

Triennial Parsha Reading For 11/21/2009
Shoftim (Judges)

Tab	Section	Verse
1	Psalm	Psa 138:1
2	Torah	Deu 16:18-17:13
3	Haftorah	Isa 51:12-52:12
4	Brit	Joh 5
5	Brit	1Co 5:9-13
6	Gospel	Act 12:1-25
7	Prophecy	Dan 11:1-20
8	History	Ezr 5:1-17

Psalm 138..... 1
Torah - Deu 16:18-17:13..... 2
My Commentary and Notes..... 3
 Stand alone Aleph Tav for Deu 17:9 and Isa 52:10..... 3
 General Comments..... 3
 Mitzvot for this parasha 3
Haftorah - Isa 51:12-52:12..... 4
Brit - Joh 5:1-47 5
Brit - 1Co 5:9-13..... 6
Gospel - Act 12:1-25..... 6
Prophecy - Dan 11:1-20..... 7
History - Ezr 5:1-17 8
Commentary..... 9
 Ahavta..... 9

Psalm 138

¹ I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee. ² I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name. ³ In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. ⁴ All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, YHVH, when they hear the words of thy mouth. ⁵ Yea, they shall sing in the ways of YHVH: for great is the glory of YHVH. ⁶ Though YHVH be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off. ⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. ⁸ YHVH will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, YHVH, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Torah - Deu 16:18-17:13

The Establishment of the Legal System

¹⁸ Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which YHVH thy Elohim giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. ¹⁹ Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. ²⁰ That which is altogether just ^{H6664 tzedek H6664 tzedek} shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which YHVH thy Elohim giveth thee. ²¹ Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of YHVH thy Elohim, which thou shalt make thee. ²² Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which YHVH thy Elohim hateth.

^{17:1} Thou shalt not sacrifice unto YHVH thy Elohim any bullock, or sheep, wherein is blemish, or any evilfavouredness: for that is an abomination unto YHVH thy Elohim. ² If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which YHVH thy Elohim giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of YHVH thy Elohim, in transgressing his covenant, ³ And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; ⁴ And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: ⁵ Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. ⁶ At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. ⁷ The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you. ⁸ If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which YHVH thy Elohim shall choose; ⁹ And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: ¹⁰ And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which YHVH shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: ¹¹ According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. ¹² And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before YHVH thy Elohim, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. ¹³ And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.

My Commentary and Notes

Stand alone Aleph Tav for Deu 17:9 and Isa 52:10

For an explanation of the Aleph Tav teaching, click here → [Word Doc](#) version or [PDF](#) version

Deu 17:9 And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee **Aleph Tav** the sentence of judgment:

Deu 17:9 וּבֹאֵת אֶל-הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם וְאֶל-הַשֹּׁפֵט אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בְּיָמֵם הָהֵם וְדַרְשֶׁתָּ וְהַגִּידוּ לְךָ אֵת דְּבַר הַמִּשְׁפָּט:

Isa 52:10 YHVH hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations shall see; and all the ends of the earth **H776 erez** **Aleph Tav** shall-see the salvation **H3444 yshuat** of our Elohim.

Isa 52:10 חָשַׁף יְהוָה אֶת-זְרוּעֵ קְדָשׁוֹ לְעֵינֵי כָל-הַגּוֹיִם וְרָאוּ כָל-אַפְסֵי-אֲרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ס

General Comments

Isa 52:10 Not much commentary is needed for the Aleph Tav found in Isaiah 52:10 as it should be self-explanatory. The stand alone Aleph Tav stands between the earth and the salvation of Elohim. The meaning of Y'shua is the salvation of Elohim. This reminds me of

Joh 3:16 KJV For Elohim so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Deu 16:20 That which is altogether just **H6664 tzedek H6664 tzedek** shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which YHVH thy Elohim giveth thee.

This is where we get the concept of due process, i.e. when in the pursuit of justice, do it justly.

Act 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after **Easter** **G3957 pascha, LXX H6453 pesach=passover** to bring him forth to the people.

KJC of G3957 **πάσχα** pascha **Occurrences: 29**

passover, 28: [Mat 26:2](#), [Mat 26:17-19](#) (3), [Mar 14:1](#), [Mar 14:12](#) (2), [Mar 14:14](#), [Mar 14:16](#), [Luk 2:41](#), [Luk 22:1](#), [Luk 22:7-8](#) (2), [Luk 22:11](#), [Luk 22:13](#), [Luk 22:15](#), [Joh 2:13](#), [Joh 2:23](#), [Joh 6:4](#), [Joh 11:55](#) (2), [Joh 13:1](#) (2), [Joh 18:28](#), [Joh 18:39](#), [Joh 19:14](#), [1Co 5:7](#), [Heb 11:28](#) ; **easter, 1:** [Act 12:4](#)

Mitzvot for this parasha

Verse(s)	Mitzvah Number	Category	Law
Deu 16:18	227	The Court and Judicial Procedure	To appoint judges and officers in every community of Israel.
Deu 16:21	350	Idolatry, Idolaters and Idolatrous Practices	Not to plant a tree for worship.
Deu 16:22	351	Idolatry, Idolaters and Idolatrous Practices	Not to set up a pillar (for worship).
Deu 17:1	558	Sacrifices and Offerings	Not to offer up a beast that has a temporary blemish.
Deu 17:11	261	The Court and Judicial Procedure	To accept the rulings of every Supreme Court in Israel.
Deu 17:11	262	The Court and Judicial Procedure	Not to rebel against the orders of the Court.

