

Parshas Shoftim

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת שופטים

ד' אלול תשפ"ה / August 28, 2025



Elul is the last month of the year, which is why the Chachamim designated this month to do teshuva on sins committed over the past year. So that one can enter Rosh Hashanah, the Yom HaDin – day of reckoning, with a clean slate.

The month of Elul's – אלול --acronym is איש לרעהו ומתנות לאביונים – one should increase giving tzedakah during the month of Elul.



The Belzer Rebbe shlita blowing the shofar Rosh Chodesh Elul

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BELZ

YAHREZIT OF REBBETZIN MALKA ZT"l

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 - ח' אלול

Rebbetzin Malka of Belz: A Partner in Holiness

Rebbetzin Malka was not only the devoted

Rebbetzin of the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l, but a true Aishes Chayil – partner in his spiritual mission. Steadfast and resolute, she stood at her husband's side when shortly after their marriage, the Sar Shalom undertook a seemingly impossible challenge: to study Torah for 1,000 consecutive nights without interruption.

Throughout this monumental effort, Rebbetzin Malka remained by his side – literally. Each night, she would stay awake holding a candle to keep the room lit, ensuring the Sar Shalom could continue learning. If ever she noticed him starting to drift off, she would gently awaken him so he could resume his sacred task. Her dedication made his achievement possible.

On the thousandth night, as fierce winds and storms raged outside, Reb Shalom remained immersed in his learning. That night, Eliyahu HaNavi appeared to him and revealed the hidden wellsprings of Kabbalah. Together, they delved into the mystical foundations of Torah and the halachos related to the sanctity of a beis tefillah.

It was then that Reb Shalom resolved to build the Belz Shul, whose every detail would reflect the holiness and precision he had learned from Eliyahu HaNavi himself.

The Sar Shalom never forgot the sacrifices and devotion of his Rebbetzin during those early, difficult years. Her contribution was so profound that it gave rise to the beautiful saying often quoted among Chassidim:

“ומלכי צדק מלך שלם” – “It is in the merit of Malka (the Queen) that Shalom is a King.”

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WHATS HAPPENING IN BELZ

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Blessed Food

Rebbetzin Malka was known for preparing a large pot of kasha every Shabbos, which she generously served to the Chassidim. When asked how there was always enough kasha to go around—even on those Shabbosim when guests arrived unexpectedly at the last minute—she replied with heartfelt humility:

"I place a piece of my heart into the pot and pray to Hashem that I should not be put to shame. As it says in Mishlei, 'טוב עין הוא יברך' — 'A good eye will be blessed.' When one has a generous and trusting heart, Hashem sends His blessing so that no one should lack food."

A Simcha in the במליא של מעלה

Rebbetzin Malka a"h passed away on the 8th of Elul, 5638 (תרי"ח). When the Sar Shalom, saw their children weeping bitterly over her loss, he comforted them with these words:

"If only you could understand the great Simcha that is now taking place in the במליא של מעלה—the heavenly entourage—you would not be crying now."

BAR MITZVAH PREPARATIONS

In preparation for his son Moshe Yehoshua's upcoming bar mitzvah, Harav Hatzaddik Reb Aharon Mordechai Rokeach shlita visited the renowned Hatzlacha workshop, together with his son, to observe the crafting of Moshe Yehoshua's tefillin batim by Harav Menachem Hillel Hirsch shlita.



NEW ZMAN BEGINS WITH DIVREI CHIZUK

Following Mincha in the Great Belz Shul, where all the new bochurim had gathered together for the first time, the Harav Hatzaddik Reb Aharon Mordechai Rokeach, shlita, delivered warm divrei pesicha—opening words of inspiration—to the hundreds of bochurim who had recently arrived in Eretz Yisroel to begin the new zman in Yeshivas Gedolas across the country.

With warm words, Harav Hatzaddik welcomed them to Yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel, offering heartfelt brachos for much hatzlacha in their learning and spiritual growth, and concluding with warm wishes for a גוט געבענטש יאר!

