



## ALTERNATIVE JUSTICE SYSTEM

How could manna from heaven serve as forensic evidence in Moses's court, and how could gold lions participate in Solomon's judicial proceedings? The Torah is not in the Heavens!

TEACHER'S MANUAL



# JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS



PARSHAT MISHPATIM



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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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The first verse of the parsha teaches us several important laws about judges (Source 1).

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The Midrash tells of G-d's gift to Solomon, the ability to judge correctly without witnesses or warning the defendant before he committed the act, as seen in the famous story of the two women and the dead child (Source 2)

Question: The Talmud says otherwise, that a heavenly voice told Solomon that this would not be allowed; he must rule using witnesses' testimony.

Question 2: Jewish law demands that judgment be based only on witnesses, for "Torah is not in the heavens."

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The Talmud tells a story of how the manna the Jews received in the desert helped Moses resolve a dispute about the ownership of a slave, because the manna was distributed according to the number of household residents.

But how can ownership be determined by heavenly actions?

## D. Lions And Bears At Judicial Proceedings.....15

Solomon's throne was built with incredible ingenuity. Made of gold and jewels, on its steps stood lions, eagles, oxen, wolves and bears. Classic sources say that when witnesses would come to testify before Solomon, the oxen bellowed, the lions roared and the bears growled, which caused the witnesses and defendants to speak only the truth (Source 5).

Accordingly, Solomon's judicial proceedings may not have had the testimony of witnesses but they did have confessions. Terrified by the scene, they confessed to the truth and Solomon ruled based on that. The Rebbe quotes the story of the barrels of honey as an example of this concept (Source 6).

The same happened with the manna. The manna descending for Reuven wasn't admissible evidence in the court. But the fact that the manna continued to fall for the true owner brought the other party to confess.

# Introduction

What do animals, barrels of honey, and manna from heaven have to do with a justice system? A fascinating class on the Jewish judicial system, and the methods sometimes used to rule in extraordinary cases.

## השיעור לפרשת משפטים

משיחת ליל י"א ניסן, ה'תשל"ג.  
הנחה בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם כרך ע"ב עמוד 41 ואילך

ההנחה באדיבות וועד הנחות בלח"ק, ותודתנו נתונה להם.

[לצפייה בשיחה:](#)



[לשמיעת השיחה:](#)



# A. Judges and Courts

After the awe-inspiring story of the giving of the Torah in the reading of Yitro, the reading of Mishpatim contains the laws of interpersonal conduct.

The reading begins with a five-word verse, and the Oral Torah teaches many laws regarding judges and courts based on these words

## Source 1 Exodus, 21:1

**Student's** And these are the laws you shall place before  
pg. 3 them.

Rashi

**And these are the laws.** Why are civil laws juxtaposed with the laws of the sacrificial altar? To teach you that the court should be adjacent to the Temple (Mechilta).

וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תָּשִׂים  
לְפָנֶיהֶם.

רש"י

וְאֵלֶּה הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים. וְלָמָּה  
נִסְמְכָה פְּרִשְׁת דִּינִין לְפָרֶשֶׁת  
מִזְבֵּחַ? לֹוֹמֵר לָךְ, שְׁתָּשִׂים  
סִנְהֶדְרִין אֶצְלַּת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ  
(מכילתא):

Last week's reading ended with the laws of the altar, and this week's reading picks up with the civil laws which require judges. This juxtaposition alludes to the proper place of the court: near the altar. Indeed, the court was very close to the altar in the Temple.

**Before them.** Not before foreign nations. Even if they rule the same way in this specific case, do not try a Jew before them, for this desecrates G-d's name and glorifies idolatry, as the verse states: For their rock is not like our Rock, and our enemies sit in judgment (Deuteronomy 32:31). When our enemies sit in judgment over us, this elevates their deity (Tanchuma).

