



# Carnegie Shul Chatter

September 1, 2022



## The High Holidays Are Coming

In just a few short weeks the High Holidays will be here, as Rosh Hashanah begins on Sunday evening, September 25. A new Carnegie Shul Shofar, which will include this year's High Holiday protocols and schedule, will be coming your way in the next few days, so keep an eye out for it.

This year, once again, tickets will not be required to attend our High Holiday services. We hope you will join us for services in our sanctuary, but if you cannot attend in person, we will be streaming the services on Zoom.

## Give Something Back

This week, my wife, Ellen, and I gave a presentation on *Jews in Music* to the residents of the Weinberg Terrace assisted living facility, run by the Jewish Agency on Aging, in Squirrel Hill. This was the third presentation we have done this summer following presentations on *Jews in Sports* and *Jews in the Movies*.

Our presentations were well attended and very well received by residents, who really seemed to enjoy them. But I doubt they enjoyed attending them nearly as much as we did presenting them.

Preparing the presentations took a lot of work. Researching the Jewish athletes, actors, and singers we talked about took many, many hours. Many more hours were spent writing the scripts, and Ellen spent countless hours preparing the slide shows the accompanying slide-shows. And each presentation lasted a full hour.

Yes, it was a lot of work, but it was well worth it. We felt truly blessed to be able to make the residents' days just a little bit better.

There are many ways to give back to our communities. One, of course, is by donating money. But another, perhaps equally important, way to give back is to volunteer our time and expertise.

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This is the time of year when many of us open our check books to donate money for Tzedakah. If you can afford to do so, by all means donate some money. But many of the same charities and institutions that need your money may also be able to benefit by you volunteering your time and your talents.

Think about it. You may discover that it really is better to give than to receive.



# Shoftim in a Nutshell

## Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9

*From Chabad.org*

Moses instructs the people of Israel to appoint judges and law enforcement officers in every city. “Justice, justice shall you pursue,” he commands them, and you must administer it without corruption or favoritism. Crimes must be meticulously investigated and evidence thoroughly examined—a minimum of two credible witnesses is required for conviction and punishment.

In every generation, says Moses, there will be those entrusted with the task of interpreting and applying the laws of the Torah. “According to the law that they will teach you, and the judgment they will instruct you, you shall do; you shall not turn away from the thing that they say to you, to the right nor to the left.”

Shoftim also includes the prohibitions against idolatry and sorcery; laws governing the appointment and behavior of a king; and guidelines for the creation of “cities of refuge” for the inadvertent murderer. Also set forth are many of the rules of war: the exemption from battle for one who has just built a home, planted a vineyard, married, or is “afraid and soft-hearted”; the requirement to offer terms of peace before attacking a city; and the prohibition against wanton destruction of something of value, exemplified by the law that forbids to cut down a fruit tree when laying siege (in this context the Torah makes the famous statement, “For man is a tree of the field”).

The Parshah concludes with the law of the eglah arufah—the special procedure to be followed when a person is killed by an unknown murderer and his body is found in a field—which underscores the responsibility of the community and its leaders not only for what they do, but also for what they might have prevented from being done.



# Shoftim

“Justice, justice shall you pursue.” These are certainly among the most famous words in the entire Torah. And the pursuit of justice is among the most controversial topics in our society today.

The Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are being praised by some and lambasted by others for their recent raid on former President Trump’s home at Mar-a-Lago in search of certain documents. The House Committee investigating the January 6 attack on the Capitol Building in Washington has been praised by many and condemned by others.

There have been calls to defund police departments and even the FBI. The Presbyterian Church has even accused Israel of being an apartheid state.

Where is the justice?

This week I have selected a commentary from the *Baltimore Jewish Times*, written not by a famous Rabbi, but by Adley Weinberg, an eighth grader at Krieger Schechter Day School in Pikesville, Maryland, who expresses his opinion on this week’s parshah. I hope you find it enlightening.

## Parshat Shoftim: In pursuit of justice

August 31, 2022

Adley Weinberg | Krieger Schechter Day School



The name of my Torah portion, Shoftim, means “Judges.” Shoftim focuses on how you should not judge people unfairly, but rather “tzedek tzedek tirdof” (“justice, justice you should pursue”) (Deuteronomy 16:20).

The Torah talks about how you shouldn’t convict someone in court just because they are different or because you don’t like them. It wouldn’t be fair to punish an innocent person.

Rabbi Artson explains that according to traditional sources, God loves justice much more than sacrifices. For example, Proverbs says: “To do what is right and just is more desired by the Lord than sacrifice” (21:3). The verse doesn’t say, “as much as sacrifice,” but “more than sacrifice.” This shows what God wants much more than sacrifices and praying. It is more important to have justice and peace.

Part of justice is that you should never judge someone unfairly just because they are different. You could be thinking that someone you don’t know did something wrong because they don’t look the same as you, but in reality they end up being a very kind person and different than you thought.

Some people don’t treat others who are different with respect. This could end up being worse than hurting someone’s feelings. Things are happening today that date back to the story of Moses. In the story of Moses, the Jewish people were slaves to Pharaoh and were beaten to death just because they were Jews. They worked and worked until they died.

Then Moses, a Jew who was the adopted son of Pharaoh, took a stand and saved the Jewish people from slavery. Moses did an act of justice.

Today there are many examples of people who judge other people unfairly because of the color of their skin. This has led to acts of racism. For example, two years ago a man named George Floyd was killed by a white police officer in an act of unnecessary force. This shows how injustice can be deadly.

We need to stop these kinds of injustices. We can't bring George Floyd or any other victims of racism back, but we can still help to make sure that those acts of racism don't happen ever again. I think that the message of this, my Torah portion, is that people must not show partiality against someone who doesn't look the same way as them.

Justice, justice you shall pursue.



*Adley Weinberg is a rising eighth grader at Krieger Schechter Day School in Pikesville.*

## Hybrid Shabbat Service

The Carnegie Shul continues to offer hybrid Shabbat services. If you want to attend services in the sanctuary, please join us, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19. Masks are optional, and there is plenty of room for social distancing. Or participate via Zoom. Rosalyn Hoffman will send a Zoom link. If you don't receive it, contact her at [rjlynman@yahoo.com](mailto:rjlynman@yahoo.com). Either way, please help us make a minyan this week.

## Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

**Melvin Harold Cohn**  
**Meyer Perloff**  
**Anna Friedman**

**Alex Glantz**  
**Milton Moskovitz**

May their memories be for a blessing.