

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Mishpatim Shabbos Shekalim

For the week ending 25 Shevat 5758
20 & 21 February 1998

Parsha Questions

1. In what context is a *mezuzah* mentioned in this week's *Parsha*? (tricky question)
2. What special mitzvah does the Torah give to the master of a Hebrew maidservant?
3. What is the penalty for striking one's father or mother and causing a wound?
4. 'A' intentionally hits 'B'. As a result, B is dangerously close to death. Besides any possible monetary payments, what happens to A?
5. What is the penalty for someone who tries to murder a particular person, but accidentally kills another person instead? Give two opinions.
6. A slave goes free if his master knocks out one of the slave's teeth. What teeth do not qualify for this rule and why?
7. An ox gores another ox. What is the maximum the owner of the damaging ox must pay, provided his animal had gored no more than twice previously?
8. From where in this week's *Parsha* can the importance of *work* be demonstrated?
9. What is meant by the words "If the sun shone on him"?
10. 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?
11. A person borrows his employee's car. The car is struck by lightning. How much must he pay his employee for the damage to the car?
12. Why is lending money at interest called "biting"?
13. Non-kosher meat — "*treifa*" — is preferentially fed to dogs. Why?
14. Which verse forbids listening to slander?
15. What constitutes a majority-ruling in a capital case?
16. How is the festival of *Shavuot* referred to in this week's *Parsha*?
17. How many prohibitions are transgressed when cooking meat and milk together?
18. What was written in the *Sefer HaBris* which Moshe wrote prior to the giving of the Torah?
19. What was the *livnas hasapir* a reminder of?
20. Who was Efras? Who was her husband? Who was her son?

Rashi never just comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi's comments are answers to unspoken questions and difficulties arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah. Therefore, anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask

"What's Bothering Rashi?"

"You shall not take a bribe, for the bribe will blind those who can see and will pervert the words of the righteous (divrei tzadikim)." (Exodus 23:8)

Rashi: "Divrei tzadikim: Words that are righteous; judgments of truth."

Rashi translates the Hebrew in an unusual way. *Divrei tzadikim* would normally mean "words of the righteous people." Why does Rashi reject this in favor of the translation "righteous words?"

What's bothering Rashi?

Answer: Rashi can't reconcile calling judges who take bribes "righteous people." It is a contradiction in terms! Therefore, the *words* — not the judges — are righteous, coming as they do from the Torah.

Based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek's new book "What's Bothering Rashi?" Feldheim Publishers

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Parshas **Mishpatim** — 25 Shevat 5758, 20 & 21 February 1998

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I Did Not Know That!

Parshas Mishpatim, dealing largely with monetary laws, precedes *Parshas Terumah* which details the donations needed to build the Sanctuary. This teaches that even when donating to charity (*terumah*), a person must be sure that the money honestly belongs to him (*mishpatim*).

Beis Halevi

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 <i>Kashrus</i>
23:25	Blessings and Destruction
24:1	<i>Matan Torah</i> 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

- 21:6 - If a Hebrew slave desires to remain enslaved, the Torah tells his owner to bring him "to the door or to the door post — *mezuzah* — and to pierce his ear.
- 21:8,9 - To marry her.
- 21:15 - Death by strangulation.
- 21:19 - He is put in jail until 'B' recovers or dies.
- 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.
- 21:26 - Baby teeth, because they grow back.
- 21:35 - The full value of his own animal.
- 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 working with his ox to plow his field.
- 22:2 - If it's as clear as the sun that the thief has no intent to kill.
- 22:8 - Double value of the object denied.
- 22:14 - Nothing.
- 22:24 - Interest on a loan is like a poisonous snake bite. Just as the poison is not noticed at first but soon overwhelms the person, so too interest is barely noticeable until suddenly it accumulates to an overwhelming sum.
- 22:30 - As "reward" for their silence during the plague of the first born (*Shmos* 11:7).
- 23:1 - Targum Onkelos translates "Don't bear a false report" as "Don't receive a false report."
- 23:2 - A simple majority is needed for an acquittal. A majority of two is needed for a ruling of guilty.
- 23:16 - *Chag HaKatzir* — Festival of Reaping.
- 23:19 - One. There are three prohibitions (cooking, eating and deriving benefit) involving milk and meat. Only one is violated by cooking them together.
- 24:4,7 - The Torah, starting from *Bereshis* until the giving of the Torah, and the commandments given at *Mara*.
- 24:10 - That the Jews in Egypt were forced to toil by making bricks.
- 24:14 - Miriam, wife of Calev, mother of Chur.

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