

May 24, 2026 – Questions to Discuss and Consider at Home or in Small Group

“The ‘Property Laws’ Show What It Takes to Make You Whole Again” – Exodus 21:33-22:15

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

1. If a man failed to cover a pit that he dug, and another person’s animal fell into and died, what was required of the man who dug the pit (21:33-34)?
2. What happened when a man’s ox gored another man’s animal to death (21:35-36)?
3. If a man stole an ox and killed it or sold it, how much did he need to repay once he was caught? How much if he stole a sheep (22:1)?
4. If a thief broke into a house a night, and the owner killed him, what happened to the owner of the house? What happened if the thief broke in during the day and the householder killed him (22:3-4)?
5. If a thief was caught and could not repay what he stole, what happened to him (22:3b)?
6. If a man did not restrain his animals, and they overgrazed on another man’s vineyard or field, what did the man who let his animals overgraze need to do (22:5)?
7. If a man entrusted something valuable to his friend for safekeeping and it was stolen, but the thief could not be caught, what had to happen (22:7-9)?
8. If a man entrusted one of his working animals to his friend for safekeeping and it became injured or lost without anyone seeing what occurred, what happened then (22:10-11)?
9. What happened if a neighbor entrusted to keep property safe claimed wild beasts injured or killed the animal of his friend (v. 13)?
10. If someone borrowed something from another person and the property was damaged when the owner was not present, what must the man who borrowed the property do (v. 14)?

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

11. What principle underlies the property laws?
12. How was theft generally punished in ancient Israel according to the passage?
13. Should society today force thieves or those unable to pay their debts to make restitution? Why or why not?
14. Why is stealing dealt with less harshly than premeditated murder?
15. In one of his more famous songs, “Imagine,” John Lennon mused that if people did not have possessions there would be no greed or hunger (third verse). Without personal property, everyone would be motivated to share. Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? [see <https://genius.com/John-lennon-imagine-lyrics>]
16. How might the “property laws” shape the way you think about peace, justice, and restoring relationships when harm has been done?
17. Has someone ever borrowed something from you and damaged it? How did you handle the situation? Did the person repay what was damaged? If not, was the relationship the same afterwards?
18. How do the property laws point to the Gospel?
19. What restitution do humans owe to God their Creator?
20. How can restitution be made to God our Creator?