

single erroneous decision by a court does not in itself undermine the confidence of the public in the judicial system per se. The Talmud stated that the rule of law, of the courts of each and every generation, should be respected even if eventually proven to be factually erroneous. Any system of human justice is by definition error-prone. It is the corruption of the judicial system rather than its possible mistakes that threatens its viability and public standing. And it is upon the prevention of this corruption of the judicial system that the Torah places emphasis. These are lessons that are as relevant to our society as they were in the days of Moshe. For we too are still commanded to pursue righteousness by righteous means with judges and courts of quality and fairness. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tendler

G-d, speaking through Yishayuhu the Navi, contrasts the situation of Israel while in exile to the way things will be at the time of Her redemption. In many ways it continues the Parsha's theme of justice. "Behold I took from you the cup of weakness, and I will place it into the hand of those who cause you to wander." (51:22-23) Ultimately, Israel will be returned to the Land and our oppressors will be punished.

In the last section of the Haftarah (52:7-9) the Navi prophesies the coming of Eliyahu Hanavi who will herald the arrival of Mashiah and the rebuilding of Yerushalayim. "How beautiful are the feet of

Minyan Schedule

Erev Shabbat Parashat Shoftim	
Mincha (Mizrachi)	5.00 pm
Candle lighting 9/09/16	5.24 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat	5.45 pm
Shabbat Parashat Shoftim	
Shacharit 10/09/16	9.15 am
Children's Service	10.00 am
Mincha	5.10 pm
Shabbat ends	6.20 pm
Erev Shabbat Parashat Ki Tetze	
Mincha (Mizrachi)	5.00 pm
Candle lighting 16/09/16	5.29 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat	5.45 pm

Announcements

Kiddush is sponsored by

The Synagogue

Remember to book
your seats for the
High Holy Days

See email for the
complete details of other
events

the herald on the mountains announcing peace, heralding good tidings, announcing salvation." Our soon to be announced redemption is the greatest consolation that G-d could offer his children. *Rabbi Aron Tendler and torah.org.*

Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Shabbat Parashat Shoftim 7 Elul 5776;
10 September, 2016
Shabbat Torah reading: Stone Chumash
page 1024, Haftarah page 1199.

President Jonathan Erlich
Rabbi-in-residence
D'var Torah Rabbi Franklin

Paying to Pray? An Ongoing Dilemma for Synagogues Rabbi Marc D. Angel

Over the years, I have received bitter notes from people who strongly object to synagogues charging high prices for seats during the High Holy Days. They have also expressed displeasure with the high cost of synagogue membership dues.

Shouldn't all Jews who wish to pray be allowed to do so without having to pay premium prices? Does it seem ethical for synagogues to "sell seats" for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur? Doesn't this process diminish the sanctity and idealism of synagogues? Yes, these criticisms

certainly seem valid. In an ideal world, synagogues would not "sell tickets" or charge expensive dues for membership. But we do not live in an ideal world, at least not yet.

Synagogues need funds in order to maintain their buildings; to pay their rabbis and synagogue staff; to provide services to members and the community at large. Synagogues invariably operate with deficits, often very severe deficits. They depend almost entirely on the voluntary dues and contributions of members, but these dues and contributions fall short of the synagogues' expenses.

How are synagogues to exist if they lack adequate financial support? They can cut down on services; they can cut down on staff; they can cut salaries. Yes, but then they will be unable to be of maximum service to their constituents.



People will complain that their synagogues do not provide them with enough services to warrant their support; so the synagogues will have even less income and provide even less services.

Synagogues can (and often do) depend on the generosity of a few wealthy individuals who contribute large amounts. Because of these generous contributions, people with lesser means are able to be members or attend services at relatively low cost to themselves. But synagogues cannot forever depend on a few philanthropists; they need a larger constituency of people who contribute as generously as their means allow.

Many people expect synagogues and rabbis to be available to them, but are not willing or able to contribute to maintain the synagogues. They expect that other people will do this for them. I know from personal experience that many synagogues are quite sympathetic to those who are in financial straits; they provide membership at greatly reduced, or at no cost; they provide seats for the Holy Days at low, or no, cost.

I also know from personal experience that many synagogues are unhappy with those who have financial means, but who do not share in supporting synagogues through their membership dues and contributions. Some people will have no problem spending several

hundred dollars for an evening out at a restaurant or for theater tickets, but will complain bitterly if the synagogue asks them for a few hundred dollars for a seat in the sanctuary for the holidays. Some people will spend thousands of dollars on vacations, summer homes etc.; but are offended if synagogues charge a few thousand dollars for dues.

In an ideal world, all Jews would support synagogues to the best of their ability. If this happened, there would be no synagogue deficits, no “selling tickets” for the Holy Days, and no expensive membership dues. But we do not live in such an ideal world. Synagogues need financial solvency, and they spend a good deal of time and energy coming up with fund-raising strategies. It is a real pity that synagogues need to conduct “appeals,” and “seat sales” and other events to raise funds. It would be so much nicer if they simply had enough support from the community without needing such fund-raising tactics.

There are synagogues that provide free or low cost services for the High Holy Days. Most synagogues will make accommodations for those who cannot afford the cost of tickets. No one should feel precluded from praying in a synagogue on the High Holy Days, or any day of the year due to financial considerations. As

long as synagogues need to “sell tickets” for the High Holy Days, we know that the Messiah has not yet arrived. We know that our system is imperfect, even unpleasant. But the only way to move closer to the ideal is for each Jew to take personal responsibility for the maintenance and flourishing of our synagogues. *Rabbi Marc. D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

Justice and Human Error Rabbi Berel Wein

Law and order are the basic ingredients of a civilized society. Judaism abhors anarchy and disorder. The Torah therefore orders Jewish society to create a system of justice, of judges and police and the rule of law. The Torah demands that we pursue justice. But not simply justice but rather righteousness, fairness and a sense of the rule of law and of an equitable judicial system. It is only a society that feels that it can rely on an equitable and reliable system of justice that can achieve community harmony, serenity and unity of purpose. The Torah, ever realistic and never naively optimistic about the true nature of human beings and their society, ordains that a system of justices and police be instituted throughout the Land of Israel in order to assure the basic requirement for a just, peaceful and unified society.

The Torah also warns us against the corruption of the governmental and judicial system. It teaches us that corruption destroys the vision of even the most righteous and pious of individuals. Corruption comes

Or Chadash is a friendly community. We hold tuneful participatory services, in the nusach Ashkenaz tradition, on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Focusing on personal growth, we welcome all, from small children to older men and women, of all levels of observance. We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.

in many forms. It need not take the gross form of actual monetary bribery. Corruption, in the Jewish sense, includes prejudices, bigotry, insensitivity to others and pre-formed opinions about matters. People with strong personal agendas rarely if ever make for fair and unbiased judges. I think that perhaps one of the reasons that Judaism prefers courts composed of at least three judges is the realization that almost all humans possess such personal agendas and with a number of judges, their conflicting personal agendas cancel each other out and allow for a more unbiased hearing of the issues of the case under consideration. The recognition that humans by nature are subject to corruption, if not the venal kind at least the more subtle but equally dangerous personal prejudicial kind, allows for countermeasures to be taken to obtain fairness and equity in judicial matters.

The Torah also allows for the possibility of error in rendering judicial decisions. Because of this recognition of human fallibility, the death penalty as a practical matter was never really part of the Jewish judicial system. Nevertheless, a

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