

KMS Family Parsha Sheet

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בס"ד

שפטים - Shoftim

Parsha Questions (Answers on the back!)

- 1) What qualifications should one look for when appointing a judge?
- 2) "You will come to...the judge who will be in those days." It's impossible to visit a judge living at a different time, so why must the Torah add these apparently extra words?
- 3) How can we say "אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר נֶשֶׁל"? Where did Hashem command us to light Chanukah candles (which happened after the Torah was written)?
- 4) How many Torah scrolls must a Jewish king have?
- 5) What do we learn from the words "לְבַלְתִּי רוּם לִבּוֹ מֵאֲחֵיו" (17:20)?
- 6) Who lives in an Ir Miklat?
- 7) What is the Halacha of Hasagat Gevul?
- 8) In this parsha, where are the numbers 1, 2, and 3 found in the same pasuk?
- 9) Why does the section about going to war follow the laws about witnesses?
- 10) To what in nature is humankind compared?



Words of Wisdom

Taanit 20b

לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אָדָם רַךְ כְּקָנָה
וְאֵל יִהְיֶה קָשָׁה כְּאַרְזִי

A person should always be soft like a reed
and not stiff like a cedar.

Did You Know?

Bal Tashchit (Chabad.org)

The Torah teaches us that we are not to cut down fruit trees in wartime. Yet the rabbis in the Babylonian Talmud understand verse 19 to be a general principle beyond war and fruit trees. They employ a common form of rabbinic interpretation, making a logical inference from a more stringent to a less stringent case. If Jews must not cut down fruit trees in the extreme case of a war of conquest, when destruction is the norm, how much the more so does this apply to normal life. The general prohibition against needless destruction, derived from the verse on fruit trees, concerns not destroying directly or indirectly anything that may be of use to people. It applies to wasting energy, clothing, water, money, and more. According to the Talmud, this prohibition includes wastefully burning oil or fuel. Many rishonim conclude that wasting any resources of benefit to humans is a Torah prohibition. For example, Maimonides explains that a Jew is forbidden to "smash household goods, tear clothes, demolish a building, stop up a spring, or destroy articles of food." Rabbeinu Yerucham rails against wasting water when others are in need... According to the Sefer HaChinuch, righteous Jews "do not allow the loss of even a grain of mustard, being distressed at the sight of any loss or destruction. If they can help it, they prevent any destruction with all the means at their disposal."





Parsha Answers:

- 1) Rashi 16:18 - The judge should be expert in the law and righteous.
- 2) Rashi 17:9 - To teach that although a judge may not be as eminent as judges of previous generations, we must obey him nevertheless.
- 3) Shabbat 23a - This is based on the pasuk "Lo Tasur" (17:11). The Torah instructs us to follow the guidance of the Chachamim.
- 4) Rashi 17:18 - Two. One stays in his treasury and one he keeps with him.
- 5) Ramban 17:20 - We learn from here the prohibition of arrogance. If a king must be humble then that shows us all to be humble.
- 6) 19:4 - Someone who accidentally murders another person may run to the City of Refuge for protection until their trial.
- 7) 19:14 - One may not encroach upon someone else's territory. We must respect boundaries.
- 8) 19:15 - The Torah states that one witness is not valid to testify; only two or three are acceptable.
- 9) Rashi 20:1 - To teach that if the Jewish People execute fair judgment they will be victorious in war.
- 10) 20:19 - Humans are compared to a tree:
כי האדם עץ השדה



This Week In Jewish History

Elul 9 (Aish.com)

In 1654, Jacob Barsimson became the first Jewish settler in New Amsterdam (New York), and a few months later a group of 23 Jews arrived from Brazil. At first, Governor Peter Stuyvesant denied Jews the right to engage in trade, own real estate, serve in the military, and conduct public religious services. Barsimson, an observant Jew, filed an appeal to the Dutch West India Company, and succeeded in gaining equal rights for Jews. In one incident, Barsimson was summoned to court on Shabbat and courageously refused to appear. In a landmark decision that extended the limits of religious freedom, the court did not hold him accountable. Barsimson's Jewish pride and pioneering spirit paved the way for generations of Jewish immigrants yet to come.



Tefilla Insights

L'David Hashem Ori (ou.org)

One of the themes of this mizmor is Dovid HaMelech's reaction to the dangers that threaten him in the midst of warfare and battle. Aside from the physical battles that Dovid fought, he encountered spiritual and emotional obstacles within his life, from which we draw strength and parallels to our own lives. Over the course of about seven weeks, we become accustomed to repeating Dovid's references to enemies, to battlefields, to fear and to isolation. Despite these intense emotions, Dovid begins the mizmor with a sense of hope and security. L'Dovid Hashem Ori, Mi-mi Irah?" To Dovid – Hashem is my light (and therefore, if I know that Hashem is my light and brings salvation), from whom shall I fear? (Metzudas Dovid). The mention of "ori" – my light – in the first person possessive form, can perhaps indicate that Hashem shines His light on each person in a way that is tailor-made for each individual for each particular situation. Light is generally not something that is individualized. If we turn on a light, or experience the light of the sun, that light shines for everyone in its proximity in the same manner. However, the or that Dovid references is ori – it is my light, and custom-made for my particular set of circumstances and daily battles. Dovid is providing encouragement to us as we encounter our challenges that we must be armed with the knowledge that our predicaments are tailor-made for us, and our extrication from those battles and the accompanying joy will be a perfect fit as well.



Key Number or Word In The Parsha

Tamim - תמים

We are told to walk wholeheartedly with Hashem (Devarim 18:13). What does that mean? According to Rashi it means to "put your hope in Him and do not attempt to investigate the future, but whatever comes upon you accept wholeheartedly." Rabbeinu Bechaye explains that Temimut means being authentic. Your words and deeds match up. Similarly, The Alshich explains that the pasuk is referring to the way one acts when nobody is around. If one's actions change when there is no longer an audience then that may be a sign that there are other motives involved.

Discussion: Is Temimut the same thing as Tam (one of the 4 children from the Haggadah)?