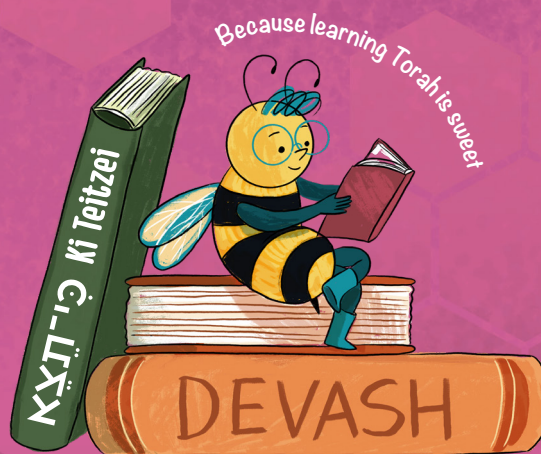




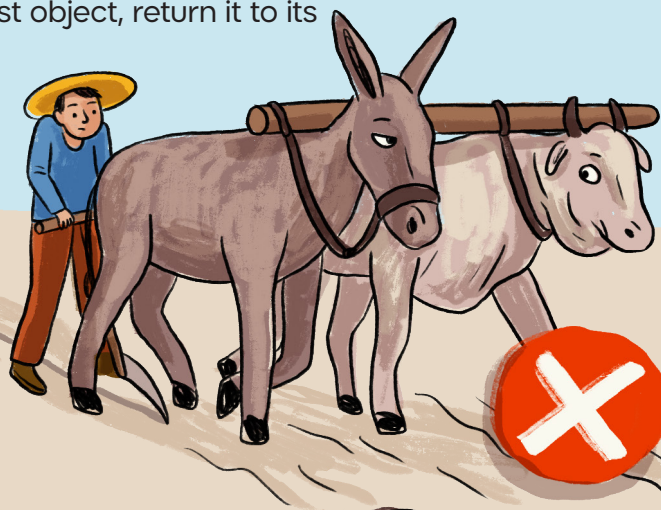
ג' - ט' אלול תשפ"ו August 16–22, 2026



קה בפךשה • In This Week's Parashah

◆ Ki Teitzei contains 74 mitzvot—the most of any parashah! The mitzvot here focus on individuals, families, and neighbors. Here are some examples:

- ◆ If you find someone's lost animal, or another lost object, return it to its owner.
- ◆ If you want to take eggs or young birds from a nest, you should first send away the mother bird.
- ◆ When you build a house, put a fence around the roof to keep people from falling off.
- ◆ Some mixtures are not allowed. Don't plant a mixture of two kinds of seeds, or plow with two different animals together, or wear a piece of clothing made from wool and linen. That's called שַׁעֲטָנֶז (shaatnez).
- ◆ You have to be clean and dignified even when going to the bathroom and make sure you don't leave a mess.
- ◆ Don't charge interest when you lend money to someone from Benei Yisrael.
- ◆ A נֶדֶר (neder) is a serious promise to God. You have to keep your word.
- ◆ You must pay your workers on time, especially if they are poor.
- ◆ Don't muzzle an ox while it works in the field.
- ◆ Use honest measurements and weights in business.





פִּשְׁט הַפְּסוּקִים • Understanding the Verses

Devarim 22:6-7

If, along the road, you happen to find a bird's nest,
in a tree or on the ground,
with chicks or eggs,
and the mother bird is sitting over the chicks or
on the eggs—
do not take the mother together with her young.

