

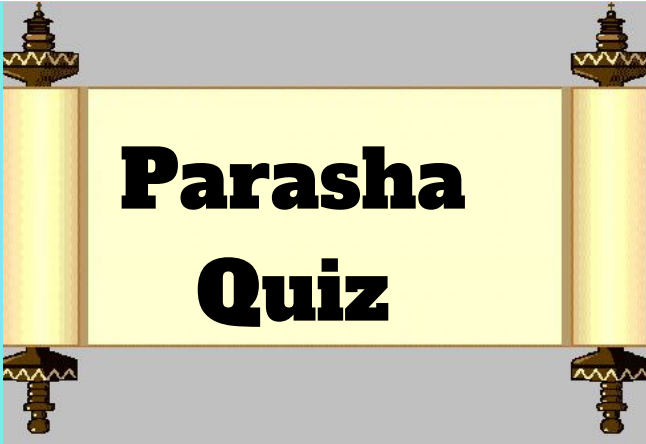


KMS Family Parasha

LEARN ABOUT THE PARASHA WITH THE KMS YOUTH DEPARTMENT

שפְּטִים : Shoftim

9.7.19



Elementary:

- 1) What is the difference between Shoftim and Shotrim?
- 2) What is Sho Chad?
- 3) What 3 things is a Jewish King warned not to do?
- 4) What is a Jewish King instructed to carry with him at all times?
- 5) Which 4 types of people are exempt from having to fight in war?

Middle/High School:

- 1) Which words in this week's parsha show us that we must listen to the words of Chazal?
- 2) What do we learn from the repetition of the words "Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof?"
- 3) What is the Halacha of Hasagat Gevul (19:14)?
- 4) What are the different roles of the Kohein, Levi, Shofet, Melech, and Navi?
- 5) From where in the parasha do we learn the concept of Bal Tashchit?
- 6) What are Eidim Zomemin and what is their punishment?

What would you do?

Discussion starter for your Shabbat table..

Your friend realizes at lunch that they forgot to do their homework. They ask if they can copy your work. How do you respond?

Did You Know?

The month of מְנוּחָה is a time for Teshuva. This is because on Rosh Chodesh מְנוּחָה Moshe went up Har Sinai to receive the 2nd Luchot after Hashem forgave Bnei Yisrael for the Cheit HaEigel. The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch (128) teaches that the name מְנוּחָה is an acronym for several pesukim that hint to our job during this month:

תשובה, תפלה, צדקה

ומל'ה' אלקיך את לבבך ואת לבב זרעך

(Devarim 30:6) - Teshuva

אני לדודי ודודי לי

(Shir HaShirim 6:3) - Tefilla

איש לרעהו ומתנות לאביונים

(Megillat Esther 9:22) - Tzedakah



"I'm going to let you off with
an enormous bribe...."

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

In the course of setting out the laws of war, the Torah adds a seemingly minor detail that became the basis of a much wider field of human responsibility, and is of major consequence today. The passage concerns a military campaign that involves laying siege to a city: When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an axe to them, because you can eat their fruit. Do not cut them down. Are the trees people, that you should besiege them? However, you may cut down trees that you know are not fruit trees and use them to build siege works until the city at war with you falls.

War is, the Torah implies, inevitably destructive. That is why Judaism's highest value is peace. Nonetheless, there is a difference between necessary and needless destruction. Trees are a source of wood for siege works. But some trees, those that bear fruit, are also a source of food. Therefore, do not destroy them. Do not needlessly deprive yourself and others of a productive resource. Do not engage in a "scorched earth" tactic in the course of war.

The Sages, though, saw in this command something more than a detail in the laws of war. They saw it as a *binyan av*, a specific example of a more general principle. They called this the rule of *bal tashchit*, the prohibition against needless destruction of any kind. This is how Maimonides summarises it: "Not only does this apply to trees, but also whoever breaks vessels or tears garments, destroys a building, blocks a wellspring of water, or destructively wastes food, transgresses the command of *bal tashchit*." This is the halachic basis of an ethic of ecological responsibility.