לְפָנֶיהֶם. וְלֹא לְפָנֵי גוֹיִם,  
וְאִפְלוּ יִדְעֵת בְּדִין אֶחָד שֶׁהֵם  
דִּנְיָן אוֹתוֹ כְּדִינֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֵל  
תְּבִיאָהוּ בְּעֶרְכָּאוֹת שְׁלֵהֶם,  
שֶׁהִמְבִּיא דִּינֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפָנֵי  
גוֹיִם, מִחֲלָל אֶת הַשֵּׁם וּמִיִּקְרָר  
שֵׁם עֲבוּדָה זָרָה לְהַשְׁבִּיחָהּ,  
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר כִּי לֹא כְצוּרָנוּ צוּרָם  
וְאִיִּבְנוּ פְּלִילִים (דְּבָרִים ל"ב) -  
כְּשֶׁאוֹיְבֵינוּ פְּלִילִים זֶהוּ עֵדוּת  
לְעֵלוֹי יִרְאָתָם (תנחומא):

The Midrash explains that when one sues his fellow Jew, he may only do so in a Jewish court. “These are the laws,” and they should only be applied “before them,” in a Jewish court.

### Baal Haturim

Student's  
pg. 4

**These:** These Hebrew letters stand for: One is obligated to investigate the case

וְאֵלֶּה: נוֹטְרִיקוֹן - וְחִיב אָדָם  
לְחַקֵּר הַדִּין.

The Baal Haturim gleans several laws regarding judges via an allusion—reading the words as acronyms. The word “these” teaches the importance of properly investigating the matter and revealing the truth

**The laws:** These Hebrew letters stand for: The judge must first attempt to reach a compromise before ruling.

הַמְשַׁפְּטִים. נוֹטְרִיקוֹן - הַדִּין  
מִצְוָה שְׂיַעֲשֶׂה פְּשָׁרָה טָרָם  
יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט.

**That:** This stands for: If both parties agree.

אֲשֶׁר. נוֹטְרִיקוֹן - אִם שְׁנֵיהֶם  
רוֹצִין:

The words “the laws that” teach us that when two parties come before a judge, he must first try to broker a compromise between them. Only if the parties insist on a verdict, or a compromise cannot be reached, may the judge issue a ruling.

Student's  
pg. 4

**Place:** These letters stand for: Listen to both of them speak.

תְּשִׁימ. נוֹטְרִיקוֹן תִּשְׁמַע  
שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחַד מִדְּבָרִים.

**Before them:** These letters stand for: Do not favor the wealthy; pretend you do not know them.

לְפָנֵיהֶם. נוֹטְרִיקוֹן - לֹא פָּנִי  
נְדִיב יִהְיֶה הַתְּנַכֵּר מֵהֶם.

The words “place before them” teach us that the judge must treat both parties equally and not give preference to either of them. He must remain neutral, as if he didn't know either of them beforehand.

The verse contains five words, to teach that one who judges truthfully has fulfilled the five books of the Torah and has become G-d's partner in creation.

וַיֵּשׁ בְּפִסּוּק ה' תְּבוּת, לוֹמַר  
לְנִי, שְׁכַל הַדָּן דִּין אֶמֶת לְאַמְתּוֹ  
כָּאֱלוֹ קַיִם ה' חֲמִשִּׁי תוֹרָה  
וּכְאֱלוֹ נַעֲשֶׂה שְׁתָּף לְהַקְב"ה  
בְּמַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית.

In this address, the Rebbe speaks about one of the best-known judges in Jewish history, King Solomon—the wisest of all men—and his unique judicial method.

## B. Trials Without Witnesses?

### >> The Rebbe

#### The Judgement of Solomon

**Student's** The first verse of Psalms, chapter 72 states,  
pg. 5 “On Solomon. G-d, give Your judgments to a king and Your righteousness to a king’s son.”

In the Midrashim and commentaries, we find two ways to read this verse. According to one explanation, the verse was said about the reign of King Solomon, while according to the second explanation it refers to the future reign of the King Moshiach.

The Midrash expounds on this verse: “The verse doesn’t just say judgments, it says Your judgments. With this verse King David was entreating G-d, ‘give Your judgments to the king’ - just as You are able to judge without witnesses or forewarning, so too should Solomon be able to do. G-d responded, ‘indeed, this is what I will do.’ As the verse states, “Solomon sat on G-d’s throne.” Is it possible for a person to sit on G-d’s throne? Rather, this means he was able to judge like his Creator, without witnesses or forewarning. This is how he decided the case of the two harlots that came before him.”

בפסוק הראשון בפרק ע"ב  
בתהלים נאמר: "לְשִׁלְמָה אֱלֹקִים  
מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תּוֹ וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֵן  
מֶלֶךְ."