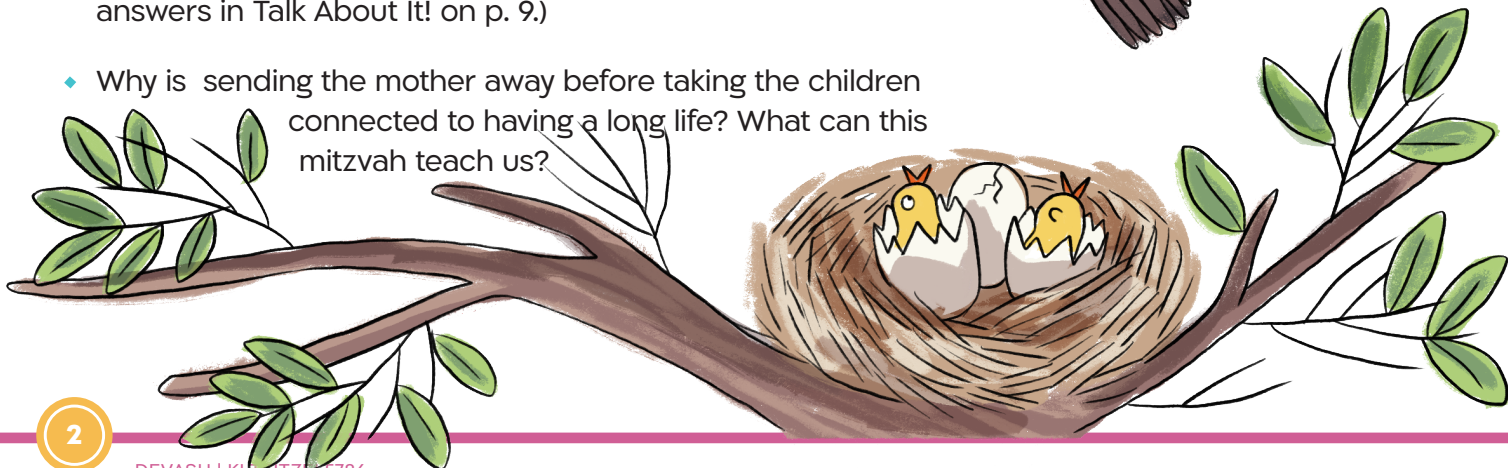
Send the mother away,
and take only the young,
so that things will be good for you, and you have a
long life.

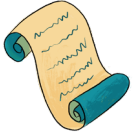
דברים כב:ו-ז

כִּי יִקְרָא קוֹן צִפּוֹר לִפְנֵיךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ
בְּכֹל עֵץ אוֹ עַל הָאָרֶץ
אֶפְרָחִים אוֹ בִּיצִים
וְהָאִם רֹבֶצֶת עַל הָאֶפְרָחִים אוֹ
עַל הַבִּיצִים
לֹא תִקַּח הָאִם עִם הַבָּנִים:

שְׁלַח תִּשְׁלַח אֶת הָאִם
וְאֶת הַבָּנִים תִּקַּח לָךְ
לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ וְהָאֶרֶץ תִּמְיָם:

- ♦ What do you notice? What do you wonder about?
- ♦ What does it mean to "happen" to find a bird's nest? What do you learn from that?
- ♦ Why does the Torah list all of the different places where you might find a bird's nest? What might you think if you find it in these different places?
- ♦ How might you feel differently about taking eggs vs. chicks that have already hatched?
- ♦ Do you think the second pasuk is saying that you **can** send the mother away, or that you **must** send her away? Why? (See some answers in Talk About It! on p. 9.)
- ♦ Why is sending the mother away before taking the children connected to having a long life? What can this mitzvah teach us?





Devarim 24:19

When you gather the harvest in your field, and you forget a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it. It should be for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow—in order that God your Lord may bless you in all you do.

דברים כד:יט

כִּי תִקְצֹר קְצִירְךָ בְשָׂדֶךָ וְשָׁכַחְתָּ עֹמֶר
בְּשָׂדֶךָ לֹא תָשׁוּב לִקְחָתוֹ לִגְר לְיָתוֹם
וְלְאַלְמָנָה יִהְיֶה לְמַעַן יְבָרְכֶךָ ה'
אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל מַעֲשֶׂה יְדֶיךָ:



This is a surprising mitzvah. You get a blessing from God just for **forgetting** to do something?!

Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are **bugged** by something unusual in the Torah text



Here's a story that points out the lesson behind this pasuk.

Tosefta Pe'ah 3:8

Once a certain pious person forgot a sheaf in his field [during harvest], and he said to his son, "Go and sacrifice in my name a bull for an olah sacrifice and a bull for a shelmim sacrifice."

