



Parshas Mishpatim 2022, fail to plan

This week's Parsha Perspective is dedicated by Simon and Co Jewellers in honor of the birth of Sarah Malkah to Menachem and Chana Simon! May G-d bless them with health, happiness, and nachas!

This week's Parsha Perspective honors the birthdays of Shaul Shaul and Lior Hemo! May bless them and their entire family with a year of happiness, health, and success!

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna and Shaul Ben Berta and in loving memory of Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha begins with G-d giving Moshe Rabbeinu and the Jewish nation fifty-three new practical commandments. He gave them the laws regarding the treatment of slaves, personal injury, murder, and the requirements of a person who is a guardian of another's property. The Mitzvah to see the Beis Hamikdash three times a year, the laws of shemita, sacrifices, and returning a lost object.

Moshe then tells the Jewish nation what rewards they will receive for keeping G-d's commandments. There will be no miscarriages, the borders of Israel will grow, and they will conquer the land without opposition.

The Parsha ends with G-d summoning Moshe Rabbienu back up Mt. Sinai to study the Torah for forty days and forty nights.

Moshe told the seventy elders that his brother, Aaron, and his nephew, Chur, would answer any questions they had in his absence.

G-d's glory set the mountain top ablaze as Moshe began to ascend the mountain with his most faithful student, Yeshuah Ben Nun. The whole Jewish nation watched as Moshe disappeared into the clouds from afar.

However, a question comes to mind: The Parsha begins with words (21:1), *"These are the laws that you (Moshe) must place before them."* But why does Moshe have **"place it before them"** rather than just **"say"** it to them?

The Sforno (*Rav Ovadiah Sforno, an Italian commentator and doctor from the early 1500s*) gives a simple answer. He writes that many of these laws will never apply to most people.

First, many regulations will only begin once they are in Israel, which most won't enter. Secondly, several laws are occasion-based, for example, a Jewish slave. They are only in that predicament because they must repay what they stole.

Since most of the community will not put themselves in that mess, these laws might seem irrelevant. Hence, some might not pay attention to what Moshe is about to say. So G-d is telling Moshe to tell the Jewish people that they must study the laws anyway, although it may appear unrelated to them.

However, the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh (*Rav Chaim Ibn Attar, a Moroccan commentator and Kabbalist*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He quotes a disagreement between Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Akiva. They disagree about the purpose of our Pasuk *"These are the laws that you must place before them."*

Rabbi Yishmael holds that our Pasuk teaches us that G-d gave just the Ten Commandments; these mundane and physical laws are also G-dly.

Rabbi Akiva argues that since these rules immediately follow the Ten Commandments, Moshe might think he just needs to say the laws one time as G-d did on Mt. Sinai.

Therefore, G-d reiterates to Moshe that **he must do the exact polar opposite**. He must explain, repeat and clarify every law until the nation understands them. He must outline every rule and regulation in a way they will practicalize and follow daily. **For he is their leader, it is his duty to lead his people on the correct and G-dly path.**

Interestingly, the code of Jewish law is called the Shulchan Aruch, which means **a set table**. One of the many reasons for this name is because the author, **Rav Yosef Karo, laid out the laws in the order of our daily routine**. This made every rule and regulation accessible to every person, like cooked food on a set table.

In our daily life, if we seek to accomplish and grow in our conduct, relationships, and business, we will need a plan of action. We must take an honest look at our current situation and formulate a path to our goals. It often takes an outsider, a close friend, a mentor, a life coach, a trusted rabbi, or a therapist to show us the correct course of action objectively.

It is crucial for success because it is almost impossible to think rationally when we are in the midst of all the action. Our past experiences and history subconsciously control our reactions **unless we plan otherwise**.

"If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail."

-Benjamin Franklin

Have a meaningful Shabbos!
Rabbi Sholom Yemini