

May 17, 2026 – Questions to Discuss and Consider at Home or in Small Group

“The Mosaic Code on Assaults Protects Life” – Exodus 21:12-32

Questions for Younger Ones (ages 5-18) to Answer from the Text:

1. If someone struck another person so that he died, what was supposed to happen to the person who did the striking (v. 12)?
2. What was to happen to a person who did not intend to kill someone, but the person died anyway (v. 13)?
3. What was to happen to someone who assaulted his father or his mother (v. 15)?
4. What was the punishment for kidnapping (v. 16)?
5. If a son or daughter cursed father or mother, what was the penalty (v. 17)?
6. If someone struck another person who did not die but was injured only for a while, what was the person who struck him required to do (vv. 18-19)?
7. If a man struck his slave so that he died, what was to happen to the man (v. 20)?
8. What could happen to a person who hit a pregnant woman who then gave birth prematurely, but there was no harm to the woman or the baby? What could happen if the pregnant woman's unborn baby died (vv. 22-25)?
9. If an ox gored a person to death, what happened to the ox (v. 28)?
10. What could be done to an owner of an ox who gored a person to death, if he knew the ox had the habit of goring but did not do anything about it (vv. 29-30)?

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

11. What is the *lex talionis* in this passage?
12. Where do we find principles of motive and intent in this passage that impact the infliction of punishment?
13. Does the penalty of death for certain assaults (e.g. striking father or mother, stealing a person, or cursing a parent) seem overly harsh? Why or why not?
14. Why would cursing one's father or mother require the death penalty?
15. Why should an ox have been killed for goring a person to death when it didn't understand what it was doing? Does the "goring ox" principle have any application to modern life?
16. What is the dispute that impacts the abortion issue in verse 22?
17. Why must sin be punished? How does the fact that sin will be punished reassure you?
18. How are the personhood and dignity of the slave upheld as equal to that of a non-slave in these verses?
19. Why is the slave who is injured, yet survives a cruel punishment by his master, not compensated for the time he is laid up and cannot work?
20. How is the Gospel foreshadowed in these assault laws?