The son said to him, "Father! Why are you celebrating this mitzvah more than any other mitzvah in the Torah?"

תוספתא פאה ג:ח

מַעֲשֶׂה בְּחָסִיד אֶחָד שֶׁשָׁכַח עֹמֶר
בְּתוֹךְ שָׂדֵהוּ וְאָמַר לְבָנוֹ צֵא וְהָקְרִיב
עָלַי פָּר לְעוֹלָה וּפָר לְשִׁלְמִים.

אָמַר לוֹ, אָבִא, מָה רָאִיתָ לְשִׁמְחָה
בְּמַצְוָה זוֹ מִכָּל מִצְוֹת הָאֲמֻרוֹת
בְּתוֹרָה?

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >>

The father replied, "All mitzvot in the Torah were given to us by God to be done on purpose and with thought. But this mitzvah was given to us to be done unknowingly. If we had done it on purpose, we would not have actually fulfilled the commandment..."

We can conclude: If the Torah considers a person who does something good by accident to be worthy of merit, then someone who does something good on purpose must be even more deserving of merit.

אמר לו כל מצות שבתורה נתן לנו
המקום לדעתנו, זו שלא לדעתנו,
שאלו עשינוה ברצון לפני המקום
לא באת מצוה זו לדעתנו..."

והלא דברים קל וחמר, מה אם מי
שלא נתכוון לזכות וזכה מעליו עליו
פאלו זכה, המתכוון לזכות וזכה על
אחת כמה וכמה.

This is an astonishing idea! You can do a mitzvah accidentally and it still "counts" and has incredible value.

- What can this mitzvah teach us about God? What can it teach us about the power of our actions?
- Have you ever done something by accident and it turned out to be for good? What are the good things you're able to do without even thinking about them? What are the good things you do that take a lot of thought?
- When we do mitzvot, is it important to think or feel a certain way? How so? Can you think of some examples where our thoughts matter a lot, and some where our thoughts don't matter so much?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

Describing Amalek's attack on Benei Yisrael; the Torah talks about both Amalek and Benei Yisrael:

Devarim 25:18

He came upon you on the road, and attacked your tail, all of the ones falling behind you, and you were tired and weary, **and didn't fear God.**

דברים כה:יח

אשר קרד בדרך ויזנב בך כל
הנחשלים אחריך ואתה עיף ויגע
ולא ירא אלקים:

The last few words of the pasuk are unclear. Who is being talked about—Amalek or Benei Yisrael? Which of these “didn’t fear God”?

רש"י

וְלֹא יָרָא - עֲמָלֵק
אֲלֵקִים - מִלְּהָרֶע לָךְ:

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

Amalek didn’t fear God enough to not do this evil to you.

חזקוני

אֵלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהָיוּ בָּהֶם מִצְוֹת וְלֹא קִיְּמוּם. אָבֵל
אִם הָיִיתָם יֹרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים לֹא הָיָה יָכוֹל לָךְ.

Hizkuni (France, 800 years ago)

These are Israelites who had been given mitzvot but didn’t keep them. “But if,” the Torah says, “you had feared God, Amalek wouldn’t have been able to do this you.”



- ◆ What evidence can you give for each side of the debate?
- ◆ Does it make more sense to describe Amalek or Benei Yisrael as people who “didn’t fear God”?
- ◆ What about the order of the sentence—who was just being talked about before this difficult phrase?
- ◆ If it applies to Amalek, what is it teaching us about Amalek? And if it applies to Benei Yisrael, what is it teaching us about them?
- ◆ What does fearing God mean? How are we supposed to do that?



