

## Rabbi's Column

This week we are commanded to provide judges and officers. The text does not say, "When you find that some people insist on having disputes, you should figure out who can be a judge." It states, "You shall give for yourselves judges and officers in every town in the land you are getting." People will have problems when living, and sometimes they cannot work out those problems without some help from other people. Which means judges.

The text reminds us that a judge is not allowed to change a ruling to fit some temporary thought; a judge may not recognize anything specific about an individual that is unrelated to the actual legal issues relevant to the case; a judge may not take anything that might change how the judge looks at the individuals within the courtroom. Later developments in Jewish jurisprudence helped make perversions of justice less likely.

We should all take these rules to heart, because quite often each of us acts as a judge - even when we shouldn't.

As we go through life, may we judge others in this fashion: never letting how we feel about somebody affect how we look at their actions - how we act based on what we see usually will depend upon our individual relationship with them; being honest about when what people have done to or for us affects how we think about them and their deeds; judging ourselves the same way we judge others - being neither more harsh with ourselves, or more lenient.

The shofar begins being blown this week to remind us that the High Holidays are fast approaching. May our preparation for atonement go well.