

# Exodus 22:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.

## Analysis

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**If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, to see whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.**

Theft laws emphasize restitution over retribution—restoring victims exceeds merely punishing thieves. The graduated penalties (200-500% depending on circumstances) deter theft while providing for victim's losses. This restorative justice model contrasts with purely punitive systems. The principle: sin has consequences requiring repayment. Gospel application: Christ paid infinitely more than our debt, providing ultimate restitution for sin's theft of God's glory.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern theft penalties varied widely—some death, some forced labor, some restitution. Israel's approach balanced deterrence with restoration, protecting both victim and perpetrator.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## 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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אִם	לֹא	מָצָא	הַגֵּנֵב	וְנִקְרָב	בְּעַל	הַבַּיִת
H518	<b>be not</b>	<b>found</b>	<b>If the thief</b>	<b>shall be brought</b>	<b>then the master</b>	<b>of the house</b>
	H3808	H4672	H1590	H7126	H1167	H1004
אֶל	הַשֹּׁפְטִים	אִם	לֹא	יִשְׁלַח	יָדוֹ	
H413	<b>unto the judges</b>	H518	<b>be not</b>	<b>to see whether he have put</b>	<b>his hand</b>	
	H430		H3808	H7971	H3027	
בְּמַלְאָכָה	רֵעֵהוּ:					
<b>goods</b>	<b>unto his neighbour's</b>					
H4399	H7453					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 22:28** (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

**Exodus 21:6** (Judgment): Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

**Deuteronomy 16:18** (Judgment): Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.