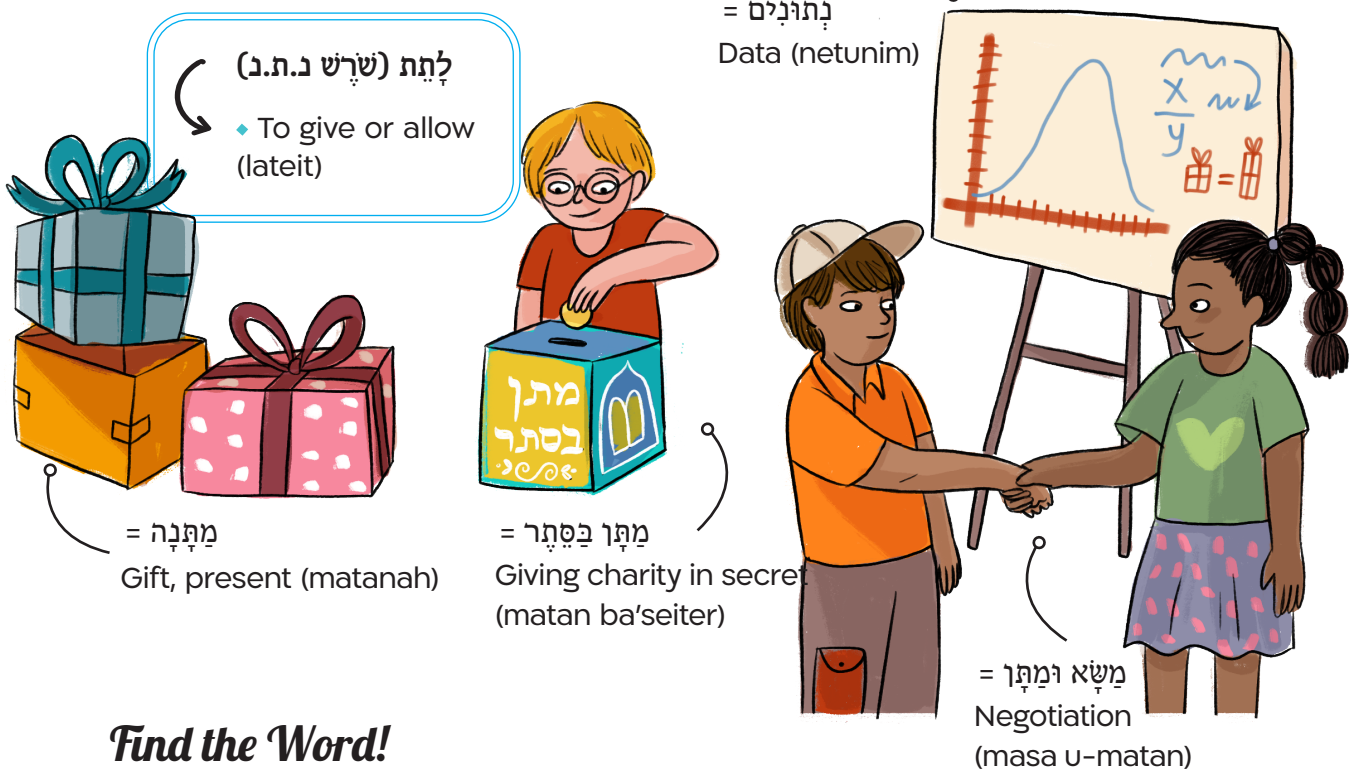
רְגֵעַ שֶׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Devarim 21:17

A father must recognize the firstborn, the son of the unloved wife, **and give him** a double portion of all he owns; since he is the first fruit of his strength, the birthright is rightfully his.

דברים כא:יז

כִּי אֶת הַבְּכֹר בֶּן הַשְּׁנוּאָה יִכִּיר לָתֵת לוֹ פִּי שְׁנַיִם בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא לוֹ כִּי הוּא רִאשִׁית אָנּוּ לוֹ מִשְׁפַּט הַבְּכֹרָה:



Find the Word!

This שָׁרֵשׁ (shoresh, root) is very common in the Torah. Can you find it in Devarim 8:10? (Bonus! This pasuk is part of Birkat Ha-Mazon. Can you also find it there?)



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

At the end of Ki Teitzei we get a bunch of commands about remembering when Amalek attacked Benei Yisrael and never forgetting it (Devarim 25:17-19).