Haftorah - Isa 51:12-52:12

¹² I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; ¹³ And forgettest YHVH thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor? ¹⁴ The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. ¹⁵ But I am YHVH thy Elohim, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: YHVH of hosts is his name. ¹⁶ And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people. ¹⁷ Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of YHVH the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. ¹⁸ There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up. ¹⁹ These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee? ²⁰ Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of YHVH, the rebuke of thy Elohim. ²¹ Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, but not with wine: ²² Thus saith thy Lord YHVH, and thy Elohim that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: ²³ But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

^{52:1} Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. ² Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. ³ For thus saith YHVH, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. ⁴ For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. ⁵ Now therefore, what have I here, saith YHVH, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith YHVH; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. ⁶ Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I. ⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy Elohim reigneth! ⁸ Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when YHVH shall bring again Zion. ⁹ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for YHVH hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ YHVH hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our Elohim. ¹¹ Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of YHVH. ¹² For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for YHVH will go before you; and the Elohim of Israel will be your rereward.

Brit - Joh 5:1-47

¹ After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Y'shua went up to Jerusalem. ² Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. ³ In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. ⁴ For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. ⁵ And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. ⁶ When Y'shua saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? ⁷ The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. ⁸ Y'shua saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. ⁹ And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. ¹⁰ The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. ¹¹ He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. ¹² Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? ¹³ And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Y'shua had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. ¹⁴ Afterward Y'shua findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. ¹⁵ The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Y'shua, which had made him whole. ¹⁶ And therefore did the Jews persecute Y'shua, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. ¹⁷ But Y'shua answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that Elohim was his Father, making himself equal with Elohim. ¹⁹ Then answered Y'shua and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. ²² For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: ²³ That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. ²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. ²⁵ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Elohim: and they that hear shall live. ²⁶ For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; ²⁷ And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. ²⁸ Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. ³⁰ I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. ³¹ If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. ³² There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. ³³ Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. ³⁴ But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. ³⁵ He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. ³⁶ But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. ³⁷ And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. ³⁸ And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. ³⁹ Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. ⁴⁰ And ye will not

come to me, that ye might have life. ⁴¹ I receive not honour from men. ⁴² But I know you, that ye have not the love of Elohim in you. ⁴³ I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. ⁴⁴ How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from Elohim only? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. ⁴⁶ For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. ⁴⁷ But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Brit - 1Co 5:9-13

⁹ I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: ¹⁰ Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. ¹¹ But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. ¹² For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? ¹³ But them that are without Elohim judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

Gospel - Act 12:1-25

¹ Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. ² And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³ And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) ⁴ And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter Pascha (Gr.) Pasach (Hebrew)/Passover to bring him forth to the people. ⁵ Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto Elohim for him. ⁶ And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. ⁷ And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. ⁸ And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. ⁹ And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. ¹⁰ When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. ¹¹ And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that YHVH hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. ¹² And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. ¹³ And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. ¹⁴ And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. ¹⁵ And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. ¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷ But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place. ¹⁸ Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. ¹⁹ And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and there abode. ²⁰ And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and,

having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country. ²¹ And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. ²² And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. ²³ And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not Elohim the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. ²⁴ But the word of Elohim grew and multiplied. ²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

Prophecy - Dan 11:1-20

¹ Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. ² And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. ³ And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. ⁴ And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. ⁵ And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. ⁶ And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times. ⁷ But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: ⁸ And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. ⁹ So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land. ¹⁰ But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. ¹¹ And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. ¹² And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it. ¹³ For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. ¹⁴ And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. ¹⁵ So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. ¹⁶ But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed. ¹⁷ He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. ¹⁸ After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. ¹⁹ Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. ²⁰ Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.

History - Ezz 5:1-17

¹ Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the Elohim of Israel, even unto them. ² Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of Elohim which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of Elohim helping them. ³ At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? ⁴ Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? ⁵ But the eye of their Elohim was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter. ⁶ The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king: ⁷ They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace. ⁸ Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great Elohim, which is builded with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands. ⁹ Then asked we those elders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? ¹⁰ We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them. ¹¹ And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the Elohim of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. ¹² But after that our fathers had provoked the Elohim of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. ¹³ But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of Elohim. ¹⁴ And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of Elohim, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; ¹⁵ And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of Elohim be builded in his place. ¹⁶ Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of Elohim which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished. ¹⁷ Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of Elohim at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

Commentary

For more commentary on Shoftim Deu 16:18 to 21:9 from [MIA](#), click → [here](#).

