

The Siev Family Invites Everyone to a Kiddush

The Siev family invites you to a kiddush at their house this shabbos at 11:15 a.m. in honor of their daughter, Ayelet Hadassa and as a chanukas habayis for their house 246 Stoneway. Everyone is welcome to come.

CHELKEINU- THIS SUNDAY!!!

Rav Hershel Schachter shlit"a will be speaking at LMS this Sunday, Sept. 11 at 7:45 p.m. on the topic of, "When Kids Are No Longer Kids: Kibbud Av ve-Em as Families Grow Older." The event is jointly sponsored by Chelkeinu, LMS, and YIML, with food provided by Yi-tzi Peking and Acme Markets. For more information, please contact Rabbi Judah Goldberg at 610-664-3474 or at chelkeinu@gmail.com.

Advanced Beginner's Gemora Shiur

The Tuesday night Advanced Beginner's Gemora Shiur will resume this Tuesday night, September 13th, following Maariv. Participants are asked to spend a little time in advance of each week's shiur preparing the Gemora, so we will get the most out of the shiur. Please speak to Rabbi Steinberg if you would like to attend.

Lower Merion Parents Concerned with Media Influence

Lower Merion Parents Concerned with Media Influence present a talk by Mr. Avi Shulman entitled, "Media Exposure and Our Children: Facts & Solutions for Parents and Caregivers" at YIML on Sunday, Sept. 18 at 8:00 p.m.

New Program for Women – Lamdeini

The Sisterhood of the Young Israel of the Main Line is proud to present **Lamdeini**, a new monthly Shabbos shiur for women. The shiur will start **Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo, Sept. 24th at 4:30 p.m. at the home of Julia Strassman (335 Bala Ave)**. Shalosh Seudos to follow. Speaker: Rabbi Steinberg. This shiur series is dedicated in loving memory of Mrs. Naomi Zeiger z"l.

Chevra Mishnavos

The YIML Chevra Mishnavos is learning Seder Tohoros. Please sign up on the bulletin board to participate.

Women's Choir

There is a women's choir being organized by Ellen Weiss. Call 610-649-4869 for details.

Tefillin and Mezuzah Checking

Rabbi Shmuel Bodenheim will be in our Shul on Sunday, September 18th starting after davening.

Last Weekly Shalosh Seudos

Rav Sholom Kamenetsky will be speaking next week at the last week of weekly shalosh seudos.

All submissions, suggestions, and sponsorships should be directed to Moshe Eisenberg, creator of this Weekly Update.

Young Israel of the Main Line Weekly Update



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Rabbi Avraham Steinberg

September 9-16, 2005

Parshas Shoftim

פרשת שופטים

Shabbos Davening Times

Candle lighting:	7:03 p.m.
Mincha - Friday:	7:00 p.m.
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:48 a.m.
Shacharis:	8:45 a.m.
Mincha- Shabbos (followed by Shalosh Seudos):	6:50 p.m.
Maariv:	8:04 p.m.

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis –Sunday:	8:00 a.m.
Shacharis I– Mon, Thurs:	6:40 a.m.
Shacharis I- Tues, Wed, Fri:	6:50 a.m.
Shacharis II- Mon-Fri:	8:00 a.m.
Mincha/ Maariv (Sun-Thurs):	7:00 p.m.



Kiddush for this week is sponsored by Rivki & Azriel Hirschfeld on the occasion of their son Yisroel's birth and pidyon haben.

Topic for the Sefer Hamitzvos Shiur:

Is Every Rabbinic Law a Torah Law?:

A Closer Look at One of the Mitzvos of Parshas Shoftim

Shabbos, 5:50 p.m.

Take advantage of this opportunity to experience the depth of Talmudic reasoning, while gaining knowledge of some of the most important principles of the Torah's Mitzvos. Each week's shiur is an independent presentation and one can join the shiur at anytime.

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Shiurim*



DAY	TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	NOTES
Shabbos	8:15 a.m.	Chumash Shiur	Rabbi Steinberg	
Shabbos	5:50 p.m.	Rambam Sefer Hamitzvos Shiur	Rabbi Steinberg	
Sunday Morning	After Davening	Sefer Hachinuch Shiur	Rabbi Steinberg	
Mon., Wed.	After Maariv	Mishna Berura Hilchos Shabbos	Eli Back	
15 minutes before Shacharis on Sun.-Fri.		Mesilas Yesharim	Rabbi Steinberg	
Monday	8:00 p.m.	A Conceptual Look at the Jewish Calendar	R' Judah Goldberg	NEW SHIUR!! Begins this week
Tuesday	9:45 a.m.	Women's Tehillim Group		At the Eisenberg home
Tuesday night	After Maariv	Gemora Sukka Shiur	Rabbi Steinberg	Resumes this week
Wednesday	8:00 p.m.	Women's Pirkei Avos Shiur	Rabbi Steinberg	8:00 p.m. through September
Thursday night	10:10 p.m.	Nefesh Hachaim	Rav Sholom Kamenetsky	RESUMES THIS WEEK!!

