JerrySchranz@gmail.com).

## Haftorah in a Nutshell – Shoftim

*Isaiah 51:12-52:12*

This week's haftorah is the fourth of a series of seven "Haftarot of Consolation." These seven haftarot commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

The haftorahs of the past two weeks open with Israel's complaint that they have been abandoned by G-d. Israel is not content with consolations offered by the prophets — instead they demand that G-d alone comfort them. In response, this week's haftorah begins with G-d's response: "I, indeed I, will comfort you."

After briefly reprimanding Israel for forgetting their Creator for fear of human and finite oppressors, the prophet describes the suffering and tribulations which Israel has endured. However, the time has arrived for the suffering to end. The time has come for Israel's oppressors to drink the "cup of suffering" which they had hitherto forced Israel to drink: "Awaken, awaken, put on your strength, O Zion; put on the garments of your beauty, Jerusalem the Holy City, for no longer shall the uncircumcised or the unclean continue to enter you. Shake yourselves from the dust, arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; free yourself of the bands of your neck, O captive daughter of Zion."

Isaiah extols the beauty of the messenger who will announce the good tidings of Redemption. "Burst out in song, sing together, O ruins of Jerusalem, for the L-rd has consoled His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem."

The haftorah ends by highlighting the difference between the Egyptian Exodus, when the Israelites hurried out of their exile and bondage, and the future Redemption: "For not with haste shall you go forth and not in a flurry of flight shall you go, for the L-rd goes before you, and your rear guard is the G-d of Israel." ❖

“For man is a tree of the field.”

Deuteronomy 20:19

The tree's primary components are: the roots, which anchor it to the ground and supply it with water and other nutrients; the trunk, branches and leaves which comprise its body; and the fruit which contain the seeds by which the tree reproduces itself.

The spiritual life of man also includes roots, a body, and fruit. The roots represent faith, our source of nurture and perseverance. The trunk, branches and leaves are the body of our spiritual lives — our intellectual, emotional and practical achievements. The fruit is our power of spiritual procreation — the power to influence others, to plant a seed in a fellow human being and see it sprout, grow and bear fruit.

– Based on the Rebbe's Teachings

**Good Shabbos to all!**





CHASSIDUS

**5:55-6:10 AM**  
Monday-Friday  
**THE MITZVAH OF HAVING FAITH IN G-D**  
Derech Mitzvosecha



SHULCHAN ARUCH

**1:40-1:45 PM**  
Monday-Thursday  
**HILCHOS TEFILLAH**  
Laws of Reading the Shema

**9:25-9:30 PM**  
Sunday-Thursday  
**HILCHOS SHLIACH TZIBUR**  
*Laws of Leading the Davening*



TALMUD

**9:30-10:00 PM**  
Tuesday  
Currently learning  
**TALMUD, tractate SUKKAH p. 22b**



MISHNA

**8:30-9:10 PM**  
Wednesday  
**THIS WEEK: TUESDAY MISHNAYOS, tractate ROSH HASHANAH Chapter 2**



CHUMASH

**8:00-9:00 PM**  
Thursday  
**Bereishis 1:1**



WANT TO LISTEN TO A CLASS ON-THE-GO? Text your WhatsApp number to 201-362-2712 to join the Torah Classes @ Anshei group



MONDAY EVENING TORAH STUDIES

7:00-8:00 PM • Maariv at 9:15

Monday, September 9, 2019  
**IT'S MY BODY, I CAN DO WHAT I WANT!**

*Wrong. It's Not Your Body. Proceed Accordingly*

It's all skin and bones, right? No! In this joyful ride, we learn that our bodies are something uniquely special, perhaps more so than our very souls. But before you hit the gym, take a moment to discover the spiritual energy in that body—and do your best to unleash it.

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**5:55-6:55 PM**

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לעילוי נשמת

חיים מענדל בן פנחס ז"ל

**Between Mincha & Ma'ariv**

Shiur with Rabbi Levi Neubort

**Judges and Officers**

Why the Rule of Law is so precious to G-d



**NEW COURSES OF INTEREST**

**FALL: WORRIER TO WARRIOR**  
12 Cheshvan 5780 / Nov. 10, 2019

We yearn to feel happy, self-assured, and enthusiastic, yet we're consumed by feelings of doubt, regret, insecurity, and suffering. Do our delicate positive emotions have a fighting chance at being in control?

This course explores negative emotions in a completely new light, offering spiritual mechanisms that allow us to remain upbeat no matter what life brings.

**WINTER: JUDAISM'S GIFTS TO THE WORLD**

29 Teves 5780 / January 26, 2020

This course explores some of the notable values and attitudes that Jews have shared with the world.

Once considered preposterous, many of these teachings are taken for granted today. The story of this transition is both instructive and fascinating.

The course also considers how Judaism can continue to serve as a beacon of light and wisdom for all of humankind.

**SPRING: SECRETS OF THE BIBLE**

9 Iyar 5780 / May 3, 2020

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Noah's Ark. Joseph and his brothers. We all heard these stories; but what do they really mean?

This course explores six famous and infamous biblical stories, showing how the many details, questions, and mysterious twists are resolved using the lens of the mystical "soul of Torah."

In the process, we discover the cosmic significance of these iconic stories, as well as their practical applications.