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EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY

especially a Chassidic story...



צדק צדק תרדף למען תחיה (שופטים טז:ג)
Righteousness, righteousness, shall you pursue, so that you will live.

The holy Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l was once in Lublin by his holy Rebbe, the Rebbe of Lublin zt"l. When he bid farewell to the Rebbe of Lublin, his Rebbe told him: "If you encounter a person walking on foot, what would you do?" The Sar Shalom replied: "I'll for sure welcome him onto my wagon!"

The Chozeh of Lublin continued asking: "And if you will encounter a person limping with a walking stick who will surely ask for a hitch with your wagon, what would you do?" The

Sar Shalom responded: "I'll for sure take him into our wagon!"

The Rebbe of Lublin said, "I feel that you shouldn't give him a hitch. Because a healthy person walks on foot if perhaps he doesn't have money to rent a wagon, but a person who limps, why didn't he originally take a wagon – it must be that he is a liar and is pretending to limp." The Chozeh finished bidding farewell to the Sar Shalom with these words.

The Sar Shalom headed out and fell asleep in the middle of the way. He suddenly awoke to the sound of screaming. He asked what the commotion was about and was told that a person with a limp was yelling to be taken into their wagon. The Sar Shalom reminded himself of his Rebbe's departing words and said not to take him in, just continue traveling.

The man with the limp started running after them, and the Sar Shalom requested that they travel faster. When the person saw them speeding up, he dropped his sticks and started running after them, until he suddenly vanished.

The next time the Sar Shalom was in Lublin, the Rebbe of Lublin explained what had occurred. The limping Yid once lived in Belz and didn't act appropriately. The Sar Shalom had summoned him, and he didn't come, saying he had nothing to do with the Rav. The last time the Sar Shalom's gabbai summoned him, he spanked him and threw him out of his house.

The Yid passed away a short time later, and it was decreed in heaven that he needed a תיקון – an atonement by coming down to this world again and having to run after the Sar Shalom, and not being able to reach him. The pain will serve as atonement – "מזדה כנגד מזדה." The Rebbe of Lublin concluded: "That's why I told you not to take him onto your wagon, so he should

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EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY, ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY

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have his atonement.”

The Friedige Belzer Rav zt”l explained the Mishna (מסכת פאה) that says: “כל מי שאינו לא חיגר ולא סומא ולא פיסח ועושה עצמו כאחד מהם, אינו מת מן הזקנה – one who doesn’t limp and makes himself as if he has a limp, will have a limp at the end. And brings צדק צדק as proof.

כי תאמר בלבבך רבים הגוים האלה...לא תירא מהם זכר תזכור... לא תערץ מפניהם...

כי יפלא ממך דבר למשפט בין דם לדם בין דין לדין...דברי ריבת בשעריך... (שופטים יז:ח)

If a matter of judgment is hidden from you, between blood and blood, between verdict and verdict...Matters of dispute in your cities.

The Avnei Nezer of Sochotchov zt”l was visited by a few community members from a different town. They had a complaint against their rabbi – that their rabbi had given a lenient verdict on a question about milk and meat, which others considered more stringent. They wanted to know if they can rely on their Rav’s verdict on graver questions; hence, they want to appoint a dayan in their city.

The Avnei Nezer dissuaded them from appointing a dayan, claiming that it would only cause a huge fight: “According to what you’re saying, your Rav gave the ok to an אסור דרבנן – something that the Rabbanim prohibited – and you want to transgress an אסור דאורייתא – something that the Torah forbids – causing a fight. Through fighting, one transgresses many more prohibitions in the Torah. The Avner Nezer explained the passuk “כי יפלא ממך דבר למשפט בין דם לדם בין דין לדין” – why? Because דברי ריבת בשעריך – there are disputes and fights over it.

