

February 18 2023

### Mispatim and the Aleph Tav

In this week's Parshah, Mishpatim which means rulings or judgments we are exposed to more details for how Israel is to live according to the Covenant they have embraced and accepted with Adonai.

- Exodus 21:1-12 - Servants to our Community
- Exodus 21:13-14 - Murder, Manslaughter - Capital Crimes
- Exodus 21:15-17 - Parents - Ritual Occultic Curse
- Exodus 21:18-36 - Reparation
- Exodus 22:1-5 - Stealing & Restitution
- Exodus 22:6 - Arson
- Exodus 22:7-9 - Receiving Stolen Property
- Exodus 22:10-15 - Borrowing & Lending
- Exodus 22:16-31 - Treatment of Widows & Orphans [Deacons were used to fulfill this Command]
- Exodus 23:1-3 - Not to follow a crowd
- Exodus 23:3-17 - The 7 Year Cycle

Adonai is laying out His Mishpatim by which the people are to live as a nation. You might call these statutes. The only difference is that these are not legislated by a governing body but instituted by ONE.

This foundation is important in that it expands upon the 10 Words / Commandments revealed in Exodus 20. Even today, there are challenges with living by the 10 commandments in terms of How do we do this?

For instance...

**Exo 20:12** ה "Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land which Adonai your God is giving you.

How are we to honor our father and mother. One of the challenges is when one's parents are not lovable or likable, when they are abusive, where we in our human nature ask why should I honor them considering the way they treated me.

Notice that this Mitzvah does not off with the conditional "if you will" It is not conditioned on any external aspect but is an affirmative statement. It is to be done regardless of your feelings or emotions. Some might say, easier said than done, which is our challenge in all our humanness.

**Exo 21:15** "Whoever attacks his father or mother must be put to death

**Exo 21:17** "Whoever curses his father or mother must be put to death.

These two mishpatim (rulings) convey what is to happen in the manner when one does not honor their parents, whether physically or verbally.

Still very generic in terms of specifics yet more detailed than the commandment by itself.

Adonai does not leave us without further guidance when it comes to living by His rulings. Sha'ul elaborates on this relationship to believers at Ephesus...

**Eph 6:1** Children, what you should do in union with the Lord is obey your parents, for this is right.

**Eph 6:2** "Honor your father and mother"—this is the first commandment that embodies a promise—

**Eph 6:3** "so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the Land."

**Eph 6:4** Fathers, don't irritate your children and make them resentful; instead, raise them with the Lord's kind of discipline and guidance.

A child's duty and a Father's responsibility.

The wisdom granted Solomon by Adonai, the child of King David conveys more details as to this relationship with a promise...

**Pro 1:8** My son, heed the discipline of your father, and do not abandon the teaching of your mother;

**Pro 1:9** they will be a garland to grace your head, a medal of honor for your neck.

When we are being trained up in the way of Torah, taught by our father, Shlomo shares this, inspired by Adonai and likely of his own experience...

**Pro 6:20** My son, obey your father's command, and don't abandon your mother's teaching.

**Pro 6:21** Bind them always on your heart, tie them around your neck.

**Pro 6:22** When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you wake up, they will talk with you.

**Pro 6:23** For the mitzvah is a lamp, Torah is light, and reproofs that discipline are the way to life.

Yet, in many ways we have not been raised where Torah is our light, yet this is the standard by which Adonai has revealed to us. There are many influences outside of the family that impact our relationship with our parents but it is these foundational truths that establish a beacon for us.

This is but one example of what this week's Parshah contains that can be applied to our lives today, here and now, even if we haven't been brought up in the Light of Torah. We can embrace it Ha Yom – Today.

All that is being revealed here at Sinai is intended for the purpose of preparing the children of Israel for living in the land that had been promised to the Patriarchs – Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov. This people will no longer be a clan or nomadic but is being prepared to be a nation, with their own land, their own borders, their own freedom. Granted, all that will be delayed, yet the preparation and intention of Adonai did not change for He does not change...

**Num 23:19** "God is not a human who lies or a mortal who changes his mind. When he says something, he will do it; when he makes a promise, he will fulfill it.

Upon preparing the people with further insight and understanding pertaining to the requirements of the Covenant, Adonai reveals what is to happen as they move from Sinai to the promised land...

**Exo 23:20** "I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you on the way and bring you to the place I have prepared.

**Exo 23:21** Pay attention to him, listen to what he says and do not rebel against him; because he will not forgive any wrongdoing of yours, since my name resides in him.

**Exo 23:22** But if you listen to what he says and do everything I tell you, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes.

**Exo 23:23** When my angel goes ahead of you and brings you to the Emori, Hitti, P'rizi, Kena`ani, Hivi and Y'vusi, I will make an end of them.

**Exo 23:24** You are not to worship their gods, serve them or follow their practices; rather, you are to demolish them completely and smash their standing-stones to pieces.

**Exo 23:25** "You are to serve Adonai your God; and he will bless your food and water. I will take sickness away from among you.

It is in verse 25 that we witness the first Aleph Tav...

**Exo 23:25** "You are to serve (Aleph Tav) Adonai your God; and he will bless your food and water. I will take sickness away from among you.

We see this Mitzvah of service to Adonai as the foundation of the Covenant established at Sinai. Yet this verse further confirms the foundation of the New Covenant in that we are to serve the Aleph Tav who is Adonai.

Yeshua came to serve, not be served.

**Mar 10:42** But Yeshua called them to him and said to them, "You know that among the Goyim, those who are supposed to rule them become tyrants, and their superiors become dictators.

**Mar 10:43** But among you, it must not be like that! On the contrary, whoever among you wants to be a leader must be your servant;

**Mar 10:44** and whoever wants to be first among you must become everyone's slave!

**Mar 10:45** For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve—and to give his life as a ransom for many."

We have come to understand through Yeshua's own words that He is the Aleph Tav...

**Rev 22:12** "Pay attention!" [*says Yeshua,*] "I am coming soon, and my rewards are with me to give to each person according to what he has done.

**Rev 22:13** I am the 'Aleph Tav', the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

This non-translatable word comprising the first and last letter of the Aleph-Bet dispersed throughout the Tanakh and as identified by the sages to be a divine marker, we know to be a representation of Yeshua.

By serving Adonai the children of Israel will experience...

**Exo 23:26** In your land your women will not miscarry or be barren, and you will live out the full span of your lives.

**Exo 23:27** I will send terror of me ahead of you, throwing into confusion all the people to whom you come; and I will make all your enemies turn their backs on you.

**Exo 23:28** I will send hornets ahead of you to drive out the Hivi, Kena`ani and Hitti from before you.

**Exo 23:29** I will not drive them out from before you in one year, which would

cause the land to become desolate and the wild animals too many for you.

**Exo 23:30** I will drive them out from before you gradually, until you have grown in number and can take possession of the land.

Does Yeshua not convey this very dynamic...

**Joh 10:7** So Yeshua said to them again, "Yes, indeed! I tell you that I am the gate for the sheep.

The gate represents the means by which to enter and thus to serve. Yeshua is our gate in order to serve Adonai.

**Joh 10:8** All those who have come before me have been thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn't listen to them.

**Joh 10:9** I am the gate; if someone enters through me, he will be safe and will go in and out and find pasture.

**Joh 10:10** The thief comes only in order to steal, kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, life in its fullest measure.

**Joh 10:14** I am the good shepherd; I know my own, and my own know me—

**Joh 10:15** just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father—and I lay down my life on behalf of the sheep.

The sheep follow the shepherd.

In serving Adonai, we are to follow Him.

In serving Yeshua, we are to follow Him.

This message is extremely simple yet challenging. Just as Torah is simple yet challenging.

**Mat 4:18** As Yeshua walked by Lake Kinneret, he saw two brothers who were fishermen—Shim'on, known as Kefa, and his brother Andrew—throwing their net into the lake.

**Mat 4:19** Yeshua said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers for men!"

**Mat 4:20** At once they left their nets and went with him.

We are to serve as Scripture guides us, reveals to us and thus enlightens us as to the ways we are to serve. It is all about relationships. Our first priority and thus our first relationship is to Adonai, yet we are not to neglect our relationships with others.

Deu 6:4 "Sh'ma, Yisra'el! Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad [*Hear, Isra'el! Adonai our God, Adonai is one*];

Deu 6:5 and you are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources.