

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT MISHPATIM

9-10 FEBRUARY | 1 ADAR I

An Ethical Society



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Bnei Yisrael (the Children of Israel) had been oppressed in Egypt for hundreds of years, being slaves with no liberty to make their own decisions and no justice. In Parashat Mishpatim, we learn about the ways to follow Jewish ethics and morals to create a fair society, after experiencing the complete opposite environment in Egypt.

Let us take one of the commandments in our parasha: "If the stolen object shall be found in his possession... he shall pay back

double" (Shemot 22:3).

Why does a thief pay back double?

When a thief steals £100, his intention is to gain £100 for himself at the expense of £100 to his victim. The punishments in the Torah are 'measure for measure'. Therefore, by paying double, the thief ends up losing £100 and making the victim gain £100. What is done to him is exactly what he planned to do to his victim.

Another mitzvah in Mishpatim is lending money to a person in need.

When we give someone a loan, it seems as if we are giving away something for nothing. That person is not giving us anything back immediately for the money we gave him, but of course we expect to get it back one day. We trust him, even

if he is a poor person.

God fulfils this commandment too. Like a person lending another some money, God 'lends' each and every soul the special strength and ability to fulfil His will.

As with a loan, the soul gets its strength 'for free.' But God expects that, in return, our soul will pay back the loan by using this strength to fulfil His will.

When we lend money, we do not tell the borrower how to use that money. It becomes his, and he can use it for whatever he wants. When God gives us a 'loan,' it also becomes ours. We can use the strength and power He gives us for anything we choose. We must do our best to make the right choices.

We must show God that we are worthy of this loan, and 'pay it back' by using the strength He gives us to fulfil His will.

Mishpatim Word Scramble

Unscramble the letters to reveal words connected to the parasha.

- 1 IEBN ERLIASY
- 2 HZVAMTI
- 3 TPGEY
- 4 ITHFE
- 5 ALESVS
- 6 AMIHSMTPI
- 7 TMSNNCOEMDAM
- 8 ALEST