

Shoftim-The Mystical, Spiritual Benefits of Justice

From the Ahavas Sholom of Kossov]

By Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

Parshas Shoftim opens with the Mitzvah to appoint judges over all of our tribal territories and cities. The Torah is emphasizing the need to maintain a justice system to see that the Torah is carried out as well as to punish wrongdoers. Truthfully, every society needs to have a government and a justice system. Experiments in various forms of socialist, anarchical societies have proven this need many times over.

Aside from the societal need for a justice system, there are many mystical, spiritual benefits that the world enjoys from justice being executed according to the Torah's definition. The Ahavas Sholom of Kossov quotes the statement from the Midrash that when there is no justice on earth, there will be heavenly enforcement of justice. The simple explanation is that when we bring justice into our world, we alleviate the need for Hashem to bring justice. The Ahavas Sholom, however, elaborates on how exactly this is the case.

First, the Ahavas Sholom brings the statement of Chazal from Mishna Avos 1:18 that on three things the world endures: truth, justice and peace. Hashem's seal is truth as is known. Truth is personified by Yaakov Avinu as it states in Michah 7:20, 'You give truth To Yaakov, kindness to Avraham.' Avraham personified kindness while Yitzchak personified strength and justice. Yaakov personified truth which is the Torah giving us the proper balance between kindness and justice. Either of these alone does no good for the world. Too much kindness would mean showing compassion for evil or wrong things. Similarly, the world could not endure on too much or only strict justice. How is the proper balance achieved? It is achieved through *emes*, truth which was personified by Yaakov. At the time of Adams's sin, the letter *alef* was taken away from *emes* leaving *mes*, meaning dead. Adam's sin brought the need to enforce justice into the world. Furthermore, the *kosnos ohr* spiritual garments that Hashem made for Adam were originally written with an aleph meaning light. After the sin, the word is written with an *ayin*, meaning skin. This denotes the major spiritual change in Adam before and after his sin. The Avos started the process of rectification. Avraham was the first to call Hashem master [brachos 7b] and put the aleph back to *din* forging the word *adon*, master. Yaakov put the *aleph* back into *mes* forging the word *emes*, truth. This is the meaning of the Mishna in Avos. The world endures through three things; keeping the aleph in *din*, *emes* and *shalom*, the balance. *Shalom* means peace completeness and balance. Am Yisroel, in their avodas Hashem, is constantly striving to maintain this balance and bring completeness into the world. When we appoint judges and there is proper justice in the world, the need for Hashem to enforce justice is alleviated. This is our work in Torah and avodas Hashem, to unify and balance all of the creative spiritual forces. In this way Am Yisroel becomes partners with Hashem in the creation.