What's the purpose of this remembering, and why is it so important? If Amalek doesn't exist anymore, what difference does it make?

R. Joseph Dov Soloveitchik (who lived in Europe and then the United States, and died 30 years ago) thought that Amalek still exists today but isn't a specific nation of people anymore. Instead, it's about those with an evil and hateful worldview. He says that the Torah commands us to remember Amalek because we always have to be on the lookout for that evil and try to create a world where that evil no longer exists.

Kol Dodi Dofek (by R. Soloveitchik)

The subject of "God's war with Amalek through time" (Shemot 17:16) isn't just about the mitzvah to fight people from a certain nation. It actually includes the obligation to stand up against any group that is filled with hatred, and directs its bitterness against the community of Israel. When a people calls out, "Let us cut them off from being a nation so that the name of Israel shall no longer be remembered" (Tehillim 83:5), that nation becomes Amalek.

קול דודי דופק (ר. סולובייצ'יק)

פְּרִשֶׁת "מִלְחָמָה לֵּה' בְּעַמֶּלֶק מִדֹּר דֹּר" (שמות יז:טז) אינה מְגַבֶּלֶת בְּחִלּוּתָהּ הַצְבּוּרִית כְּמִלְחָמַת מִצְוָה לְגַזֵּעַ מְסִים. אֲלָא כּוֹלֶלֶת חֻבַּת הַתְּקוּמָמוֹת נֶגֶד כָּל אָמָה אוֹ קְבוּצָה הַחֲדוּרָה שְׂגֵעוֹן שֶׁל שִׁנְאָה, וְהַמְכִּינָת אֶת מִשְׁטֶמֶתָה כְּלָפִי כְּנֶסֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל. כְּשֶׁאָמָה חוֹרֶתֶת עַל דִּגְלָהּ "לִכּוֹ וּנְכַחֲדִים מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזְכָּר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד" (תהלים פג:ה) הִיא הוֹפֶכֶת עַמֶּלֶק.

- ◆ Have you ever heard people say that we can "never forget" evil things done in history? What do you think R. Soloveitchik would say this means? Why do we always have to be on the lookout for evil and hatred?
- ◆ Is it hard to constantly fight against evil and hatred? How can remembering Amalek help us do that?
- ◆ What are different ways to stand up against evil?





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Devarim 21:10 to 21:21
- 2) 21:22 to 22:7
- 3) 22:8 to 23:7
- 4) 23:8 to 23:24
- 5) 23:25 to 24:4
- 6) 24:5 to 24:13
- 7) 24:14 to 25:19

haftarah: Yeshayahu 54:1 to 54:10

Good luck!



1 According to our parashah, how much inheritance is a firstborn supposed to get?

2 What three animals does the Torah specify must be returned to their owner?

3 What mitzvot relate to your fashion choices?

4 What are you not allowed to do with a runaway slave?

5 Are you allowed to eat someone else's grapes without permission?

6 What is Benei Yisrael commanded to remember?



7 What has to be done by sunset?

8 In this parashah, what different things are we told to return to their owner?

9 Which mitzvot in this parashah are connected to יציאת מצרים (yetziat Mitzrayim, the Exodus from Egypt)?

10 From the haftarah: What does God promise will never occur again?



*
Look for the answers on page 11!



