

# J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



**Mishpatim**  
**February 9, 2018 / 24 Shevat 5778**  
Volume 23, Issue 18  
Candlelighting: 5:34 pm

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## Friday, February 9

7:00 Shacharis  
5:34 Candlelighting  
5:35 Mincha / Maariv  
8:50 **Parsha class**  
@ R. Nisenbaum

## Shabbos, February 10

8:45 Shacharis  
*Kiddush is available  
for sponsorship*  
4:55 Laws of Shabbos  
5:25 Mincha / Shalosh  
Seudos  
*Shalosh Seudos is  
available for  
sponsorship.*  
6:44 Maariv

## Sunday, February 11

8:00 Shacharis  
10:00 Maariv

## Monday, February 12

7:00 Shacharis  
8:00 **Cities of Spirit:  
Meron:  
Secret of Rashbi**  
10:00 Maariv

## Tuesday, February 13

7:00 Shacharis  
8:00 **Understanding Our  
Prayers (Stoll)**  
10:00 Maariv

## Wednesday, February 14

7:00 Shacharis  
8:00 **The Prophets Still Speak  
(Stoll)**  
10:00 Maariv

## Thursday, February 15

7:00 Shacharis  
10:00 Maariv  
10:15 **Textual Parsha Class**  
(30 minutes)

## Power Points 2

Contact R. Nisenbaum for ways to be a sponsor for his new sefer.

## 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.

## Insights: Mishpatim

**If an ox shall gore a man or woman and he shall die... (Exodus 21:28)** A person is obligated to guard his belongings from causing harm. A student would drive Rav Moshe Feinstein from his home on the Lower East Side to his yeshiva in Staten Island. Once the student came late and was driving quite a bit faster than the speed limit. He was stopped by the police and handed a hefty ticket. The boy complained to Rav Moshe, "I was driving the Rosh Yeshiva to teach! Doesn't the Talmud (Pesachim 8a) promise that a person engaged in a mitzvah will not be harmed?" Rav Moshe looked at the young man and quietly said, "What do you mean? That is exactly why the policeman stopped you, to prevent you from getting hurt!"

## Did You Know?

It is forbidden to pressure a borrower to repay his loan if one is certain that he is unable to do so. If the lender is uncertain if the borrower can repay the debt, or if the borrower forgot about the loan, it is permissible to remind him. Even if the borrower has no cash, but he does own possessions that could be sold, it is permissible to remind him to pay. If one knows that the borrower is unable to pay the debt, he should not even pass before the borrower if he knows that it will make him uncomfortable.

However, just like the lender must be sensitive to the borrower, the debtor also has responsibilities to the lender, and he may not withhold the money he owes if he is capable of paying it.

**Thought for the week:** *The modern remedy for a bad back is a good front.* (A Candle by Day)

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.

## Sponsorships

Upcoming simcha? New job? New home? Share your simcha by sponsoring a Kiddush, Shalosh Seudos, or newsletter!