

TEFILAT YAMIM



PARSHAT MISHPATIM MEVARCHIM ADAR

27 Shevat 5786 - 14 February 2026



Dear Community Family,

Parshat Mishpatim appears, at first glance, to be a collection of dry civil laws: damages, liabilities, oxen that gore, animals that misbehave. But the

Lubavitcher Rebbe taught us that Mishpatim is anything but dry. It is a map of how transformation happens. Not slowly. Not someday. **Now.**

Let me begin with a story.

In the 16th century, a Jewish man was unjustly imprisoned by a feudal baron and sentenced to life. One

day a year, the baron offered him freedom. One day only. "Choose wisely," he said. Rosh Hashanah? Yom Kippur? Pesach? A family milestone?

Paralyzed by the choice, the prisoner wrote to Rabbi David ben Zimra, the Radbaz, asking what to do.

The Radbaz's answer was shocking in its simplicity:

Take the first available day. Don't wait. Don't strategize. Don't idealize. Choose now.

The Rebbe explained in 1987 that this ruling is not just about prison. It is about redemption.

Mishpatim teaches the laws of a dangerous animal. At first, when an animal causes harm, it is treated as an anomaly. But when destructive behavior becomes habitual, after goring three times, the owner bears full responsibility. And then comes the radical

part: **even such an animal can return to innocence.**

How?

Either through disciplined inner work, or by changing ownership entirely. When the animal enters a new domain, with a new authority, the Torah says it is considered renewed. A clean slate.

That animal is us.

Every one of us carries an inner animal consciousness. It is not evil. It is scared. It wants safety. When unrefined, it lashes out, retreats, clings, numbs. On a personal level, we call this trauma. On a national level, we call this history.

And here is the question that has haunted our people for nearly two thousand years:

Can we really change?

Can a nation so fractured ever become one again?

The Gemara tells us that baseless hatred destroyed the Second Temple. We have repeated that sentence for generations, often as a verdict, not a diagnosis. As if Jewish disunity is a permanent condition. As if we are prisoners serving a historical life sentence.

Look around today. Jews in Israel and the Diaspora disagree on almost everything: war, peace deals, leadership, religion, politics, identity. Sometimes it feels like there is no common language left.

And yet, last year, walking through Osher Ad, the answer hit me.

I passed a woman speaking loudly on the phone about the hostages. Then a couple whispering about them. Then another aisle. And

another. Everywhere.
The same topic. The
same pain.

Why?

The hostages are not
all the same. Different
backgrounds. Different
beliefs. Different
countries. Look at their
posters. What do they
share?

Nothing except this:
they are ours.

Why did Jews in Israel,
America, Italy, South
Africa, Canada, China
lose sleep for over 843
days? Why did our
hearts stop when we
saw them released?

Because they are our
brothers and sisters.

Hamas made a
catastrophic mistake.
In trying to break us,
they revealed the truth
we forgot: **we are one
body.** You don't ask if
you agree with your

hand before you pull it
out of fire. You don't
debate ideology when
your sibling is in pain.

We argued fiercely
about *how* to bring
them home. But there
is not a single Jew on
earth who did not pray
for them. Not one Jew
who did not feel relief,
gratitude, and tears
when they returned.

That means unity is not
impossible.

It means we have
already tasted it.

Geulah does not begin
when all wounds are
healed. It begins when
we **change ownership.**

When we stop living
under the authority of
fear, trauma, and
historical inertia, and
place ourselves under
G-d's ownership, the
One who recreates the
world every moment.

**We do not need to
wait until everyone**

**agrees. We do not
need to resolve every
argument. We do not
need to be perfect.**

We need to choose the
first available day.

Now.

If we can love each
other when someone is
a hostage, we can learn
to love each other
when they are not. If I
only love you when you
think like me, I don't
love you, I love myself.
We need to learn, "I
love **you**".

We are not prisoners of
Jewish history. We are
its authors.

May we merit to see,
and bring, the ultimate
Geulah now.

With deep love and
unshakable hope,

Rav Mendel Wuensch

Shabbat Schedule

Friday

5:03 PM Candle Lighting

5:15 PM Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat - Dvar Torah by Rav Mendel Wuensch

Shabbat Day

8:30 AM Shacharit - Dvar Torah by Rav Mendel Wuensch

9:45-10:30 AM Kid's Program

10:30 AM Kiddush

11:00 AM Kolot Yamim: Oded Sher

4:00 PM Rav David Rue Siyum Talmud Yerushalmi

5:00 PM Mincha Followed By Seudat Shlishit "Raava D'Raavin" With Rav Mendel Wuensch

5:58 PM Arvit

6:03 PM Shabbat Ends

Weekday Events & Lectures Schedule

9-11 AM Monday Men's Kollel By Rav Mendel Wuensch

@ Young Israel Of Poleg, Hanurit St. 33, Poleg

8 PM Monday Sages Of The Ages Series On "The Lubavitcher Rebbe" By Rav Mendel

Wuensch @ Briga Towers, Ehud Manor 7 Beit Kneset/Tenants Room

11 AM Wednesday Experience Prayer Series By Rav Mendel Wuensch

@ Briga Towers, Ehud Manor 5, Tenants Room

Kiddush Sponsors

Sherry & Kenny Friedman in memory, on the Yahrtzeit of Sherry's beloved Father, Isaac Kinek, יצחק בן צבי אפרים.

Marilyn and Louis Newman in Hakoras Hatov to all who make Tephilat Yamim a family.

Shelley and Steve Ekstein in honour of the Rav and Rebbetzin, and the welcoming Kehilla.

Stacy and Roy Freedman in honor of the Tefilat Yamim community in warmly welcoming them on their Aliyah.

Mazel Tovs

Michael & Debra Laskow on the engagement of their daughter Gabrielle "Gabs" Laskow to Ryan Amrani. May the wedding be in a good, auspicious hour and they build an everlasting home among Am Yisrael. Mazel Tov!

Dinah & Liad Braude on the birth of a son! As well as proud grandparents Inbar & Alan Braude, and proud aunt & uncle Ayalah & Tal Braude. May they raise him to Torah, Chuppah & Maasim Tovim! Mazel Tov!

Weekday Minyan Schedule

7:30 AM Shachrit @ Beit Chabad Ir Yamim

5:20 PM Mincha/Maariv @ Be Pharmacy On Piano

Contact Info

Rav Mendel Wuensch - 053-8809063

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Location: Chaim Guri School, Corner of Beni Berman & Uzi Hitman Streets,
Entrance On Uzi Hitman Streetk