

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Mishpatim

For the week ending 1 Adar I 5757
7 & 8 February 1997

Parsha Questions

1. Did Rashi write "Shulchan Aruch"? (hint: a trick question)
2. What mitzva in this *parsha* involves a *mezuzah*? (hint: another trick question)
3. What special mitzva does the Torah give to the master of a Hebrew maidservant?
4. What is the penalty for striking one's father or mother and causing a wound?
5. 'A' intentionally hits 'B'. As a result, B is in critical condition, dangerously close to death. Besides any possible monetary payments, what happens to A?
6. What is the penalty for someone who wants to murder a particular person, but accidentally kills another person instead?
7. A slave goes free if his master knocks out one of the slave's teeth. What type of teeth do not qualify for this rule? Why?
8. An ox gores another ox. What is the maximum the owner of the damaging ox must pay, even if his animal had gored twice previously?
9. From where in this week's *parsha* can the importance of work be demonstrated?
10. What is meant by the words "If the sun shone on him"?
11. A person is given an object for safe-keeping. Later, he swears it was stolen. Witnesses come and say that, in fact, *he* is the one who stole it. How much must he pay?
12. While a person is borrowing his employee's car, the car is struck by lightning. How much must he pay his employee for the damage to the car?
13. Why is lending money at interest called 'biting'?
14. Non-kosher meat is preferentially fed to dogs. Why?
15. Which verse forbids listening to slander?
16. What constitutes a majority-ruling in a capital case?
17. How is the festival of *Shavuot* referred to in this week's *parsha*?
18. How many prohibitions are transgressed when cooking meat and milk together?
19. What was written in the *Sefer HaBris* which Moshe wrote *prior* to the giving of the Torah?
20. Who was 'Efras'? Who was her husband? Who was her son?

BONUS

Q:

If a person shall give money or vessels to his friend... (22:6)

Reuven and Shimon are standing in front of a Jewish court.
Reuven says to Shimon: "You owe me 100 dollars."
Shimon answers: "No, it was only 50 dollars."
In this case, the Torah obligates Shimon to swear that he is telling the truth.

But why must he swear? Isn't it obvious that Shimon is telling the truth? If he were a liar, he would have denied the *entire* claim! Then he would have paid zero, and been free of any Torah oath!

I Did Not Know That!

"The beginning of your land's fruits you shall bring to the house of Hashem your G-d; don't cook a kid in its mother's milk." (23:19)

What's the connection between the first half of this verse and the second? A renowned Rabbi once explained as follows: Bring your 'fruits,' — your children — to the house of Hashem when they are young. That is to say, bring them to the *Beis Medrash* and teach them the Torah. And if you think, "My kid is too young to learn Torah. He needs more maternal pampering." To this the Torah says "Don't cook a *kid* in his mother's milk."

Heard from Rabbi Betzalel Rudinsky

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Parshas **Mishpatim** — 1 Adar I 5757, 7 & 8 February 1997

Production Design: Lev Seltzer

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

21:1-2	Parallel with Ten Commandments
21:6	(first part) Divine Role in Human Justice
21:15	The Severity of Cursing One's Parents
21:29-30	Death Penalty and Ransom
22:6	(first part) Two kinds of <i>Shomrim</i>
22:20-22	Prosecutor of the Helpless
22:30	Holiness of Kashrus
23:25	Blessings and Destruction
24:1	Matan Torah Chronology

Sefer Hachinuch

42	Human Kindness
43	Divine Kindness
47	Capital Punishment
50	Penalty for Anger
52	Despising Destruction
62	The Danger of Sorcery
66	Why Hashem Creates the Poor
70	Blasphemy
71	Respect for Authority
73	Kashrus
78	Antidote to Anarchy
84	Shemita
93	Relations with Heathens

Answers to this Week's Questions

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 21:1 - Yes! Rashi writes that Moshe was commanded to present the Torah clearly to the Jewish People, like a '<i>shulchan</i>' (<i>table</i>) which is '<i>aruch</i>' (<i>set</i>) and ready for the meal. 2. 21:6 - If a Hebrew slave desires to remain enslaved, it is a mitzva to pierce his ear next to a door post — <i>mezusa</i>. 3. 21:8,9 - The Torah mandates a special <i>mitzva</i> to marry her. 4. 21:15 - Death by strangulation. 5. 21:19 - He is put in jail until 'B' recovers or dies. 6. 21:23 - One opinion: The murderer deserves the death penalty. Another opinion: The murderer is exempt from capital punishment, but must compensate the heirs of his victim. 7. 21:26 - Baby teeth, because they grow back. 8. 21:35 - The full value of his own animal. 9. 21:37 - From the 'five-times' penalty for stealing an ox and then selling it or slaughtering it. This heavy fine can be seen as a punishment for preventing the owner from using his ox to plow his field. 10. 22:2 - If it's as clear as the sun that the thief has no intent to kill. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. 22:8 - Double value of the object denied. 12. 22:14 - Nothing. 13. 22:24 - Interest on a loan is like a poisonous snake bite. Just as the poison is not noticeable at first, but soon overwhelms the person, so too interest is barely noticeable until suddenly it accumulates to an overwhelming sum. 14. 22:30 - As 'reward' for their silence during the plague of the first born (<i>Shmos</i> 11:7). 15. 23:1 - Targum Onkelos translates "Don't bear a false report" as "Don't <i>receive</i> a false report." 16. 23:2 - A simple majority is needed for an acquittal. A majority of two is needed for a ruling of guilty. 17. 23:16 - <i>Chag HaKatzir</i> — Festival of Reaping. 18. 23:19 - One. There are three prohibitions involving the combining of milk and meat. One is violated by cooking. 19. 24:4,7 - The Torah starting from <i>Bereshis</i> until the giving of the Torah, and the commandments given at <i>Mara</i>. 20. 24:14 - Miriam, wife of Calev, mother of Chur. |
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Bonus

A:

Most people aren't brazen enough to lie straight into their creditor's face. Therefore, even a liar will find it difficult to deny the entire claim.

But by admitting to part of the claim, the liar can salve his conscience, thinking, "I don't have enough money to pay right now. I'll admit to part of the claim now, and later when I'm able, I'll pay the rest." To prevent this evasive tactic, the Torah obligates him to swear.

Bava Metzia 3