שבזה מצינו במפרשי התנ"ך  
ומדרשי חז"ל שני פירושים:<sup>1</sup>  
פירוש אחד, שזה מתייחס לשלמה  
המלך בעת מלכותו, ופירוש שני,  
שזה מתייחס למלך המשיח.

ומובא על זה במדרש<sup>2</sup>: "מִשְׁפָּט  
אֵינוֹ אוֹמֵר, אֲלֵא מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ, אָמַר  
דָּוִד לְפָנָי הַקַּב"ה, רְבוּנוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם,  
תּוֹ מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ, כְּשֵׁם שֶׁאַתָּה  
דָּן בְּלֹא עֵדִים וּבְלֹא הַתְּרָאָה, כִּן  
יְהֵא שְׁלֹמֹה דָּן בְּלֹא עֵדִים וּבְלֹא  
הַתְּרָאָה. אָמַר לוֹ הַקַּב"ה, תִּיַיֵּן, כִּן  
אֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר<sup>3</sup> וַיֵּשֶׁב שְׁלֹמֹה  
עַל כִּסֵּא ה', וְכִי אֶפְשָׁר לוֹ לְאָדָם  
לְשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא ה'... אֲלֵא שֶׁהִיָּה דָן  
כְּיוֹצְרוֹ, בְּלֹא עֵדִים וּבְלֹא הַתְּרָאָה.  
וְהוּא דִינֵן שֶׁל זִוְנוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר<sup>4</sup> אִזּוֹ  
תְּבִאֲנָה שְׂתִימִים נְשִׁים זִוְנוֹת וְכוּ'."

(3) דברי הימים א' כט, כג.  
(4) מלכים א' ג, טז.

(1) פי' התרגום והראב"ע עה"פ.  
(2) מדרש תהלים ושוח"ט ויל"ש (רמז תתה) עה"פ.

The Midrash relates that King David requested from G-d that his son Solomon be able to render judgment like G-d, without witnesses and forewarning. The Midrash cites the famous story of the Judgement of Solomon as an example of this.

## Source 2 Kings I, 3:16-28

**Student's** Two harlots came and stood before the king.  
pg. 6

One of them said, "Pardon me, my lord. This woman and I live in the same house, and I had a baby while she was there with me. The third day after my child was born, this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there was no one in the house but the two of us. During the night this woman's son died because she smothered him. So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I, your servant, was asleep. She put him by her breast and put her dead son by my breast. The next morning, I got up to nurse my son—and he was dead! But when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that it wasn't the son I had borne."

The other woman said, "No! The living one is my son; the dead one is yours." But the first one insisted, "No! The dead one is yours; the living one is mine." And so they argued before the king.

The king said, "This one says, 'My son is alive and your son is dead,' while that one says, 'No! Your son is dead, and mine is alive.'"

Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword for the king. He then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one woman and half to the other."

אז תבאנה שתיים נשים זנות אל המלך ותעמדנה לפניו.

ותאמר האשה האחת: בי אדני, אני והאשה הזאת ישבת בבית אחד, ואלד עמה בבית. ויהי ביום השלישי ללדתי, ותלד גם האשה הזאת, ואנחנו יחדו אין זר אתנו בבית זולתי שתיים אנחנו בבית. וימת בן האשה הזאת לילה, אשר שכבה עליו. ותקם בתוך הלילה ותקח את בני מאצלי ואמתך ישנה, ותשפיהו בחיקה, ואת בנה המת השפיהו בחיקי. ואקם בבקר להניק את בני והנה מת, ואתבונן אליו בבקר והנה לא היה בני אשר ילדתי.

ותאמר האשה האחרת: לא כי בני החי ובגך המת, וזאת אמרת: לא כי בגך המת ובני החי. ותדברנה לפני המלך.

ויאמר המלך: זאת אמרת זה בני החי ובגך המת, וזאת אמרת לא כי בגך המת ובני החי.

ויאמר המלך: קחו לי חרב. ויבאו החרב לפני המלך. ויאמר המלך: גזרו את הילד החי לשנים, ותנו את החצי לאחת ואת החצי לאחת.



Student's  
pg. 7

The woman whose son was alive was deeply moved out of love for her son and said to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!" But the other said, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!"

Then the king gave his ruling: "Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is his mother."

When all of Israel heard the king's verdict, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from G-d to administer justice.

## >> The Rebbe

Student's This raises an obvious halachic problem:  
pg. 7

### Source 3 Talmud, Rosh Hashanah, 21b

Student's Solomon wished to judge by knowing what was  
pg. 7 in one's heart and rule as he saw fit, without witnesses and without forewarning the offenders before they committed the offense. He wanted to rely on his intellect to reveal the truth. A Heavenly voice rang out, telling him (Ecclesiastes, 12:10): "Write honest, truthful words." Which words does this refer to? "By the testimony of two or three witnesses he shall be killed, he shall not be killed by the word of one witness" (Deuteronomy, 17:6). Capital punishment and lashes aren't administered without the testimony of two witnesses.

ותאמר האשה אשר בנה החי  
אל המלך, כי נכמרו רחמיה  
על בנה, ותאמר: בי אדני! תנו  
לה את הילוד החי והמת אל  
תמיתהו! וזאת אמרת: גם לי גם  
לך לא יהיה. גזרו!

ויעז המלך ויאמר: תנו לה את  
הילוד החי, והמת לא תמיתהו.  
היא אמו.

וישמעו כל ישראל את המשפט  
אשר שפט המלך, ויראו מפני  
המלך, כי ראו כי חכמת אלקים  
בקרבו לעשות משפט.

כאן מתעוררת מיד קושיה בנגלה:

בקש קהלת [=שלמה] לדון דינין  
שבליב ולקבע על פי המסתבר  
לו, שלא בעדים ושלא בהתראָה  
ולסמך על הבנתו שהוא יכול  
לגלות את האמת. יצתה בת קול  
ואמרה לו: "וכתוב ישר דברי  
אמת" (קהלת יב, י) ומה הוא -  
"על פי שנים עדים או שלשה  
עדים יומת המת לא יומת על  
פי עד אחד" (דברים יז, ו). שאין  
דנים למות או למלקות אלא על  
פי שני עדים ולא פחות.

## >> The Rebbe

### Torah Isn't In The Heavens

**Student's** The Talmud clearly states that Solomon  
pg. 8 was told that he could only judge based on  
witnesses' testimony and forewarning.

Question 1: The Talmud says the opposite: a Divine voice told Solomon that it was impossible for him to judge without witnesses.

About this passage in the Talmud, we could say that there are conflicting sources from the Sages on this point. But the question goes much deeper, because this is a matter of law.

The Torah rules that in order to take money out of one person's possession and award it to another, two witnesses are required. The same applies to all other areas where testimony is required.

Against this, no prayers or requests can help. Maimonides' commentary to the Torah states that a prophet cannot make any decision-making power is the exclusive domain of the sages, based on the principles of the Torah. A prophet cannot innovate, and he can only do anything contrary to Torah law.

There are certain measures that the Torah does allow a prophet to take on a temporary basis.

לכל לראש - גמרא מפורשת במסכת  
ראש השנה<sup>5</sup>, שחייבים לדון בעדות  
ובהתראה דוקא!

ועוד זאת, שהקושיה היא לא רק  
מדברי הגמרא במסכת ראש השנה,  
שעל זה יכולים לומר שרגילים בכך  
שיש מדרשות חלוקות, אלא הקושיה  
היא שזהו ענין שהוא היפך ההלכה:

כדי ליטול ממון מאחד וליתן לחבירו,  
ישנו פסק דין בתורה "על פי שנים  
עדים יקום דבר", ועל דרך זה בשאר  
דיני התורה שיש צורך בעדות.

ועל זה לא יועילו ענינים של תפלות  
ובקשות כו', וכפי שמאריך הרמב"ם  
בהקדמה לפירוש המשניות<sup>6</sup> שנביא  
אינו יכול לפעול מאומה בדברי  
תורה - "אין הנביא רשאי לחדש  
דבר"<sup>7</sup>, כיון שזהו ענין ששייך לחכמי  
הדור, שהם יכולים לפסוק על יסוד  
הקבוע בתורה, אבל לא לחדש דבר,  
ועל אחת כמה וכמה לא לעשות דבר  
בניגוד לתורה.

יש אמנם ענינים שנביא יכול לעשות  
בתור "הוראת שעה", אבל זהו דין  
בתורה.



6 קרוב לתחלתה.  
7 שבת קד, רע"א. וש"נ.

5 כא, סע"ב (הובא גם במכתב י"א ניסן הנ"ל הערה ד"ה משפטים). וראה גם "רשימות" חוברת קכא ס"ח.

**Student's** But here we are discussing the judicial  
pg. 9 process for the entire duration of a king's reign: The regular Sanhedrin court rules based on witness testimony and forewarning, but King Solomon wished to be able to rule without those conditions, with the justification that he sits on G-d's throne and is able to judge like his Creator. This isn't just contrary to the Talmudic passage quoted above, it is contrary to the universally accepted clear law that Torah law isn't decided in heaven, and a ruling can only be issued by an earthly court.

אבל לקבוע סדר של "משפטיך למלך" לכל משך ימי מלכותו, שבשעה שבאים לסנהדרין, יפסקו דין תורה בעדות ובהתראה, ואילו כשיבואו לשלמה, יפסוק בלא עדות ובלא התראה, בגלל ש"וישב שלמה על כסא הוי", "דן כיוצרו" - הרי זה לכאורה (לא רק היפך הסוגיה בראש השנה, אלא) היפך הלכה פסוקה ומפורשת שאין עליה חולק, שהתורה "לא בשמים היא"<sup>8</sup>, אלא צריך להיות פסק דין למטה דווקא!

*Question 2: This is against a fundamental halachah. The Torah's entire justice system is built on the principle that people can only be judged based on testimony, and that halachic rulings are the domain of the Torah scholars of the generation who rule based on logical proofs and testimony. Prophets invoking Divine inspiration have no place in this system, as the Torah is not in the Heavens. How then could King Solomon judge prophetically, without witnesses?*

# C. Heavenly Proof

## >> The Rebbe

### The Manna Decided Law

**Student's** pg. 10 To understand this, we must first explore a similar problem. The Talmud teaches the following regarding the manna:

ויובן בהקדם עוד ענין דומה. בנוגע ל"מן" מובא בגמרא כדלהלן:

### Source 4 Talmud, Yoma, 75a

**Student's** pg. 10 Rabbi Yose taught: Just as the Prophets told the Jews matters hidden "in the cracks and crevices," so too the manna told the Jews matters of the "cracks and crevices." In what way? Two parties came before Moses in judgment, one said: "He stole my slave." The other retorted: "You sold him to me." Moses answered: "The morning will judge: Tomorrow, if you find his portions of manna at the house of his previous master, you will know that he was stolen. If you find his portion of manna at the home of the second master, you will know that he was sold.

תנא, רבי יוסי אומר: כשם שהנביא היה מגיד להם לישראל מה שבחורין ומה שבסדקין, כך המן מגיד להם לישראל מה שבחורין ומה שבסדקין. כיצד? שנים שבאו לפני משה לדין, זה אומר: עבדי גנבת, וזה אומר: אתה מכרתו לי. אומר להם משה: לבוקר משפט. למחר, אם נמצא עומר בביית רבו ראשון - בידוע שזה גנבו. אם נמצא עומר בביית רבו שני - בידוע שזה מכרו לו.

*When the manna descended from heaven, each person received the same amount, one omer-sized portion per head. The portions of manna fell next to each tent, one for each member of the household. Thus, if a household of ten stole a slave from a neighbor, they would still receive only ten portions. This was unimpeachable proof that the slave was not theirs.*

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**Student's** Here too we have the same question:  
pg. 11 How can money be awarded—even if its ownership was in doubt—based on the precise place where the manna fell?

There are laws in the civil section of the Code of Jewish Law that are based on the Written and Oral Torah that Moses taught. But the fact that, for the duration of the years when the manna descended, ownership could be determined by the location where the manna fell, is contrary to the Code of Jewish Law.

וגם כאן נשאלת אותה קושיה: איך אפשר להוציא ממון, אפילו אם הוא מוטל בספק - על יסוד זה שה"מן" נמצא במקום זה או במקום אחר!?

יש דינים בחושן משפט, שמבוססים על תורה שבכתב ותורה שבעל-פה, כפי שלמד משה רבינו עם דורו; ואילו העובדה שבמשך השנים שירד המן הוציאו עבד מרשותו של ראובן לרשותו של שמעון על ידי זה שראו אופן ירידת המן - הרי זה היפך הדין בחושן משפט!

*Removing money from one person and awarding it to another based on where the manna fell is deciding a law based on Heavenly signs. This, too, is contrary to what we have learned, "the Torah isn't in the Heavens."*

# D. Lions And Bears At Judicial Proceedings

## >> The Rebbe

### Solomon's Throne

Student's  
pg. 12

We can answer this question based on the account given in the Targum Sheini to Megilat Esther describing Solomon's throne.

אך ההסברה בזה מובנת על פי מה שכתוב בתרגום שני למגילת אסתר<sup>10</sup> בנוגע ל"וישב שלמה על כסא ה'":

*Solomon's throne was built with incredible ingenuity. It was built to resemble G-d's "chariot," His throne of glory. The throne of glory contains the likenesses of four creatures: a human, a lion, an ox and an eagle, and so did Solomon's.*

*The throne was built of ivory, coated with pure gold, and adorned with precious stones. Six golden steps with tiles of gemstones and pearls went up the throne, and on the steps stood ten golden lions facing twelve golden eagles, oxen, wolves, and bears. When the king ascended his throne, the lions spread fragrant scents.*

*When the king entered the gates of the hall, all the Jews stood and the king approached his throne, followed by the seventy elders, the high priest, Nathan the Prophet and Gad the Seer.*

*When he placed his foot on the first step, the golden lion lifted him to the second step, and so on, until the sixth step when the eagles lifted him up and placed him on the throne.*

*After King Solomon sat down, the eagle returned with his crown and put it on his head. Then a golden dove came down, opened the ark and brought a Torah scroll and placed in in King Solomon's hands, in accordance with the verse (Deuteronomy, 17:19): "The Torah scroll should accompany the king and he will read from it all the days of his life ... so that he and his sons may reign for lengthy days." All the Jews present would proclaim: "May the Davidic kingdom reign forever!"*

## Source 5 Targum Sheni, Esther, 2

**Student's** When the high priest came to greet King Solomon, the elders sat on the right and left of the throne and judged the people's disputes. When witnesses came to testify before King Solomon, the wheels rolled, the oxen bellowed, the lions roared, the bears growled, the sheep bleated, the panthers hissed, the owls hooted, the cats and pheasants purred, the roosters crowed, and the hawks and birds chirped, all in order to fluster the witnesses so they would not testify falsely. The witnesses told themselves: "We must speak the truth; if not, the world will be destroyed on our account."

כַּאֲשֶׁר הִגִּיעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל לְשֹׂאוֹל  
בְּשִׁלּוּמוֹ שֶׁל הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה, וְכָל  
הַזְּקֵנִים יָשְׁבוּ מִיְמִין וּמִשְׂמָאל  
לְכֹסֵא, וְדָנוּ דִין לְעָם. כַּאֲשֶׁר  
הוֹפִיעוּ עֵדִים לְהַעֲיֵד לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
שְׁלֹמֹה, הִגְלָגְלִים נָעוּ, הַשְּׁוֹרִים  
גָּעוּ, הָאֲרִיּוֹת שָׁאָגוּ, הַדְּבִים  
נָהֲמוּ, הַכֹּבָשִׁים פָּעוּ, הַפְּנִתָרִים  
צָעְקוּ, הַיְנָשׁוּפִים בָּכוּ, הַחֲתוּלִים  
וְהַטְּוֹסִים יָלְלוּ, הַתְּרַנְגוּלִים  
קָרְאוּ, הַנְּצִים וְהַצְּפוּרִים צָפְצְפוּ  
כְּדִי לְהַבְהִיל אֶת לְבָם שֶׁל הָעֵדִים  
שֶׁלֹא יַעֲיֵדוּ עֵדוֹת שָׁקֶר. וְהָיוּ  
הָעֵדִים אוֹמְרִים בְּלִבָּם: "עָלֵינוּ  
לְהַעֲיֵד הָאֱמֶת, וְאִם לֹא הָעוֹלָם  
יִחָרַב בְּגִלְלוֹנוֹ."





## >> The Rebbe

**Student's** The Targum Sheni describes at length the structure of Solomon's throne, which included lions, wolves, and bears. When a person would come for a court case the wild animals would roar, frightening the litigants and causing them to confess the truth.  
pg. 13

Under such circumstances there is no need for witnesses and forewarning. When Solomon sat on G-d's throne and the lions roared, the litigants would confess, and the law is that "a litigant's confession is as powerful as a hundred witnesses." Solomon could then rule which woman the child belongs to and who the rightful owner of a sum of money is, as in the story related by the Midrash about the coins in the jug of honey.

*After we read about Solomon's unique throne and how his judgements played out, everything is understood. Yes, there were no witnesses and there was no forewarning, but there was an admission by the defendant, which is equal to the testimony of a hundred witnesses. When people came before judgment and were terrified by what they saw, they immediately admitted the truth. Based on their confessions, Solomon ruled whose baby was whose, and who the money belonged to, etc.*

*As an example of this, the Rebbe quotes the story of the Midrash that occurred with King David, Solomon's father, and reinforces the same idea: Circumstantial events which cannot be admitted as proof in court may cause the defendant to confess, and a verdict can then be based on that confession.*

מתואר שם בארוכה איך כסא שלמה היה בנוי - שהיו בו אריות וזאבים ודובים וכו', וכאשר מישהו הגיע לשאול שאלה או לדין תורה, היו האריות והזאבים והדובים צועקים וצווחים כו', באופן שהיה נופל אימתה ופחד על בעלי הדין, והיו מודים על האמת.

ומוכן שבמצב כזה אין צורך בעדים והתראה, כי, בשבתו על כסא ה', והאריות צווחו כו', היו בעלי הדין מודים על האמת, והרי "הודאת בעל דין כמאה עדים דמי"<sup>11</sup>; ואז היה יכול לפסוק שילד זה שייך לאשה פלונית, או שממון זה שייך לאיש פלוני, כסיפור הידוע במדרש<sup>12</sup> אודות המטבעות שהיו בכד עם הדבש וכו'.

(11) גיטין מ, ב. וש"נ.

(12) ראה אוצר מדרשים (אייזנשטיין) ח"ב ע' 533.



## The Honey Barrels and the Hidden Gold

### Source 6 Otzar Hamidrashim, Midrashim About King Solomon, The Barrels Of Honey And Gold

**Student's** A man in the times of King Saul had a very beautiful wife who was very wealthy. He  
pg. 14 was very old and then passed away.

Because his wife was so beautiful, the ruler of that region laid his eyes upon her and prepared to take her by force. She refused, and was terrified of the consequences.

She took all her wealth, placed it in barrels, and filled them with honey. She gave the barrels to a friend of her husband's to watch over, and fled the region.

Eventually, the ruler died and the woman returned home. The man with whom she had entrusted her barrels had made a wedding for his son and needed honey. He found those barrels and took some honey from them. Eventually, he saw that all the barrels were filled with gold. He took the fortune and filled the barrels with honey.

When the woman returned home, she asked him for her barrels back. "Bring the witnesses who watched you give me the barrels and I will return them," he said. She brought the witnesses and he returned the barrels. When she returned home, she found the barrels filled with honey and began to cry and scream.

She went to the local judge and he asked her if she had witnesses that there was gold in the barrels. "No," she replied. "My daughter, what can I do? Go to King Saul and he will judge." She went to Saul and he sent her to the Sanhedrin. They asked her if she had witnesses and she responded that she had none, because she had wished to conceal it from the ruler. "My daughter, we can only rule based on witnessed events, we cannot rule on what was in your heart," she was told. The woman left distraught.

On her way home, she met the future King David, then a young shepherd playing with his friends.

She raised her voice: "My son, They will not rule in my favor over the man who cheated me. Listen to me and kindly give a ruling!" David responded: "Go to the king and request permission for me to rule and I will bring the true verdict to light." She returned to King Saul and said: "My master, I have found a young boy who can find out the truth." He told her to bring him before him. She brought David to the king. Saul asked him: Is it true that you can resolve this case?" "If I have your permission, I trust in my Creator." "Go along with him," he told her.

**Student's** David told the woman to take out the barrels that she had entrusted to the man.  
pg. 15 She did, and he asked her, "Do you recognize that these are the barrels you gave this man?" "Yes my master." They asked the man, and he too admitted they were his. David told her to bring other, empty barrels. She brought them and he emptied the honey into them. David picked up the barrels and shattered them before everyone. He felt around and found in the shards two gold coins which were stuck to the walls. David immediately told the man to return the gold coins to the woman. When Saul and all the Jews heard about this event, they were in awe and knew that the Divine Spirit rests upon David.

*Here too, gold coins found on the walls of the barrels aren't acceptable evidence. But finding those coins in such dramatic fashion brought the defendant to confess.*

## >> The Rebbe

**Student's** The same can be said about the manna.  
pg. 15 When an extra portion of manna descended at the opening of Reuben's tent rather than Simeon's, people would harass Simeon because this was a sign from heaven that the servant didn't belong to him. As a result of the harassment and mockery, Simeon would be compelled to confess and willingly return the servant to Reuben. Simeon wouldn't do this because witnesses came forward against him, but as a result of the manna descending at Reuben's tent.

ועל דרך זה בנוגע ל"מן": בשעה שמדידי יום ביומו ירד עומר מן מיותר על פתחו של ראובן, ולא של שמעון, אזי ירדו לחייו של שמעון, שהנה מראים מן השמים בכל יום שהעבד אינו שייך אליו, כי אם לראובן, עד שהוכרח להודות - מפני אלו שמלעיגים ומצירים ומציקים, וברצונו הטוב החזיר את העבד לראובן. אבל הסיבה לכך היא - לא בגלל שהביאו עדות כנגדו, אלא בגלל שה"מן" ירד על פתחו של ראובן.

*The same is true regarding the manna. The manna falling outside Reuben's tent wasn't acceptable evidence in court. But the daily reality that the manna was arriving at Reuben's doorstep created pressure on Simeon, leading him to confess.*

משיחת ליל י"א ניסן, ה'תשל"ג.  
הנחה בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם כרך ע"ב עמוד 41 ואילך

How does all this relate to us? We don't have Solomon's throne, nor does manna rain down from heaven.

Let's think about what is really behind the miracles of the manna and the roars of the animals. Moses and Solomon elevated those being judged before them to a higher spiritual level, where they were ashamed to lie and confessed to the truth.

The manna and Solomon's throne accomplished this in a very visual way, but we see this in a more spiritual sense with Moses' conduct:

### **Yitro's Suggested Judicial System**

After the exodus from Egypt, in addition to being the one who transmitted G-d words to the people, Moses also became the sole judge of the people. Any time a judicial ruling was required, both parties came before Moses himself and he would render a verdict.

When Yitro, Moses' father-in-law, comes to visit the Jews in the desert, he tells his son-in-law that he cannot continue to do this alone<sup>13</sup>. "What you are doing is not right. You will surely wear yourself out, and the people as well, for the task is too great for you; you cannot do it alone."

He suggests delegating responsibilities. Moses will continue to be the one who communicates with G-d and teaches the Torah, but judgment will be rendered by a hierarchical system of judges of tens, judges of fifties, judges of hundreds and judges of thousands.

Each unit of ten people will have one judge. For every fifty people, a higher judge will be appointed. For every two "judges of fifties" another judge will be appointed over 100, and for every ten such judges, a higher judge will rule over 1000.

When people wish to bring a dispute before a court, they will go to the lowest judge. On appeal it will go higher, and only seldomly will it rise all the way to Moses himself.

Moses accepts his father-in-law's recommendation and applies it. In those days, the Jewish population was 600,000 men and according to this math, 78,600 judges were appointed!

### **Lesson for Life**

Yitro's idea was simple and made sense. Moses himself cannot judge the people, therefore additional judges must be appointed. Could Moses, the leader of the Jewish people, not come up with this himself?

The Rebbe explains<sup>14</sup>: Moses knew that when the Jews face him, they will feel a high level of holiness, rise above their day-to-day issues and immediately the conflict would be resolved

### **Create Your Environment**

We are all leaders: of our families, communities or workplaces. Instead of chasing after our children or students and making sure they're one thing or another, and instead of being the arbiter of all conflicts, we should invest in creating an environment of holiness and positivity around us. Then, our children will rise above petty issues, above their egos, on their own, and will live at a higher level from the outset

The Rebbe explains: Moses knew that when the Jews face him, they will feel a high level of holiness, rise above their day-to-day issues and immediately the conflict would be resolved.