



ב"ה
Project: Sermon Resource for Shluchim
Distribution Date: February 13, 2007/ כ"ה שבט תשס"ז
Parsha: Mishpatim / משפטים

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1. Lipa's "Abi M'leibt" (lit. "as long as I'm alive")

In the song he gets pulled over, has the bank closed in his face and has some guy crash into him at the supermarket and spill his groceries.

He just he just smiles and sings "abi m'leibt"!



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2. "Abi M'leibt" comes from "abi gezunt".

Whenever Jews kvetch they will always conclude with "Nu, abi gezunt!"

So I'm not a millionaire, at least I have my health!

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3. The question is, is health the most important thing; if you are healthy is life perfect? Or is there something more to life than just being healthy?



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4. In this week's parsha we read about the mitzvah of tzedakah.

"When you lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you..."

The Torah is telling us to who gets Tzedakah first.

- Jew and gentile; the Jew takes preference.
- Poor and rich person; the poor takes first.
- The poor of your city and the poor of another city; the poor of your city take first.



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5. We wouldn't have figured out our Tzedakah priorities ourselves. Quite the contrary, people are happy to send money to the other end of the world but to help a needy neighbor, "Why can't he get a job!" Thank G-d for setting our priorities straight.



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6. The Ten Commandments also help to set right our priorities. First are commandments between man and G-D; only then are the interpersonal commandments.

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7. However when it comes to the rest of life how should we know what takes priority?



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8. Let's look again into the parsha. The parsha opens with the laws of owning slaves. Why does Torah choose to place these laws immediately following Matan Torah? It would seem more fitting for the Mitzvos at the end of the parsha, all practical lessons for every day life, to come first.



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9. The answer comes in Leviticus.
 G-d says, "The people of Israel are my servants".
 Why must we be *servants* of G-d, as apposed to employees of G-d?



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10. The difference is, an employee has his own life after he puts in a day's work. A slave on the other hand, has no life aside from the master.

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11. G-d wants Judaism to be the Jew's life not just from six to nine in the morning and then forgetting about Him.



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12. In 1845 R. Y. Jacobson traveled to the Friediker Rebbe for Rosh Hashanah.
 He found the shul empty of furniture. He asks R' Elya Chaim Althaus, "It's erev R"H and there's nothing in the shul?"
 R' Elya taught him to feel personally responsible for the Rebbe's shul, "R' Yisroel, it erev R"H and there's nothing in the shul!"



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13. This story demonstrates how a Jew must feel about his Judaism.
 It must be his personal responsibility!



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14. We can't possibly set our children's priorities for each and every situation.
 But if we can make our children feel that Judaism is their "thing" they will automatically make the right choice, because it's their business.

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