*All shiurim are at YIML unless specified.

Parsha Musings by Rabbi Steinberg

The Measure of Accountability

The full scope of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina has not been fully discovered yet, and already the finger-pointing has begun. *Was it the federal, state or, local officials who bore the responsibility to react more swiftly? Who knew how much of the possibility of such a catastrophe and how much could they have done to prevent it?* These questions and many others will no doubt be debated for months and years to come, adding much to fuel nasty politics, and nothing to comfort the bereaved inhabitants of the Gulf Coast or to calm a shocked nation.

Who is responsible? This is a question that the Torah teaches us must have an unequivocal answer. This is, in fact, a recurring theme of our Parsha.

One of the Mitzvos presented in Parshas Shoftim (see 18:6-8) is that the Kohanim must be divided into groups (mishmaros), with each group to serve in the Temple at its own designated time. A Kohen from one mishmar may not serve at a time designated for another mishmar. The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzva 509, "Misharashi HaMitzva") explains a reason for this: *...For all tasks assigned to a designated few people, one can be sure, will be performed properly, and laziness, apathy, and bickering will not set in. But those left to the masses, without designation of a few – sometimes these will unload it on those, and sometimes these will quarrel with those....* The Torah thus teaches that assigned responsibility is essential, because without it the job will not get done, either because nobody will want to do it, or because too many people will want to do it.

Continued on facing page

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Please daven for a refuah shelaima for Shabsai Shmuel Eliyahu ben Sarah Esther

But an even greater charge of responsibility is presented at the end of the Parsha.

If a man is found slain in the fields, the Elders of the nearest city must perform the Eglah Arufa (axed heifer) ceremony to announce their innocence. The Torah prescribes a very remarkable procedure to determine which city must perform this rite. The Torah tells us that the distance must be measured from the slain man to each of the surrounding cities to determine which is closest. The Gemora gives us precise details of this procedure. The distance is to be measured from the nose of the deceased. If one city is closer but the other is of greater population, or any other questionable circumstance arises, the Halacha has a formula to answer it. Some authorities maintain (see Mishna L'Melech, Hilchos Rotze'ach, 9:1) that even when the nearest city is very readily identifiable, the measurement must nevertheless be carried out as a formality. It seems that the measuring is mandated less out of necessity, and more to teach a lesson: *Responsibility can be measured to the inch.*

Furthermore, the Mishna (Sotah 55b) explains that the declaration that the Sanhedrin makes – "Our hands did not spill this blood" – does not mean simply that they did not commit the murder. As Rashi comments, could anyone really think that the Elders committed the murder? Rather, the Mishna explains, the Elders must be able to say that they did not in any remote way bring about this man's demise. "We did not see him and let him go without food or escort." (ibid.) The Eglah Arufah teaches us that responsibility must be unambiguously designated and borne absolutely.

[It is noteworthy that the section of the Eglah Arufah appears in the middle of a number of sections relating to war. This seems to teach us that even when we are caught up with external problems, we cannot lose our focus on tragedies within our own borders. It is hard to miss the parallel between this and criticisms directed at President Bush of late.]

Why does our society not manifest Eglah Arufah responsibility?

The Torah begins this section with the phrase "When a corpse *shall be found.*" The implication is that the verse addresses a society in which this is not a common occurrence. Indeed the Mishna states (Sotah 47a) that when there was an increase in the murder rate, the practice of Eglah Arufah ceased. The Talmud says (ibid, 47b) that the reason for this is because the Eglah Arufah is meant to be performed only when there is a doubt as to who the murderer is, but when known murderers abound, it is inapplicable.

But I believe there is a deeper meaning in this principle. The Eglah Arufah ritual is meant to exonerate society and its leaders. The Elders have to be able to say that this incident is an anomaly, and in no way reflects on their leadership. Despite this unfortunate incident, the Elders must definitively say that lawfulness reigns and that they take responsibility for their people's behavior.

In a society in which murder is commonplace – in which violation of the law and injustice abound – it is impossible to make such a declaration. The behavior of the people attests to the anarchy and lack of responsibility of the leaders. The Eglah Arufah cannot be carried out in such a place as it would be folly.

We daven every day for "the return of our judges as in early times." This, the Beracha continues, will "remove from us sorrow and anxiety." The heartrending images that we've seen these last few days should certainly elicit heartfelt tefillos to HaKadosh Boruch Hu. Among them should be prayers for the restoration of a world with thorough and complete justice.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos, Rabbi Steinberg