

The Covenant – Part 1 (3 Sivan [May/June] 1446 BC)

Exodus 20:22–22:20

Proper Worship of Yahweh

20:22 The LORD said to Moses: “Thus you will tell the Israelites: ‘You yourselves have seen that I have spoken with you from heaven.
 23 You must not make gods of silver alongside me, nor make gods of gold for yourselves.
 24 ‘You must make for me an altar made of earth, and you will sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I cause my name to be honored I will come to you and I will bless you.
 25 If you make me an altar of stone, you must not build it of stones shaped with tools, for if you use your tool on it you have defiled it.
 26 And you must not go up by steps to my altar, so that your nakedness is not exposed.’ [cf. [Gen 3:21](#); [1 Tim 2:9–10](#)]

Treatment of Israelite Slaves

21:1 “These are the decisions that you will set before them:
 2 “If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years, but in the seventh year he will go out free without paying anything.
 3 If he came in by himself he will go out by himself; if he had a wife when he came in, then his wife will go out with him.
 4 If his master gave him a wife, and she bore sons or daughters, the wife and the children will belong to her master, and he will go out by himself.
 5 But if the servant should declare, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’
 6 then his master must bring him to the judges, and he will bring him to the door or the doorposts, and his master will pierce his ear with an awl, and he shall serve him forever.
 7 “If a man sells his daughter as a female servant, she will not go out as the male servants do.
 8 If she does not please her master, who has designated her for himself, then he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to a foreign nation, because he has dealt deceitfully with her.
 9 If he designated her for his son, then he will deal with her according to the customary rights of daughters.
 10 If he takes another wife, he must not diminish the first one’s food, her clothing, or her marital rights.
 11 If he does not provide her with these three things, then she will go out free, without paying money.

Capital Crimes—Murder, Kidnapping and Violence against Parents

12 “Whoever strikes someone so that he dies must surely be put to death.
 13 But if he does not do it with premeditation, but it happens by accident, then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee.
 14 But if a man willfully attacks his neighbor to kill him cunningly, you will take him even from my altar that he may die.
 15 “Whoever strikes his father or his mother must surely be put to death.
 16 “Whoever kidnaps someone and sells him, or is caught still holding him, must surely be put to death.
 17 “Whoever treats his father or his mother disgracefully must surely be put to death. [[Matt 15:4](#); [Mark 7:10](#)]

Personal Injury by Humans

18 “If men fight, and one strikes his neighbor with a stone or with his fist and he does not die, but must remain in bed,
 19 and then if he gets up and walks about outside on his staff, then the one who struck him is innocent, except he must pay for the injured person’s loss of time and see to it that he is fully healed.
 20 “If a man strikes his male servant or his female servant with a staff so that he or she dies as a result of the blow, he will surely be punished.
 21 However, if the injured servant survives one or two days, the owner will not be punished, for he has suffered the loss.
 22 “If men fight and hit a pregnant woman and her child is born prematurely, but there is no serious injury, he will surely be punished in accordance with what the woman’s husband demands of him, and he will pay what the court decides.
 23 But if there is serious injury, then you will give a life for a life,
 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, [[Matt 5:38–42](#)]
 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.
 26 “If a man strikes the eye of his male servant or his female servant so that he destroys it, he will let the servant go free as compensation for the eye.
 27 If he knocks out the tooth of his male servant or his female servant, he will let the servant go free as compensation for the tooth.

Personal Injury by Animals

28 “If an ox gores a man or a woman so that either dies, then the ox must surely be stoned and its flesh must not be eaten, but the owner of the ox will be acquitted.
 29 But if the ox had the habit of goring, and its owner was warned, and he did not take the necessary precautions, and then it killed a man or a woman, the ox must be stoned and the man must be put to death.
 30 If a ransom is set for him, then he must pay the redemption for his life according to whatever amount was set for him.
 31 If the ox gores a son or a daughter, the owner will be dealt with according to this rule.

32 If the ox gores a male servant or a female servant, the owner must pay thirty shekels of silver, and the ox must be stoned.

Damage or Destruction of Personal Property

33 “If a man opens a pit or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it,

34 the owner of the pit must repay the loss. He must give money to its owner, and the dead animal will become his.

35 If the ox of one man injures the ox of his neighbor so that it dies, then they will sell the live ox and divide its proceeds, and they will also divide the dead ox.

36 Or if it is known that the ox had the habit of goring, and its owner did not take the necessary precautions, he must surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal will become his.

Theft, Accidental Property Damage & Restitution

22:1 “If a man steals an ox or a sheep and kills it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox, and four sheep for the one sheep.

2 “If a thief is caught breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there will be no blood guilt for him.

3 If the sun has risen on him, then there is blood guilt for him. A thief must surely make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he will be sold for his theft.

4 If the stolen item should in fact be found alive in his possession, whether it be an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he must pay back double.

5 “If a man grazes his livestock in a field or a vineyard, and he lets the livestock loose and they graze in the field of another man, he must make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

6 “If a fire breaks out and spreads to thorn bushes, so that stacked grain or standing grain or the whole field is consumed, the one who started the fire must surely make restitution.

7 “If a man gives his neighbor money or articles for safekeeping, and it is stolen from the man’s house, if the thief is caught, he must repay double.

8 If the thief is not caught, then the owner of the house will be brought before the judges to see whether he has laid his hand on his neighbor’s goods.

9 In all cases of illegal possessions, whether for an ox, a donkey, a sheep, a garment, or any kind of lost item, about which someone says ‘This belongs to me,’ the matter of the two of them will come before the judges, and the one whom the judges declare guilty must repay double to his neighbor.

10 If a man gives his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep, and it dies or is hurt or is carried away without anyone seeing it,

11 then there will be an oath to the LORD between the two of them, that he has not laid his hand on his neighbor’s goods, and its owner will accept this, and he will not have to pay.

12 But if it was stolen from him, he will pay its owner.

13 If it is torn in pieces, then he will bring it for evidence, and he will not have to pay for what was torn.

14 “If a man borrows an animal from his neighbor, and it is hurt or dies when its owner was not with it, the man who borrowed it will surely pay.

15 If its owner was with it, he will not have to pay; if it was hired, what was paid for the hire covers it.

16 “If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged and has sexual relations with her, he must surely endow her to be his wife.

17 If her father refuses to give her to him, he must pay money for the bride price of virgins.

Capital Crimes—Sorcery, Bestiality and Apostasy

18 “You must not allow a sorceress to live.

19 “Whoever has sexual relations with a beast must surely be put to death.

20 “Whoever sacrifices to a god other than the LORD alone must be utterly destroyed.

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