THE REBBE’S TORAH



צדק צדק תרדף למען תחיה וירשת את הארץ אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך (שופטים טז:כ)

Righteousness, righteousness shall your pursue, so that you will live and possess the Land that Hahem, your G-d, gives you.

There are Aveiros – sins for which one can do teshuva, or repent. However, other sins require a Yom Kippur or ailments to serve as a form of repentance. And then there is the sin of Chilul Hashem – desecrating Hashem’s name, which one can only repent when he leaves this world.

However, there are a few ways one can atone for the sin of Chilul Hashem while living.

1. The טורי זהב writes that when one does teshuva on Shabbos Kodesh.
2. The holy Mittler Rav zt”l said that one can do teshuva through tefillah.
3. The holy Friedige Rav zt”l said one can atone through Gemillas Chassadim.
4. He also said that when one lives in Eretz Yisrael, it can also serve as atonement.

All these ideas are alluded to in the passuk:

The word “צדק” is a phrase used in conjunction with teshuva, tefillah, and tzedakah, which is a form of gemilas chasadim. If one performs teshuva and adds tefillah and gemillas chasadim, he is worthy of atonement for all his sins in this world. As the passuk continues “למען תחיה” – so he shall live.

The words “וירשת את הארץ” alludes to the other ways of atonement for Chillul Hashem.

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THE REBBE'S TORAH continued

הארץ את refers to Eretz Yisroel.

The word "הארץ" - numerical value is equivalent to שבת קודש (the letter "ץ" is 900) totaling to 1106 - like שבת קודש.

THIS WEEK'S VORT

פרשת שופטים

צדק צדק תרדף למען תחיה (שופטים טז:ג)
Righteousness, righteousness, shall you pursue, so that you will live.

One must continually pursue the mitzvah of giving tzedakah and strive for justice. Even if one didn't reach the level of a tzaddik, one still needs to pursue צדק - justice and tzedakah. For "למען תחיה" - for when he works on pursuing the right things - it gives him "חי" - life.

תמים תהיה אם ה' אלקיך... (שופטים יח:ג)
You shall be wholehearted with Hashem.

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says: The passuk talks about not turning to sorcerers, and those in similar fields, don't go to them to improve your mazel - fate. The Torah tells us if you will be wholehearted with Hashem, you won't lack anything.

לא תכיר פנים ולא תקח שוחד (שופטים טז:ט)
You shall not respect someone's presence, and you shall not accept a bribe.

The word "שחד" is the same letters as "חשד" - presume. The passuk alludes to the fact that

a dayan and a shofet, judges, aren't allowed to accept bribery, and they must live a simple life so that no one should presume that they take bribes.

לבלתי רם לבבו... למען יאריך ימים על ממלכתו (שופטים יז:כ)
So that his heart does not become haughty... so that he will prolong years over his kingdom.

The passuk tells us that one who doesn't hold himself in high regard and is humble will merit prolonged life. As the Gemara says (סנהדרין צב) that "לעולם הוי קבל וקיים" - may it always be accepted and contained - Rashi says: "הוי עניו" - keep humble and you will live.



כל העוסק בתורה לשמה זוכה לדברים הרבה (אבות ו:א)
Anyone who engages in Torah for its own sake merits many things.

The holy Baal Shem Tov zt"l writes that one who learns Torah from an unworthy person will not see the fruits of his labor. However, Torah that is learned from a tzaddik is like "עץ פרי" - a tree that bears fruit. As the Mishna says לשמה הרבה - whatever he learns - for the sake of Torah, will bear fruit.

אשריך בעולם הזה וטוב לך לעולם הבא (אבות ו:ד)
May you be blessed in this World and blessed in the World to Come.

Reb Moshe of Kobrin zt"l said: "World, World! How nice you appear to those who aren't enmeshed in you and don't pursue worldly pleasures. How bitter and dark you are to those enmeshed in you, who pursue worldly pleasures, how unfortunate it is for them!"