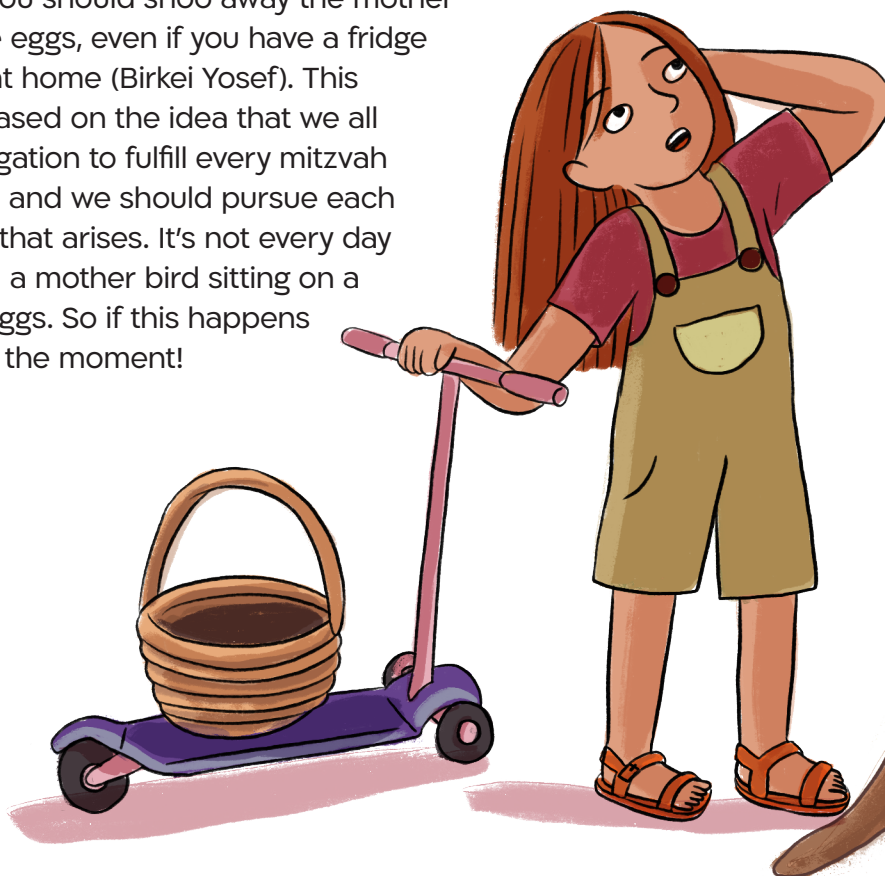
בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

Imagine you're hiking in the forest, and you find a mother bird sitting on a nest full of eggs. Seems like a chance to do the mitzvah of שְׁלִיחַ הַכֵּין (shiluah ha-kein), sending the mother bird away and taking the eggs! **But what if you don't actually need the eggs?**

It's a debate!

Some say leave the eggs and the mother alone (Netziv). According to this position, the pesukim in our parashah about shiluah ha-kein are talking about a situation when you need the eggs. But if you take eggs or baby birds when you don't need them, you're causing some measure of pain to the mother bird, even if you send her away first. According to the Hatam Sofer (OH, 100), that's not allowed because of the prohibition of צַעַר בְּעָלֵי חַיִּים (tza'ar ba'alei hayyim, the suffering of living things).

Others say you should shoo away the mother and take the eggs, even if you have a fridge full of eggs at home (Birkei Yosef). This position is based on the idea that we all have an obligation to fulfill every mitzvah in the Torah, and we should pursue each opportunity that arises. It's not every day that you find a mother bird sitting on a nest full of eggs. So if this happens to you, seize the moment!





דְּבָרִים שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.

Debate: Mitzvot are what the Torah is really about.



Agree!



- ♦ Mitzvot are what make the Jewish religion special.
- ♦ There are so many mitzvot in the Torah! (Makkot 23b teaches there are 613.) There would only be so many if it's the most important part of the Torah.
- ♦ The Torah tells us to keep mitzvot about 60 different times! Why would it have to tell that to us so much if it weren't the whole point of the Torah?



Disagree!

- ♦ It's true that mitzvot are an important part of the Torah, but the Torah is much more than a list of mitzvot. Why else would it include so many stories?
- ♦ Jewish values are about much more than specific rules about what to do and when. These go way beyond mitzvot, and are just as important (if not more).
- ♦ The Torah is about having a relationship with God, and that's also beyond mitzvot.



הֲלָכָה • Halakhah

If your house has a flat roof, the Torah tells us that it should have a wall or fence around it, called a מַעֲקֶה (ma'akeh)



Learn one way the parashah practically impacts our lives

Devarim 22:8

When you build a new house, you shall make a ma'akeh for your roof, so that no one dies in your house - to prevent anyone falling from it.

