

# Exodus 21:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

## Analysis

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**And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;**

This case law addresses property damage and personal injury, establishing liability principles. The mishpatim (מִשְׁפָּטִים, judgments) apply Decalogue principles to everyday situations, creating just society. Owner responsibility reflects broader biblical principle: we're stewards of possessions, accountable for harm they cause. The law balances justice (compensation for victims) with mercy (proportional rather than excessive penalties). These principles undergird modern tort law and demonstrate God's concern for social order.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern law codes (Hammurabi, Hittite) addressed similar property issues but often with class-based penalties. Israel's law applied more uniformly regardless of social status.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does this law reveal God's character—His justice, mercy, or holiness?
2. What New Testament principles build upon or fulfill this Old Testament regulation?

## Interlinear Text

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וְכִי	יִפְתָּח	אִם יִשׁ	בֹּרַח	אִם יִשׁ	יִכְדֶּה	אִם יִשׁ	בֹּרַח	
H3588	shall open	And if a man	a pit	H176	H3588	shall dig	And if a man	a pit
	H6605	H376	H953			H3738	H376	H953
וְלֹא	יִכְסֶה נֹו	וְנָפַל	שָׁמָּה	שׁוֹר	אִם יִשׁ	חֲמֹר:		
H3808	and not cover	fall	H8033	it and an ox	H176	or an ass		
	H3680	H5307		H7794		H2543		

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