

*Lex talionis* - Latin for "law of retaliation" - is based on Exodus 21:23-27, and is often summarized as "an eye for an eye". Contrary to popular misinterpretation, the law was not written to allow aggrieved parties to retaliate for harm done. Instead, it was written to protect guilty parties from exorbitant punishment. Those wronged could only seek a fair and just punishment, one equal to the loss incurred.

Jesus added a new dimension to this Old Testament provision. He focused on the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. Instead of demanding personal justice and retribution, Jesus said to be generous. If people injure you or ask you for favours, be willing to go above and beyond - especially when it comes to helping those in need. (Deuteronomy 15:7-11) This does not mean to let others take advantage of you: "A good man deals graciously and lends; he will guide his affairs with discretion." (Psalm 112:5)

Be wise and discrete, but above all, be generous. Instead of defending your rights, let God defend you in His way.

Matthew 5:42 "Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away."