דברים כב:ח

כִּי תִבְנֶה בַּיִת חָדָשׁ וְעָשִׂיתָ
מַעֲקֶה לְגִגְדְּךָ, וְלֹא תָשִׁים דָּמִים
בְּבֵיתְךָ, כִּי יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ.

The pasuk emphasizes that the ma'akeh is a safety precaution.

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

- Twice as much as anyone else (21:17)
- Ox, sheep, and donkey (22:1, 22:3)
- You can't wear wool and linen together, and you have to wear גְּדִלִים (gedilim, another word for tzitzit) on four-cornered garments (22:11-12)
- Return them to their master (23:16)
- Yes! If you're in their field anyhow (Rashi says this is talking about someone who works in the field). But you can only snack on the spot - you can't collect them in a container. (23:25)
- What happened to Miriam in the wilderness (24:9)
- Paying a poor worker (24:15)
- Lost animals (22:1), other lost objects (22:3), a pledge/collateral item that you take from a poor person when you make them a loan (24:13)
- Not compromising the rights of a stranger or an orphan, not seizing the clothing of a widow (24:17); leaving some of your olives and grapes for strangers, orphans, and widows (24:20-21)
- A flood like in Noah's times (Yeshayahu 54:9)



Here are some ma'akeh details:

- A ma'akeh must be 10 tefachim tall (32-40 inches) and strong enough that if someone leans on it, it will not collapse. (Shulhan Arukh Hoshen Mishpat 427:5)
- Before completing your ma'akeh there's a בְּרָכָה (berakhah, blessing) to say:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת מַעֲקֵה

Blessed are You, God our Lord, Ruler of the world,
Who has made us holy with God's commandments,
and commanded us to make a ma'akeh.

(Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Berakhot 11:12)

- Based on ma'akeh, there's also a mitzvah to put up a fence around a pit or hole that is 10 tefachim (about 30 inches) deep. Stairs that are taller than 10 tefachim should also have a railing. (Shulchan Arukh Hoshen Mishpat 427:7)
- Ma'akeh teaches us that we are responsible for making sure that people are safe in our homes. For example, we shouldn't keep a broken ladder or appliance in our homes because having these things around could cause someone to get hurt. (Bavli Bava Kama 15b)



תפילה • Prayer in the Parashah

Devarim 24:9

Remember what God your Lord did to Miriam,
on your journey leaving Mitzrayim (Egypt).

דברים כד:ט

זְכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' אֵלֶיךָ
לְמַרְיָם בְּדֶרֶךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם:

Do you remember what happened to Miriam? You can look back at Parashat Behaalotkha to refresh your memory (Bemidbar 12). God gives Miriam the skin disease צִרְעָת (tzara'at) after she speaks לָשׁוֹן הָרָע (lashon ha-ra, gossip) about her brother Moshe.

The Torah wants us to remember this event because it's a powerful reminder to avoid lashon ha-ra. Even though Miriam loved Moshe very much and probably wouldn't have wanted to hurt him (remember when she stood watch over his basket?), and even though Moshe forgives Miriam right away, God still punishes her. This teaches us that we have to be really, really careful with how we speak.

In tefillah, at the end of Shahrarit, there's a section called the נֶשֶׁח זְכוּרֹת (sheish zekhirot, six remembrances). It's a collection of pesukim from the Torah about six things that we're supposed to remember every day. One of the zekhirot is the pasuk above, about remembering what happened to Miriam.

Here are the other five zekhirot:

1. יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם (yetziat Mitzrayim, the Exodus from Egypt)

Remembering this event
starts our day off
with gratitude.



2. מַתַּן תּוֹרָה (matan Torah, the giving of the Torah)

This reminds us of our
obligations to God.



3. Amalek

We remember
the threat of evil
in the world.



5. Shabbat

Every day of the week,
Shabbat reminds us to
aim for holiness.



4. חַטַּאת הָעֵיגֵל (heit ha-eigel, the sin of the golden calf)

We also remember our
flaws and mistakes.

