



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

SHOFETIM: DECISIONS, DECISIONS!

THIS WEEK'S PARASHA TELLS US HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO APPOINT GOOD JUDGES AND HAVE A JUST SOCIETY. DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A JEWISH COURT (**BETH DIN**) FOR THE JEWISH COMMUNITY?

WE INTERVIEWED ONE OF THE **DAYANIM**, **DAYAN BINSTOCK**, TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO.



WHAT IS A DAYAN?

A Dayan is a judge in Jewish court/Beth Din. Certain areas of Jewish law require specialised knowledge and the presence of three judges. A Dayan is the name we give to one of these judges and the Beth Din is the court of the Dayanim.



WHAT DO DAYANIM DO?

Dayanim deal with Jewish court cases, Jewish divorce (Get), conversion, adoption and Jewish status. The London Beth Din Dayanim are also responsible for authorising the kashrut of food (KLBD), as well as Rabbinic guidance for mikvas, eruvs, cemeteries and many more areas relating to the Jewish community.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A DAYAN?

After qualifying as a Rabbi, someone wanting to become a Dayan would need to study many other areas of Jewish law. In addition he would need to spend much time doing shimmush – gaining field experience alongside other Dayanim. Finally he would need to understand the community he was serving and be a good judge of character.



CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT A TYPICAL DAY IN THE LIFE OF A DAYAN?

- 10.00 am – 1.00 pm Mr A versus Mr B in a court case.
- 1.00 pm Dr C is interested in converting to Judaism. She attends a meeting with a Dayan to see what will be required of her.
- 2.00 pm The Dayanim meet with the Chief Rabbi for a weekly meeting to discuss matters of importance in the community.
- 3.00 pm Mr D comes to discuss a Get with the Dayan. The Dayan meets with him and explains what will be involved.
- 4.00 pm Rabbi E attends for a "Marriage Test" to see if he is competent in the laws of officiating at a wedding.
- 4.00 pm A Dayan interviews witnesses who have come to give evidence that their friend is Jewish and single, so that a certificate can be issued to enable her to get married in Israel.
- 5.00 pm Rabbi F phones. He has a Bar Mitzvah in his shul in two weeks' time and it has been discovered that the Bar Mitzvah boy has learned the wrong haftarah, what does he do?!
- 5.30 pm Messrs G and H, caterers, attend for their annual meeting with a Dayan for the renewal of their Kashrut Licence.



tribe
www.tribeuk.com

Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.