

## What is a Shofet?

Rambam- not just a dayan (judge)

Malbim- a “catalyst” of teshuvah, causes others to return to the way of Hashem

Rav Soleveitchik- a spiritual leader, unifies and creates peace/harmony within the community

Abarbanel-

JUDGE	KING	BOTH
X	annointed	Selected by G-d
Torah daily issues	National, war, supplies	Military leaders, maintained judgement
X	Specific Halachot/restrictions	Allowed to give punishments not in Torah
X	Rules about special honor, taxing rights	Had honor, killed rebellious
chosen	Inherited by blood	Continuous chain of leadership

## How should the Shoftim era be viewed?

“Vayehi” introduces negative events, like in Ruth, Esther, etc.

Malbim- Yehoshua spoke directly to G-d, didn’t need Urim V’ tumim; the Shoftim can’t; degeneration of holiness

-Areas not conquered by Israel bother them most, failure on Bnei’s part

-Each tribe fights alone, less unity

Called “Sefer Hayashar” in Gemara Avodah Zarah, because Bnei Yisrael followed “in his eyes”:

- 1) They were on such a high level, they did what was good in G-d’s eyes even w/out a king
- 2) They did whatever was “yashar” in their own eyes, not G-d’s. Relative morality.

Daat Sofrim- “מִי יַעֲלֶה לָנוּ” who will elevate. The purpose of the war was to make Israel more holy, to replace Cnaanim with Kedushah.

## What’s so important about Adoni Bezek, and why cut off his big toes/thumbs?

Rashi- Adoni Bezek, killed 70 kings, STILL was not powerful enough to be considered a “MELECH.” Imagine how strong the KINGS must have been, and how much stronger is Bnei to conquer them!

Ralbag-

- 1) Instill fear in other kings and nations
- 2) Midah K’neged midah, Adoni Bezek did this to 70 kings. He mentions Elokim, that he is receivng G-d’s manifestation of **justice**.

Malbim- value of confession. Because he admitted wrongdoings, he wasn’t killed like usual.

Gemara: שְׁמוּאֵל wrote Shoftim (Megilat Ruth also takes place during Iftzan the shofet, who may be Boaz)

## Why did Yehudah go 1st ?

Musar Haneviim-

- 1) Yaakov blessed Yehudah that the others will “modeh,” concede to him. Instead of denying his relationship with Tamar, he concedes, judged himself and admitted it.
- 2) Gemarah Sota – Nachshon took initiative, jumped in Red Sea first, was from Yehudah

Kli Yakar- yehudah, “admit.” Just like you weren’t embarrassed to admit your sin (like David’s “chatati laHashem”) your brother tribes won’t be embarrassed to be subservient to you.

## Why is he an angel, and why him?

Rashi- Pinchas

R’ Horowitz- b/c he was a zealot, he was concerned that since Bnei Yisrael didn’t drive out the other nations that they’ll be influenced like in Bamidbar.

Musar Haneviim- angels don’t do anything for themselves or alterior motives, just what H’ wants. So too, a prophet has the same attributes when appointed to teach, all decisions for the community, not self.

Oz V’anavah- Just like Pinchas gave his soul up to the land of Israel, he is appropriate to warn about the negligence regarding the land. ALSO it was a double sin; national and religious, making treaties and leaving their mizbachot.