

J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



Parshas Mishpatim
February 17, 2023 / 26 Shevat 5783
Volume 28, Issue 18
Candlelighting: 5:44 pm

Waxman Torah Center · 2195 S. Green Road · University Heights, OH 44121 · (216) 691-3837 · www.clevelandjlc.com

Friday, February 17

5:44pm Candlelighting
5:45pm Mincha / Maariv
8:40pm Shiur @ R. Nisenbaum's

Shabbos, February 18

8:45am Shacharis
Kiddush is available
5:35pm Mincha / Shalosh Seudos /
Maariv

Sunday, February 19

9:15am *Parsha Class*
(R. Nisenbaum)
10:00am "The 613 Mitzvos"
(R. Stoll)

Monday, February 20

8:00pm "The Rest of the Story"
- "David and Batsheva"

Tuesday, January 21

8:00pm Pirkei d'Rebbi Elazar
(R. Stoll)

Wednesday, February 22

8:00pm Nach Still Speaks –
Tehillim (R. Stoll)

Thursday, February 23

10:15pm Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)

Torah Podcast

Listen to Rabbi Nisenbaum's
"Torah Podcast" at Spotify,
Apple Podcasts, iHeartRadio,
and more, or download at
www.maverickpodcasting.com

New episodes twice a week!

Weekday Minyanim

7:00am Shacharis (M-F)
8:00am Shacharis (Sun)
10:00pm Maariv (Sun-Th)

Class Connection

R. Nisenbaum:
425-436-6200 #352171

"The Torah Podcast" weekly
at all podcast locations

R. Stoll:
Zoom: 876-619-3551
Audio: 669-900-9128

Parsha: Mishpatim

According to the tradition, Moshe received all the 613 mitzvos with their details at Mount Sinai. This week's portion discusses many of the civil and tort laws given at Sinai. The Jew's social obligations are not based merely on human intellect or socially accepted norms that change according to the whims of time. They originate instead, from an objective, eternal source—the Creator of all mankind. An ethical standard of Divine origin will go beyond what one might expect from a socially accepted standard.

Several examples of this can be seen in the portion. When a person steals an object from his friend, he is obligated to pay double the value. If he steals an ox or a sheep, and sells or slaughters the animal, he must pay five times the value for the ox and four times the value for the sheep. The reason for the steeper penalty is because oxen and sheep were the mainstay of most people's livelihood, and their theft is considered as destroying a family's source of sustenance.

The Talmud explains the difference between stealing an ox and a sheep. A sheep will not always follow and must often be carried home on one's shoulders, creating a measure of embarrassment. To compensate for this shame, he is charged a lower fine. Although the thief brought the shame upon himself by stealing, he is still a human being and his disgrace is also taken into consideration. This is the Torah's idea of sensitivity.

Another example involves the animal of an enemy that is lost. Although the owner may be wicked warranting the resentment, the Torah requires the person to overcome his feelings of dislike and return the lost animal. The same applies regarding assisting the enemy to load his animal.

Showing proper respect to one's parents is also emphasized. Wounding one's parent is considered a capital offense. Even cursing one's parents is considered a capital offense. The death penalty for cursing, however, is a more painful death than that of wounding. The reason for this is because normal logic would dictate that physical harm is more severe than emotional harm. The Torah does not agree. Harm caused by the tongue can be much greater and far-reaching than that caused by one's hands, and this is reflected in the punishment.

Another example may be seen from the measures the Torah takes if one's animal kills another human being. The animal itself must be put to death, and no pleasure may be derived from its carcass. Although obviously the animal cannot be held responsible for its actions, it must be killed to emphasize the sanctity of human life. A beast that has caused the loss of human life cannot be allowed to live.

The common theme through many of these laws is the unique sensitivity the Torah tries to train the Jew to show towards his fellow human being.

Insights: Mishpatim

When you lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you ... (Exodus 22:24)

The Midrash comments that one should view himself as if he was the poor person. Rav Avraham Pam was a very busy Rosh Yeshiva, preparing classes, involved in communal affairs and more. Nevertheless, he would make a point of attending every simcha he was invited. Somebody asked him why he bothered himself so much to attend so many events when he had so many personal responsibilities. Rav Pam answered that it was true had many things calling for his attention, but to each groom his wedding was the most important event in his life, and he felt it was important to share in the groom's simcha. He did not live with the thought of all his responsibilities—right now he lived with this groom's joyous event. We must try to feel another's needs.

Did You Know?

One who damages another's property is obligated to make full restitution, even if it was done inadvertently. However, damage which was only caused indirectly, for example if somebody opened his friend's garage and thieves entered and stole the property, although it was prohibited to open the garage, he is not liable for the theft. Peeking into another person's private space or activities is also considered to be a form of damage and is thus prohibited.

Thought for the Week: Most of our conversation is not talking but "making talk."

(A Candle By Day)