

YESHIVAS TORAH ORE
YERUSHALAYIM



ישיבת תורה אור
במחנה ירושלים

Family & Friends

Parshas Shoftim

August 28th 2025 – Elul 4 5785



Pictures from our Bais Medrash

PARSHAS SHOFTIM RABBI MORDCHE GURWITZ

Parshas Shoftim opens with the command: “Shoftim v’shotrim titein lecha b’chol she’arecha” (Devarim 16:18).

Rashi explains that the Torah is instructing us to appoint judges and officers in every city to uphold justice and ensure proper conduct. The Ba’alei Mussar, however, see in this pasuk a deeper dimension. The Torah is not merely speaking about the communal structure of Klal Yisrael, but also about

the avodah of every individual.

The Sefer HaChinuch (491) writes that the purpose of shoftim and shotrim is to maintain order so that the Torah is kept properly. Likewise, each person must establish his own “judges and officers” – inner boundaries and structures – to ensure that his actions remain faithful to the Hashem’s will. The shofet represents the clarity of daas Torah, the ability to weigh truth objectively. The shotear represents discipline, the practical strength to enforce what the mind has already



Mazel Tov

Heartfelt Mazel Tov wishes to:

Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Minkus on their daughter’s marriage.

Mr. & Mrs. Yitzi Stavsky on their recent marriage

determined. Without both, a person may know the truth, but fail to carry it out.

This is why Chazal (Avos 3:1) tell us: “Ain lecha adam she’ein lo sha’ah” – every person has his moment of judgment. In Elul, which often coincides with Parshas Shoftim, the message is especially clear. Before the Yamim Nora’im, one must establish his own shoftim and shotrim – to judge his deeds honestly, and to enforce within himself the resolutions he knows to be right.

The Rambam (Hilchos Teshuvah 2:2) emphasizes that teshuvah begins with hakaras hacheit, the honest admission of one’s shortcomings. That is the shofet. But the Rambam continues that one must also firmly resolve not to return to sin – and that requires a shotear, the strength to act on that decision (Hilchos Teshuvah 2:2–3).

The pasuk adds: “Tzedek tzedek tirdof” (Devarim 16:20). The

double expression is explained by the Chasam Sofer (Drashos, Shoftim) to mean that one must pursue justice not only in the outcome, but also in the means. In Avodas Hashem, it is not enough to arrive at the right result; the process itself must be in line with Torah and yashrus. This is part of the avodah of Elul — not to cut corners, but to build true and lasting structures of teshuvah.

Thus, the opening of Parshas Shoftim is not only a communal directive, but a personal roadmap for Elul. By establishing internal shoftim and shotrim, by judging ourselves with honesty and enforcing our commitments with strength, we prepare ourselves for the Yemei HaDin and for a year of bracha and aliyah.

A NEW BEGINNING

As the sacred month of Elul dawns, a vibrant energy pulses through the Yeshiva, heralding the start of a new zman. To our dear talmidim, who've journeyed to immerse yourselves in Torah, welcome! For many, this Elul marks not

only a fresh start in learning but a profound new chapter in life. Whether being new to the Yeshiva or to Eretz Yisrael itself, you're stepping into a transformative experience, and we're here to embrace this journey together.

The vibe of this Elul zman is alive with possibility. The Beis Medrash resonates with the sounds of Torah, the rhythmic lines of Gemara, and the focused intensity of chavrusa learning. For those new to the Yeshiva, settling into the dormitory, navigating the system, and acclimating to Eretz Yisrael's unique culture can feel daunting. The bustling streets, the Hebrew language, talmidim from different countries — all of it is new, exciting, and sometimes overwhelming. Yet, this freshness is your opportunity. Every shiur, every tefillah, every passing moment is a chance to build something extraordinary, to shape a life rooted in Torah.

Our vision for this year is bold yet grounded: to create a community of talmidim who live Torah with passion and purpose. We see you diving into the depths of Torah

study, grappling with Rashi's insights, and unlocking the brilliance of Tosfos. We envision chaburos sparking new ideas and friendships that will last a lifetime. For those adjusting to this new world, know that you're not alone. The yeshiva is your home, a place where rebbeim and peers stand ready to guide you through any challenges that arise.

The beauty of this Elul lies in its potential for renewal. Each of you brings a unique spark, a fresh perspective that enriches the Yeshiva. Whether you're a seasoned learner or stepping into this world for the first time, this is your moment to shine. The challenges of acclimating—new schedules, new faces, a new land—are part of the growth. Embrace them. Let Elul's call inspire you to set goals: master a masechta, deepen your tefillah, or uplift a friend. These steps, big and small, will anchor you in this new chapter of life.

As we embark on this journey, let's infuse our learning with sincerity and joy. With Rosh Hashanah approaching, let's harness the spirit of Elul to build a foundation for a transformative year. To our new talmidim, know that Eretz Yisrael's embrace is warm, and our Yeshiva is your family. Together, we'll make this zman a vibrant, unforgettable beginning to a year of Torah, growth, and connection.



Celebrating at the Chaitovsky wedding.

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