Ahavta

Commentary - Year 3 Sabbath 35

Deuteronomy 16:18 - 17:13 - 1 Samuel 8:1-7 - Psalm 132 - John 5:1-47

<http://www.ahavta.org/Commentary%20Y-3/Y3-35.htm>

Kislev 4, 5764 / November 29, 2003; Kislev 4, 5767 / November 25, 2006; Kislev 4, 5770 / November 21, 2009

Shofetim / Judges

We regularly pray, “Restore our judges, as in earliest times” (eleventh blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei). We may expect Biblical judgment to be restored during the millennial reign of Yeshua.

(V.16:18) Today’s portion begins with the command to appoint judges: “*You shall appoint for yourself judges*”.

Appointing an unjust judge is likened to planting a tree for idolatry (v.21). “If the community has a hand in appointing unqualified judges, God holds them all responsible for the resultant perversions of justice” (*Or HaChaim*). Here is a basis for moral democracy (under God), and for believers to take part in voting.

Judges must not pervert judgment: they are not to be a respecter of persons, and are not to take bribes.

John 5:44 “*How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?*”

Here are Talmudic disqualifications for a judge or witness:

One who gambles to make money, one who loans at interest, one who bets on races, one who violates Sabbath for profit; a near kin, a friend, an enemy (one who had not spoken due to enmity for 3 days).

[*Note: Completion of Jerusalem Talmud – 351 CE*

End of Sanhedrin – 425 CE

Babylonian Talmud – 200 - 499 CE]

John 12:42-43 “*Nevertheless many even of the rulers (judges) believed in Him (Yeshua), but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*”

1 Samuel 8:1 “*And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel.*”

After these sons perverted judgment, Israel wrongly asked for a king, and was given Saul.

In Exodus 21, we are told that penalty judgments are to be proportionate to the seriousness of the crime: “*an eye for an eye*”, which means the fair price of an eye for the loss of an eye; we are also told that the defendant must be held to the court’s judgment: “*he shall pay as the judges decide*”. In Exodus 22, a defendant that is unable to pay a judgment shall be sold for payment.

Titus 3:1 “*Remind them to be subject to rulers (judges)*”.

(V.17:1) Next we are forbade worship using “*a detestable thing*”.

The order is thus:

- a) Proper justice is of tantamount importance.
- b) Perversion of justice will lead to idolatrous degrading of places of worship, in the guise of external beautification (*trees*).
- c) Blemished animals and unjustly gained money will be used for offerings.

(V.2-7) For example: if the judges are told that someone has worshipped an idol, the matter is to be thoroughly examined. Two or three witnesses are required that give exactly comparable testimony concerning time and place and details of the deed. The guilty one must be stoned to death, and the witnesses must cast the first boulders upon the prostrate person, followed by all the people.

Here are Talmudic rules for testimony:

*Witnesses questioned separately, beginning with eldest;
Must be eye/ear-witness, must be in agreement in details of time and place and circumstances.*

The reason given for capital punishment is to cleanse evil from the land. It is a warning to others. It is not revenge. Compassion for the person is not only misplaced, but wrong.

(V.17:8) Any dispute that cannot be resolved by a lower court, is to be taken the high court – the Sanhedrin. A decision there is absolutely binding.

Here are the levels of courts:

Sanhedrin = Court of Justice

- A) Reference to Great Beit Din = Court of 71 (Num 11:16) ordained scholars in Jerusalem (from Moses’ *time to 425 CE*); *=*halachic ruling*, **=*culpatory ruling*
Beit Din haGadol shebeLishkat haGazit (Great House of Judgment in the Circular Chamber of Hewn Stone)
Met every day (except Sabbaths and Festivals and their eves), only during the daytime – between the morning and evening sacrifices (approx. 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM); the place where “the Law went forth to all Israel”.
Three semi-circular rows of twenty-three disciples, needed additional judges selected from first row, replaced from second row, which were replaced from third row, which were replaced from congregation.
**Wrote Mishnah/Talmud*
**Establish lower courts, determination of Rosh Hodesh, set up King or High Priest, determination of Temple*

structure, need for Red heifer, Priestly genealogy, waging non-defensive battle

***exceptional cases – trying a high priest, false prophet, or a whole city*

B) Also reference to Small Beit Din = subordinate District Court of 23 (see Sanhedrin 1:6);

***criminal cases which may involve death penalty: defamer, owner of animal that killed; judging animals involved in bestiality or killing a person*

C) Synagogue Bench of 3 usually only called Beit Din.

**Sabbath preparation and starting times, evaluation of fourth year tree fruit, assessment of second tithe redemption, assessment of consecrated property redemption,*

***monetary matters (inheritances, loans, sales), theft, bodily injury, seduction, crimes punishable by flogging*

Synagogues had a bench of three judges, called “Rulers of the Synagogue” (Matthew 9:18) because they made halachic rulings and culpability rulings.

1 Corinthians 6:1-6 “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life? If then you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

Psalm 132

The Holy Temple was the center for instruction in righteousness, and judgment – the place of the Sanhedrin. It is called the resting place of Yahweh forever (v.13), and the place from whence the power of David will spring forth (v.17).

John 5

“22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. 25 Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live. 26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, 29 and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. 30 I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and **My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.** 31 If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. 32 There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true. 33 You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. 34 But the witness which I receive is not from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. 35 He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But the witness which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”