

EXODUS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Exodus chapter 21 as we continue our study through the Word of God. In our last study we saw the children of Israel gathered at Mount Sinai and there God gave to them the Moral Law or the Ten Commandments. This Moral Law dealt with Man's relationship with God or what God required of man, which was found on the first tablet of stone or the first four commandments. And then, the next six commandments found on the second tablet of the Law dealt with man's relationship with his fellow man. You see, if your relationship with God is off then your relationship with your fellow man will be off also and there is no ifs, ands or buts about it. If you refuse to submit to God you will not submit to man!

In Exodus chapters 21-23 the focus is now the Civil Law or the Judicial Law. The focus here is how they were to function as a nation, how they were to live and the consequences if they broke these laws. So with that said, let's begin reading in Exodus chapter 21, starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word!

EXODUS 21**VERSE 1**

1. These were the laws the judges would follow. Now, when judges are spoken of they are called “Elohim” or “gods” with a small “g.” And the idea here was they were representing God or acting in the place of God as they handed out these ordinances, made these judgments in these matters for the people. The Bible is not teaching that we are “Gods” with a big “G.” There is only *ONE GOD!*

VERSES 2-4

1. Please understand that God was not condoning slavery but because of the slavery that was practiced and the wicked treatment of slaves, He was setting laws to protect them, showing them mercy. He was not instituting slavery but He was regulating it you might say. A Hebrew slave would work for six years and then he would be set free in the seventh year. He could also take with him that which he brought with him but he could not take that which was his masters or what his master had given him.

2. What were some of the reasons the children of Israel might become slaves? Here are four basic reasons:

- A father might sell his children into slavery – Exodus 21:7.
- If a thief had nothing with which to pay restitution for what he took – Exodus 22:3.
- If they were extremely poor, they might sell their liberty – Leviticus – 25:39.
- If they became bankrupt, he might become a slave – II Kings 4:1.

VERSES 5-6

1. After six years, if the slave loved his master he could become his slave for life, not out of obligation, but out of love. The writers of the New Testament picked up on this and called themselves “Bondservants” or “Bondslaves” of Jesus Christ. (See Romans 1:1, James 1:1, II Peter 1:1, Jude 1:1). And our ultimate example is Jesus who became a bonds slave to the Father. In John 6:38-40 we see Jesus speak of this, **“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”** May we desire to be a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, not out of the Law but out of love for Him!

VERSES 7-11

1. We read this and think this is unfair to women. Please understand that in that culture women were thought of as property and God was elevating them, protecting them. A father could sell his daughter to be the wife of a man or part of his concubines, but the man would have to pay a dowry or alimony in advance in case he divorced her or let her go. And again, God is not endorsing polygamy but He is regulating it to protect the women!

VERSES 12-14

1. Don't think capital punishment was established here in Exodus with the Law. Back in Genesis 9:6 we are told, **“Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.”** God was just reminding them of this and He was making it part of the Law. And it is not just an Old Testament idea, Paul tells us in Romans 13:3-4, **“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”** And God makes it clear, that if premeditation is the issue, then that person should be put to death!

2. Now, if it was not premeditated murder then God would provide cities of refuge, 3 on the east side of the Jordan River and 3 on the west side of the Jordan River, spread out from north to south. And you can read of these cities in Numbers 35 and Joshua 20. If you fled to one of these cities you would be protected unless you committed premeditated murder, then you would be handed over to the avenger of blood and be put to death.

VERSES 15-17

1. Why was this disrespect towards parents a capital offense? Because, as we said last time, if there is no respect in the home that child will not respect anyone and they will be a detriment to a society!

2. Also, kidnapping was a capital offense. I wonder if that were true today how many would think twice about committing this crime!

VERSES 18-19

1. Here we see fair compensation for personal injury – not millions of dollars for spilling hot coffee in your lap!

VERSES 20-21

1. Here are laws to protect servants. In other cultures you could kill your slave and it was totally legal because they were your property. So God is trying to protect slaves.

VERSES 22-25

1. Here we see laws of retribution. If you injure a pregnant woman and she gives birth and the child lives, then the husband would impose a fine upon him and the payment would be according to the judges. But, if the child died it is murder and he shall be put to death. In God's eyes, at any stage of pregnancy, starting at conception, if you kill that child it is murder! Look at how many murderers there are today as well over 40 million babies have been murdered in the womb and we have made it legal in our nation but not in God's eyes!

2. The laws here were not meant for revenge or vengeance but retribution for what was done – a fair judgment! In other words, the penalty should fit the crime!

VERSES 26-27

1. For a servant, if this was done to him he was to be set free. This was teaching restraint on the part of the master for if he lost control he could lose his servant!

VERSES 28-32

1. We might call these laws; regulations regarding neglect on the owner of an animal. If you have an animal that is violent, you need to keep him away from others or you could be put to death or pay a heavy fine if they kill a person. The exception was if they gored a servant, then they would pay 30 shekels of silver, the price of a slave, the price that Judas betrayed the Lord for – Matthew 26:15.

VERSES 33-36

1. Here we see laws dealing with negligence and restitution. If you were negligent and it causes your neighbors animal to die, you were obligated to pay restitution. I guess the idea is “You break it you buy it!” Responsibility and fairness is the idea and it would be great to go back to this in our court system!

EXODUS 22VERSES 1-4

1. If you stole something you had to restore it plus there was an additional penalty. And the penalty could be substantial, depending on what was stolen! Thus, this was an incentive not to steal.

2. If the person couldn't pay, he could be sold into slavery and the money used to pay the person he stole from.

3. We also see the homeowner have the right to defend himself and his property. If a thief came in at night and was killed, that was reasonable force. But he could not do that in the daytime, why? Because he could see, identify the person and bring that person to the judges!

VERSES 5-8

1. You were responsible to respect the property of others and if you didn't you had to pay restitution. If you were to watch something for someone you were responsible. For us as Christians, say we hit a ball through someone's window. We are responsible to notify that person and pay them restitution for the window and not run away!

VERSES 9-13

1. Once again we see the principle for restitution, that you were responsible for your actions.

VERSES 14-15

1. So if you borrow an ox to plow your fields and it died, you had to pay the owner back. But, if the owner is overseeing the work, then you don't have to pay him back if he dies.

VERSES 16-17

1. Here we see a law regarding a man who seduces a woman, has sex with her, he has to hope that the father would allow him to marry her and pay the “bride price” for her. If her father refused, he would still have to pay the “bride price” and go away with nothing.

This was a dowry or what we might call alimony in advance.

2. Of this law, Clarke tells us, “This was an exceedingly wise and humane law, and must have operated powerfully against seduction and fornication; because the person who might feel inclined to take the advantage of a young woman knew that he must marry her, and give her a dowry.”

3. Paul, in I Corinthians 6:15-20 tells us, **“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For ‘the two,’ He says, ‘shall become one flesh.’ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”**

Tragically, today we see the sexual revolution continue on and it is destroying families. Young women think if they give themselves over to a young man he will love her, but the reality is, they won't! I think David Guzik had it correct when he wrote, "Far too many people - especially women - sell themselves cheaply by easily giving away their virginity. A man illustrated this with a true story about a friend who owned an antique store and had a table for sale. The table was worth \$600, but was marked down to \$300. A man tried to bargain her down to \$200, and not only did she refuse, but she realized the true value of the table, and upped the price to its true worth - even when offered \$300. The man finally bought the table for \$600, and certainly treated it like a \$600 table - because its worth had been fought for. Many women who know men treat them shabbily have contributed to the problem by selling themselves cheaply." Be wise, be obedient to the law of God because He loves you and wants what is best for your life!

VERSES 18-20

1. Here we see three capital crimes spoken of. They are:

- **SORCERY:** Witchcraft and the taking of mind-altering drugs was a capital crime, you would be put to death! This was practiced in the ancient world as well as we see today!
- **BESTIALITY:** Having sex with other animals was practiced in the ancient world as well as today and God forbids this. But, apart from God's Word there is no rational reason why people can't! I know, outrageous but it is practiced today. And think about this. Many feel that a man having sex with a monkey transmitted AIDS, that is how it got started. In God's Law, that man would have been put to death and the AIDS epidemic would not have even started. God's Laws are for our good, may we not forget that!
- **SACRIFICING TO OTHER GODS:** Why was this so important? Because a life apart from the true and living God is a life that is on a destructive course and God was trying to show them not to go down that path, there is nothing good that could be found on it!

VERSES 21-27

1. If you want to see how the moral character of a society, of a nation is, look at how they treat strangers, how they treat others! In America, look at how people take advantage of the poor, the elderly, and-so-on. We have all these rip-off artists today who scam people out of money. How cold and hard their heart is, so much so they can cheat people out of all their money and go to sleep at night not even feeling bad about it. But make no mistake about it, they will have to stand before *THE JUDGE* one day and they won't be able to scam Him!

2. Also, charging interest on loans to the poor was not allowed, you were not to take advantage of them. But interest, within reason could be charged to others but again, today we see how companies take advantage of this and charge high rates on loans, especially on credit cards! They are taking advantage of people. And God wants them to understand that He is watching out for the downtrodden, the poor, the widows and-so-on, He hears their cry and He will repay those who take advantage of them!

VERSE 28

1. Our tongue can bless God and curse people. The Lord tells us here that we are not to speak evil of those in authority over us. With the Presidential race going on we need to be careful not to make degrading jokes about them. We may not agree with what they say or do and thus, instead of mocking them and making fun of them, or putting them down, pray for them!

2. As hard as this is for some to swallow, you may not agree with what I have said, but listen to what Paul has to say about those in leadership in his day, and Rome was not a good place, it was very evil and so were its leaders! In Romans 13:1-7 Paul tells us, **“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.”** God places them in those positions, don't curse them but pray for them!

VERSES 29-31

1. We are to respect God by giving to Him that which is due Him- ***OUR BEST!***

2. We are not to be like the animals, scavenging, tearing apart the flesh of another but to be holy men, set apart for God and to bring glory to Him. Peter put it like this in I Peter 1:13-16, **“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”**

EXODUS 23

VERSES 1-3

1. Our speech needs to be truthful, we need to be honest, don't pervert justice by what you are saying.

2. Also, don't follow an evil group because before you know it, you will be following their evil ways. Paul put it like this in I Corinthians 15:33, **“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’”** That is the truth even though many times we don't believe it, we think we can handle it. *YOU CAN'T!*

3. You are not to show partiality to the poor or the rich for that matter, God wants honesty!

VERSES 4-9

1. Keep in mind that this is the Old Testament and we see God instruct His people to care for those that you like and those that you don't like! Jesus put it like this in Matthew 5:43-48, **“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”** In other words, if we want to represent the Lord faithfully, correctly, we need to love people as He does, unconditionally and as we do it will bring glory to God!

VERSES 10-13

1. There was not only the Sabbath week where you work for six days and rest on the seventh day, taking time to rest in the Lord, but there were also the Sabbath years. You could work the land for six years but let it rest in the seventh year. If they obeyed the Lord would provide enough of a harvest in the sixth year to provide for them in the seventh and eighth year also until the harvest could be brought in that eighth year.

2. Now, once they got into the land of Canaan, they did not obey the Lord for 490 years and thus, they owed the Lord 70 years to let the land rest and that is how long they were in captivity in Babylon! God says what He means and means what He says and we can listen to Him and be blessed or not listen and suffer the consequences! And it was good to let the land rest to recover so you don't take all the nutrients from it. But today, they have ways of getting around this. They will work the land six years and in the seventh year they will lease it for a year to one of their Arab workers and thus, it is not theirs for that year and they can work the land. We do try to make the Law fit what we want to do but God was clear here in letting the land rest and He would provide!

VERSES 14-17

1. All the Jewish males who were 13 years old and up, that were able, were required to come to Jerusalem for these 3 feasts, once they got into in the land. These are the feasts:

- ***FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD/PASSOVER:*** This included both Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread. Passover occurred on the 14th of Nisan and then on the 15th of Nisan and running for 7 days began the feasts of Unleavened Bread. This was a spring feast that occurred in March/April during the barley harvest and it celebrated their deliverance from their bondage in Egypt.
- ***PENTECOST:*** This was also called the feast of Harvest or the feast of Firstfruits, which took place 50 days after Passover to commemorate the giving of the Law of Moses on Mount Sinai, which took place 50 days after they left Egypt. It was during the time of the wheat harvest. For us, the church was born on Pentecost!
- ***TABERNACLES:*** Also called the feast of Ingathering and it occurred in September/October and was to commemorate the Israelites dwelling in tents for forty years in their wilderness journey!

VERSES 18-19

1. Many feel this is related to the Passover meal. Before you can partake of this meal you had to remove the leaven from the home. You had to do this before the lamb was slain, his blood shed. Leaven is a type of sin in the Scriptures. As Christians, we are a new creation in Christ and those old things have passed away, all things are new. Thus, don't live in sin, live in Christ!

2. The best is to be given to the Lord and as we do give Him our best, He does bless. And think about it, would you give your second-best to the President of the United States? Of course you wouldn't. So why would you think it is okay for you to give your seconds to the Lord and He will accept it. He is the creator of heaven and earth. He is God! He doesn't accept it and we shouldn't do that. In Malachi 1:8, 13 we see the children of Israel do this very thing. We are told, **“And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, Is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, Is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?’ Says the Lord of hosts. . . . You also say, “Oh, what a weariness!” And you sneer at it,’ Says the Lord of hosts. ‘And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?’ Says the Lord.”** God didn't accept it back then and He doesn't accept it today!

3. Why couldn't they boil a young goat in its mother's milk? Because this was a Canaanite practice, a fertility rite to their god and thus, the Lord did not want them to practice this.

4. Now the Jewish people have taken this law and expounded on it far beyond what God has said. You can't eat meat and milk at the same time for the meat you eat may come from a calf and the milk from its mother and as you eat and drink the gastric juices boil these things and you are breaking the law! Sorry, that is not only foolish, but it is not Biblical! But, even today you will not find meat products being served with milk products – it isn't kosher!

Just a quick story to show you how crazy this really is. Several years ago Pastor Joe Focht took a group of people to Israel and as they were having a meal at their hotel, the room was divided. One side had meat being served, the other had dairy products and the two shall never mix. Well, that is until Calvary Chapel arrived. One of the group members was asking for cream for their coffee and Frank, Pastor Joe's right hand man, stood up and said that he would get some. And he did. But before long, when the people saw what happened, a lot of yelling was going on because they were mixing milk and meat and breaking this law. Well, Frank spoke up and said that they were eating chicken and that is not meat. They didn't buy his argument, but Frank didn't give up. He said to them, "You can't milk a chicken!" That didn't matter, they were not going to give in, Frank was not going to change 2,000 years of tradition, even if what they were doing was not Biblical!

VERSES 20-21

1. This Angel of the Lord is none other than an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ and He would lead them in the way they were to go! What is interesting to me is that the Lord said, **“For My Name is in Him.”** How true that is for His name is ***YAH-SHUA***, the name of ***YAHWEH*** is in Jesus, he is God! And just as Jesus was leading the Children of Israel, He is leading us and we too must walk by faith, trusting in Him, obeying His Laws, obeying His voice!

VERSES 22-26

1. Victory is seen in their obedience and some say that is the Old Testament teaching not found in the New Testament. I don't believe that. As we obey the Lord there are those victories in our lives, the enemies that try to bring us down, areas in our life that need to change and that can only be accomplished, that victory will only be found in Him as we obey Him!

VERSES 27-30

1. God's plan of victory was best, to drive out the enemy little by little until the children of Israel could take over the land. God does the same with us, driving out the enemy in our lives little by little, even though we would rather have them gone right now! You might be saying, “I've been a Christian for a year now, I go to Bible studies all the time, and I am still defeated!” Don't give up, God is working in your life and you can see that where you are today is farther in the Lord than a year ago!

James put it like this, **“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”** The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“Consider it wholly joyful, my brethren, whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials of any sort or fall into various temptations. Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience. But let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a thorough work, so that you may be [people] perfectly and fully developed [with no defects], lacking in nothing.”** James 1:2-4. Be patient and follow the Lord as He leads your life and He will drive out the enemies little by little!

VERSES 31-33

1. The borders of Israel’s inheritance were huge and they never fully possessed all that God have given them even though in Solomon’s day they came close. The area covered about 330 miles north to south and 80 to 100 miles wide. And today, they have far less and they continue to give away, divide the land and make covenants with other nations, giving away what the Lord had given to them!

2. As I close this evening let me leave you with this to think about. God has given you a great inheritance, what are you giving away by making covenants with they enemy, dividing up all that God has given you? What enemy? Lust, pornography, greed, covetousness, evil speaking, hatred, lying, cheating and the list of enemies goes on-and-on, don't give in to the enemy, don't make a covenant with them, but crucify the flesh and walk in the Spirit. Obey the Lord, follow Him and see the blessings that He will pour in your life and through your life for His glory!