



THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

This Shabbat:

Parashat Mishpatim

29 Shevat, 5767, Feb 16, 17 - 2007

Erev Rosh Chodesh -

Parashat Shekalim

The Haftorah is read from Kings II 12:1-17.

Friday

Candle Lighting 5:13 PM
Mincha 5:15 PM

Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM
Shacharit 9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:29 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 5:05 PM
Shabbat Ends 6:15 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:30 AM
(Rosh Chodesh)
Monday Shacharit 8:30 AM
(Rosh Chodesh, President's Day)

Tuesday - Friday Shacharit 7:00 AM

Next Shabbat:

Parashat Terumah

6 Adar, 5767, Feb 23, 24 - 2007

The Haftorah is read from Kings I 5:26-6:13

Friday

Candle Lighting 5:22 PM
Mincha 5:25 PM

Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM
Shacharit 9:00 AM
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:24 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 5:15 PM
Shabbat Ends 6:23 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM
Monday-Friday Shacharit 7:00 AM

Mazel Tov !

Mazel Tov to Rachel and Ken Elkin on the birth of a new baby grandson this week. Mazel Tov to the entire extended Elkin family. May they see much Nachat from their grandson for many years to come and may we celebrate BE"H many Smachot together in the future.

Yishar Koach !

Yasher Koach to Dovid on his incredibly beautiful Dvar Torah on Parshat Yisro last Shabbos. Mazel Tov to Dovid's parents, **Igor and Gelina**, on their son's wonderful accomplishment. May they see IY"H continued Nachat from Dovid and may we be privileged to hear many Divrai Torah from him in the future.

Mazel Tov !

Mazel Tov and welcome to **Esther** and **Sholom Silvestri** who have joined the YIFL. We appreciate your becoming Friends of the Young Israel and look forward to learning and Davening as well as celebrating many Smachot with you together in the future.

In order to subscribe to and receive notices from the Fair Lawn Shuls group, please send an e-mail to:

FairlawnShuls-subscribe@yahoo.com

Shabbat Erev Rosh Chodesh

(source: Ezras Torah)

This Shabbat is Shabbat Erev Rosh Chodesh.

We take out two Sifrei Torah; the weekly Sidrah – Mishpatim; The Maftir reads from Parshas Ki Sisah (Exodus 30:11-16). We read the Haftorah for Parshas Shekolim from Kings II 12:1-17.

We bless the month of Adar.

We do not say "El Malle" or "Av Harachamim".

This practice must be maintained, because these appeals are a major source of income for Ezras Torah. Heaven forfend that this practice be changed or replaced.

The Molad for Adar is Saturday morning, 11:17 AM and 11 Chalokim.

Daily Minyan

Please note that the Sunday and Legal Holidays Minyan is now at 8:30 AM (instead of 8:00 AM.)

Our daily Minyan is at 7:00 AM.

If your schedule allows, please help us with the Minyan. Any day(s) you could come to help would be greatly appreciated.

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Mishpatim Exodus 21:1-24:18

By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel – The Hebrew Bible is the most truly revolutionary document read by humanity, expressing truths of social conduct which even so-called enlightened society has not yet begun to live by. This week's Biblical portion commands, "You shall not exploit nor harass the stranger, because you were strangers in (a foreign) land (Exodus 22:20)", and again, "You shall not harass the stranger; you know the soul of a stranger... because you were strangers in the Land of Egypt" (Exodus 23:9). The Bible knows of two types of strangers or gerim: the righteous stranger, or ger tzedek, who may emanate from a foreign and even idolatrous nation but who has decided to become a "Jew by choice" and link his/her life and destiny to the people, religion and nation of Israel; and a stranger who may live among us in the land of Israel (if he/she so chooses) even though he/she has not converted, since he/she lives by the basic laws of social morality (not murdering, not stealing, not committing rape or adultery, not blaspheming G-d, not indulging in the orgies of idolatry, not eating the limb of blood of a live animal, living within a legal structure of just courts of law) In both cases the ger is a stranger, an other – and he/she must be positively loved and embraced rather than negatively reviled and scorned.

