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Parashah #48. Shof'tim – judges



JUDGES
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- Deu 16:18-21:9
- Is 51:12-52:12
- Mat 3:1-17

Shof'tim means "*judges*"

Debarim (Deuteronomy) 16:18-21:9

Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 16

Judges and Justice

¹⁸ You are to appoint judges and officials for your tribes in every town that אֶלֶּךָ your Alahym is giving you. They are to judge the people with righteous judgment.

¹⁹ Do not deny justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.

²⁰ Pursue justice, and justice alone, so that you may live, and you may possess the land that אֶלֶּךָ your Alahym is giving you.



Forbidden Forms of Worship

²¹ Do not set up any *tree as an Ashērah* next to the altar you will build for אלהיך your Alahym, ²² and do not set up for yourselves a pillar which אלהיך your Alahym hates.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 17

Detestable Sacrifices

¹ You shall not sacrifice to אלהיך your Alahym an ox or a sheep with any defect or serious flaw, for that is detestable to אלהיך your Alahym.

Purge the Idolater

² If a man or woman among you in one of the towns that אלהיך your Alahym gives you is found doing evil in the sight of אלהיך your Alahym by transgressing His covenant ³ and going to worship other Alahyms, bowing down to them or to the sun or moon or any of the host of heaven—which I have forbidden—
⁴ and if it is reported and you hear about it, *you must investigate it thoroughly.*

If the report is true and such an abomination has happened in Yasharal, ⁵ you must bring out to your gates the man or woman who has done this evil thing, and you must stone that person to death. ⁶ On the witness of two or three witnesses a man



shall be put to death, but he shall not be executed on the testimony of a lone witness. ⁷ The hands of the witnesses shall be the first in putting him to death, and after that, the hands of all the people. *So you must purge the evil from among you.*

Courts of Law

⁸ If a case is too difficult for you to judge, whether the controversy within your gates is regarding bloodshed, lawsuits, or assaults, you must go up to the place אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym will choose. ⁹ You are to go to the priests, the Luyim, and to the judge who presides at that time. Inquire of them, and they will give you a verdict in the case.

¹⁰ You must abide by the verdict they give you at the place אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ will choose. Be careful to do everything they instruct you, ¹¹ according to the terms of law they give and the verdict they proclaim. Do not turn aside to the right or to the left from the decision they declare to you.

¹² But the man who acts presumptuously, refusing to listen either to the priest who stands there to serve אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym, or to the judge, must be put to death. You must purge the evil from Yasharal. ¹³ Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and will no longer behave arrogantly.



Guidelines for a King (1 Samuel 8:1–9)

¹⁴ When you enter the land that אלהים your Alahym is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, “Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us,”

¹⁵ you are to appoint over yourselves the king whom אלהים your Alahym shall choose. Appoint a king from among your brothers; you are not to set over yourselves a foreigner who is not one of your brothers.

¹⁶ But the king must not acquire many horses for himself or send the people back to Egypt to acquire more horses, for אלהים has said, ‘You are never to go back that way again.’ ¹⁷ He must not take many wives for himself, lest his heart go astray. He must not accumulate for himself large amounts of silver and gold.

¹⁸ When he is seated on his royal throne, he must write for himself a copy of this instruction on a scroll in the presence of the priests, the Luyim. ¹⁹ It is to remain with him, and he is to read from it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear אלהים his Alahym by carefully observing all the words of this instruction and these statutes. ²⁰ Then his heart will not be exalted above his countrymen, and he will not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or to the left, in order that he and his sons may reign many years over his kingdom in Yasharal.



Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 18

Provision for Priests and Levites (1 Corinthians 9)

¹ The priests, the Luiyim—indeed the whole tribe of Luiy—shall have no portion or inheritance with Yasharal. They are to eat the food offerings to אלהים; that is their inheritance.

² Although they have no inheritance among their brothers, אלהים is their inheritance, as He promised them.

³ This shall be the priests' share from the people who offer a sacrifice, whether a bull or a sheep: the priests are to be given the shoulder, the jowls, and the stomach. ⁴ You are to give them the firstfruits of your grain, new wine, and oil, and the first wool sheared from your flock. ⁵ For אלהים your Alahym has chosen Luiy and his sons out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the Name of אלהים for all time.

⁶ Now if a son of Luiy moves from any town of residence throughout Yasharal and comes in all earnestness to the place אלהים will choose, ⁷ then he shall *serve in the Name of אלהים his Alahym* like all his fellow Luiyim who stand there before אלהים – YAHUAH. ⁸ They shall eat equal portions, even though he has received money from the sale of his father's estate.



Sorcery Forbidden (Acts 8:9–25)

⁹ When you enter the land that אלהים your Alahym is giving you, do not imitate the detestable ways of the nations there.

¹⁰ Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, practices divination or conjury, interprets omens, practices sorcery, ¹¹ casts spells, consults a medium or spiritist, or inquires of the dead. ¹² For whoever does these things is detestable to אלהים. And because of these detestable things, אלהים your Alahym is driving out the nations before you.

¹³ You must be blameless before אלהים your Alahym. ¹⁴ Though these nations, which you will dispossess, listen to conjurers and diviners, אלהים your Alahym has not permitted you to do so.

A Prophet Like Moses (Acts 3:11–26)

¹⁵ אלהים your Alahym will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁶ This is what you asked of אלהים your Alahym at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of אלהים our Alahym or see this great fire anymore, so that we will not die!”

¹⁷ Then אלהים said to me, “They have spoken well. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. I



will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹ And I will hold accountable anyone who does not listen to My words that the prophet speaks in My Name. ²⁰ But if any prophet dares to speak a message in My Name that I have not commanded him to speak, or to speak in the name of other mighty ones, that prophet must be put to death.”

²¹ You may ask in your heart, “How can we recognize a message that אלהים has not spoken?” ²² When a prophet speaks in the Name of אלהים and the message does not come to pass or come true, that is a message אלהים has not spoken. The prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 19

Cities of Refuge (Numbers 35:9–34 ; Deuteronomy 4:41–43 ; Josh. 20:1–9)

¹ When אלהים your Alahym has cut off the nations whose land He is giving you, and when you have driven them out and settled in their cities and houses, ² then you are to set apart for yourselves three cities within the land that אלהים your Alahym is giving you to possess. ³ You are to build roads for yourselves and divide into three regions the land that אלהים your Alahym is giving you as an inheritance, so that any manslayer can flee to these cities.



⁴ Now this is the situation regarding the manslayer who flees to one of these cities to save his life, having killed his neighbor accidentally, without intending to harm him: ⁵ If he goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut timber and swings his axe to chop down a tree, but the blade flies off the handle and strikes and kills his neighbor, he may flee to one of these cities to save his life.

⁶ Otherwise, the avenger of blood might pursue the manslayer in a rage, overtake him if the distance is great, and strike him dead though he did not deserve to die, since he did not intend any harm. ⁷ This is why I am commanding you to set apart for yourselves three cities.

⁸ And if אלהיך your Alahym enlarges your territory, as He swore to your fathers, and gives you all the land He promised them, ⁹ and if you carefully keep all these commandments I am giving you today, loving אלהיך your Alahym and walking in His ways at all times, then you are to add three more cities to these three.

¹⁰ Thus innocent blood will not be shed in the land that אלהיך your Alahym is giving you as an inheritance, so that you will not be guilty of bloodshed.

¹¹ If, however, a man hates his neighbor and lies in wait, attacks him and kills him, and then flees to one of these cities, ¹² the elders of his city must send for him, bring him back, and hand



him over to the avenger of blood to die. ¹³ You must show him no pity. You are to purge from Yasharal the guilt of shedding innocent blood, that it may go well with you.

¹⁴ You must not move your neighbor's boundary marker, which was set up by your ancestors to mark the inheritance you shall receive in the land that אלהים your Alahym is giving you to possess.

The Testimony of Two or Three Witnesses (Matthew 18:15–20)

¹⁵ A lone witness is not sufficient to establish any wrongdoing or sin against a man, regardless of what offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

¹⁶ If a false witness testifies against someone, accusing him of a crime, ¹⁷ both parties to the

dispute must stand in the presence of אלהים, before the priests and judges who are in office at that time. ¹⁸ The judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is proven to be a liar who has falsely accused his brother, ¹⁹ you must do to him as he intended to do to his brother. So you must purge the evil from among you. ²⁰ Then the rest of the people will hear and be afraid, and they will never again do anything so evil among



you.²¹ You must show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and foot for foot.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 20

Laws of Warfare

¹ When you go out to war against your enemies and see horses, chariots, and an army larger than yours, do not be afraid of them; for אלהיך your Alahym, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, is with you. ² When you are about to go into battle, the priest is to come forward and address the army, ³ saying to them, "Hear, O Yasharal, today you are going into battle with your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not be alarmed or terrified because of them. ⁴ For אלהיך your Alahym goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory."

⁵ Furthermore, the officers are to address the army, saying, "Has any man built a new house and not dedicated it? Let him return home, or he may die in battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶ Has any man planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy its fruit? Let him return home, or he may die in battle and another man enjoy its fruit. ⁷ Has any man become pledged to a woman and not married her? Let him return home, or he may die in battle and another man marry her."



⁸ Then the officers shall speak further to the army, saying, “Is any man afraid or fainthearted? Let him return home, so that the hearts of his brothers will not melt like his own.”

⁹ When the officers have finished addressing the army, they are to appoint commanders to lead it.

¹⁰ When you approach a city to fight against it, you are to make an offer of peace. ¹¹ If they accept your offer of peace and open their gates, all the people there will become forced laborers to serve you.

¹² But if they refuse to make peace with you and wage war against you, lay siege to that city. ¹³ When אֵלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym has delivered it into your hand, you must put every male to the sword. ¹⁴ But the women, children, livestock, and whatever else is in the city—all its spoil—you may take as plunder, and you shall use the spoil of your enemies that אֵלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym gives you. ¹⁵ This is how you are to treat all the cities that are far away from you and do not belong to the nations nearby.

¹⁶ However, in the cities of the nations that אֵלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym is giving you as an inheritance, you must not leave alive anything that breathes. ¹⁷ For you must devote them to complete destruction—the Hittite and the Amorite and the Kena'anite and the Perizzite and the Hiwwite and the Yebusite—as אֵלֹהֶיךָ your Alahym has commanded you, ¹⁸ so



that they cannot teach you to do all the detestable things they do for their mighty ones, and so cause you to sin against אלהיך your Alahym.

¹⁹ When you lay siege to a city for an extended time while fighting against it to capture it, you must not destroy its trees by putting an axe to them, because you can eat their fruit. You must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field human, that you should besiege them? ²⁰ But you may destroy the trees that you know do not produce fruit. Use them to build siege works against the city that is waging war against you, until it falls.

Debarim (Deuteronomy) Chapter 21

Atonement for an Unsolved Murder

¹ If one is found slain, lying in a field in the land that אלהיך your Alahym is giving you to possess, and it is not known who killed him, ² your elders and judges must come out and measure the distance from the victim to the neighboring cities.

³ Then the elders of the city nearest the victim shall take a heifer that has never been yoked or used for work, ⁴ bring the heifer to a valley with running water that has not been plowed or sown, and break its neck there by the stream.



⁵ And the priests, the sons of Luiy, shall come forward, for אלהים your Alahym has chosen them to serve Him and pronounce blessings in His Name and to give a ruling in every dispute and case of assault. ⁶ Then all the elders of the city nearest the victim shall wash their hands by the stream over the heifer whose neck has been broken, ⁷ and they shall declare, "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it. ⁸ Accept this atonement, O אלהים, for Your people Yasharal whom You have redeemed, and do not hold the shedding of innocent blood against them."

And the bloodshed will be atoned for. ⁹ So you shall purge from among you the guilt of shedding innocent blood, since you have done what is right in the eyes of אלהים.

Yashayahu (Isaiah) 51:12-52:12

Yashayahu (Isaiah) Chapter 51

¹² "I, even I, am He who comforts you.

Why should you be afraid of mortal man,
of a son of man who withers like grass?

¹³ But you have forgotten אלהים, your Maker,



who stretched out the heavens
and laid the foundations of the earth.

You live in terror all day long
because of the fury of the oppressor
who is bent on destruction.

But where is the fury of the oppressor?

¹⁴ The captive will soon be freed;
he will not die in the dungeon,
and his bread will not be lacking.

¹⁵ For I am אלהים your Alahym
who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—
אלהים of Hosts is His Name.

¹⁶ I have put My words in your mouth,
and covered you with the shadow of My hand,
to establish the heavens, to found the earth,
and to say to Tsyion, 'You are My people.' "



Alahym's Fury Removed

¹⁷ Awake, awake!

Rise up, O Yarushalayim,

you who have drunk from the hand of אֶלֶּהֶם

the cup of His fury;

you who have drained the goblet to the dregs—

the cup that makes men stagger.

¹⁸ Among all the sons she bore,

there is no one to guide her;

among all the sons she brought up,

there is no one to take her hand.

¹⁹ These pairs have befallen you:

devastation and destruction,

famine and sword.

Who will grieve for you?

Who can comfort you?



²⁰ Your sons have fainted;
they lie at the head of every street,
like an antelope in a net.

They are full of the wrath of אֱלֹהִים,
the rebuke of your Alahym.

²¹ Therefore now hear this, you afflicted one,
drunken, but not with wine.

²² Thus says your Master, אֱלֹהִים,
even your Alahym, who defends His people:

“See, I have removed from your hand
the cup of staggering.

From that goblet, the cup of My fury,
you will never drink again.

²³ I will place it in the hands of your tormentors,
who told you: ‘Lie down, so we can walk over you,’
so that you made your back like the ground,



like a street to be traversed.”

Yashayahu (Isaiah) Chapter 52

Deliverance for Yarushalayim

¹ Awake, awake,

clothe yourself with strength, O Tsyion!

Put on your garments of splendor,

O Yarushalayim, set apart city!

For the uncircumcised and unclean

will no longer enter you.

² Shake off your dust!

Rise up and sit on your throne, O Yarushalayim.

Remove the chains from your neck,

O captive Daughter of Tsyion.

³ For this is what אלהים says:

“You were sold for nothing,



and without money you will be redeemed.”

⁴ For this is what אלהים Alahym says:

“At first My people went down to Mitsrayim to live,
then Ashshur oppressed them without cause.

⁵ And now what have I here?

declares אלהים.

For My people have been taken without cause;
those who rule them taunt,
declares אלהים,

and My Name is blasphemed continually
all day long.

⁶ Therefore My people will know My Name;
therefore they will know on that day
that I am He who speaks.

Here I am!”

⁷ How beautiful on the mountains



are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings,
who proclaim deliverance,
who say to Tsyion, "Your Alahym reigns!"

⁸ Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices,
together they shout for joy.

For every eye will see
when אלהים returns to Tsyion.

⁹ Break forth in joy, sing together,
O ruins of Yarushalayim,
for אלהים has comforted His people;
He has redeemed Yarushalayim.

¹⁰ אלהים has bared His set apart arm
in the sight of all the nations;
all the ends of the earth will see
the deliverance of our Alahym.



¹¹ Depart, depart, go out from there!

Touch no unclean thing;

come out from it, purify yourselves,
you who carry the vessels of אֵלֹהִים.

¹² For you will not leave in a hurry

nor flee in haste,

for אֵלֹהִים goes before you,
and the Alahym of Yasharal is your rear guard.

MattithYahu (Matthew) 3:1-17

MattithYahu (Matthew) Chapter 3

The Mission of Yoḥanan the Immerser (Isaiah 40:1–5 ; Mark 1:1–8 ; Luke 3:1–20 ; Yoḥanan 1:19–28)

¹ In those days Yoḥanan the Immerser came, preaching in the wilderness of Yahudah ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet YashaYahu:



"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

'Prepare the way for אֵלֶיךָ,

make straight paths for Him.' "

⁴ Yoḥanan wore a garment of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Yarushalayim and all Yahudah and the whole region around the Yarden. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were immersed by him in the Yarden River.

⁷ But when Yoḥanan saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his place of immersion, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?

⁸ Produce fruit, then, in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones, Alahym can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The axe lies ready at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ I immerse you with water for repentance, but after me will come One more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Set Apart Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and to gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."



The Immersion of ལུ་ཡུ་མེད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མོ་ (Mark 1:9–11 ; Luke 3:21–22 ; Yoḥanan 1:29–34)

¹³ At that time ལུ་ཡུ་མེད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མོ་ came from Galilee to the Yarden to be immersed by Yoḥanan. ¹⁴ But Yoḥanan tried to prevent Him, saying, “I need to be immersed by You, and do You come to me?”

¹⁵ “Let it be so now,” ལུ་ཡུ་མེད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མོ་ replied. “It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness in this way.” Then Yoḥanan permitted Him.

¹⁶ As soon as ལུ་ཡུ་མེད་ཀྱི་མཚན་མོ་ was immersed, He went up out of the water. Suddenly the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of Alahym descending like a dove and resting on Him.

¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!”

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