Our Bible delineates two types of unseemly conduct towards the stranger: ona'ah or exploitation in business (as in hiring foreign workers for a fraction of what an

Israelite would receive in wages) and lehitzah, or harassment with words, reminding him/her of his/her foreign forbears and background (B.T. Bava Metzia 58b). While both are forbidden, verbal harassment is considered to be the more stringent of the two crimes since restitution can be made for financial exploitation whereas a hateful word can never be recalled.

The most fascinating question is precisely why our Bible expresses such poignant sensitivity towards how we treat the other, the different one, the stranger; remarkably, our Bible warns us in no less than thirty-three (or forty six) places against harassing the ger! (B.T. Bava Metzia 49b).

The Ramban (in his 12-13th century commentary to Exodus 22:20) explains that G-d, the loving and compassionate creator of life, is especially solicitous and protective of the "weaker vessels," the widow, the orphan, the indigent, the stranger. From the point of view of the Divine G-d of loving-kindness and compassion, the test of any society, and of every human being within a particular society, is how it treats its weaker vessels – and those who act towards them in high-handed fashion will have to answer for their insensitivity before G-d Himself.

Perhaps this idea goes even deeper. The Mishnah (Sanhedrin chapter 4) praises the Almighty precisely because of the differences, the otherness, within His creation of the human being: "Behold the uniqueness of G-d, the King of all kings, when He compared to a mortal king of flesh and blood. The mortal king takes one mold and mints from it many coins, each precisely and exactly a replica of the original as well as of each other. The Almighty blessed be He, however, created the mold

of Adam, the first human being, and derived from him numerous other human beings, not one of them looking like any other, not one of them thinking like any other..."

It is this very differences between individuals, -in their facial features, bodily builds, thumb imprints, opinions, ideologies and outlooks – which expresses the true glory of the Creator; it is the grand unity which emerges from the sum total of all of these separate and disparate elements which will ultimately express true wholeness peace and redemption. Uniformity, totalitarian enslavement and brainwashing, are the Babelian hobgoblin of little minds, fearful of being challenged by the new and the different; Unity which emerges from an honest synthesis of respected and diverse attitudes and perspectives ultimately produces a free and open pluralism in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It goes without saying that the stranger can serve as a most welcome addition, even as a necessary yeast-like ingredient, for any societal mixture, as Abraham apparently did for the Hittites ("I am a stranger and a resident among you"), as Moses (Prince of Egypt) did for the Hebrews, as Ruth did for First Commonwealth Judea. Excluding the stranger often means excluding societal growth and development.

The Bible itself, however, provides the most fundamental rationale for our sensitive consideration towards the stranger: "You shall not oppress (harass) the stranger, because you know the soul of the stranger-since you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 23:9). We the Jewish people, a nation which twice suffered exile and lived for more than 2000 years as strangers in an alien host country, know to the depths of our

historic soul what it feels like to be suspected, envied, feared, persecuted and delegitimized only because we were different. We the Israelites symbolize the ultimate stranger-and our collective experience must teach us not to do to others the kind of persecution which was done to us. We must teach the world to love the stranger.

And indeed, are we not-all of us humans-strangers in an alien universe? Do we not require the close embrace of all of humanity together to help protect us mortal, flesh and blood creatures, against a new ice-age brought about by global warming, tsunamis and earthquakes which wreak havoc upon our societies, against a nuclear disaster which one madman threatens to unleash? And does not the Almighty G-d Himself feel like a stranger, as it were, in His world of free choice in which so much evil is wrought? Does not our Bible have G-d command the Israelites to "make for Him a Sanctuary so that He may (finally) dwell in our midst" comfortably, and does not our mystical tradition teach that "the Divine Presence is in exile"? If Rav Nahman of Bratzlav can teach that in a world not yet redeemed, "Who is a whole individual? Only one with a broken heart," may we not also teach that in a world not yet redeemed, "Who is at home? Only one who feels himself to be in exile"! To love the stranger means to love G-d; to love the stranger means to love yourself, because, after all, in the final analysis, each of us is other, different, a stranger, vis a vis everyone else.

Shabbat Shalom

Shlomo Riskin

Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone

Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel