

Exodus 21

Chapter 21 of 40 · 36 Verses · Authorized King James Version

Laws About Servants

- 1** Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.
- 2** If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.
- 3** If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.
- 4** If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.
- 5** And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:
- 6** 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.
- 7** And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do.
- 8** If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.
- 9** And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters.
- 10** If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.

11 And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.

Laws About Violence

12 He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death.

13 And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.

14 But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.

15 And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

16 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

17 And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

18 And if men strive together, and one smite another with a stone, or with his fist, and he die not, but keepeth his bed:

19 If he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote him be quit: only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall cause him to be thoroughly healed.

20 And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished.

21 Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his master's money.

22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

23 And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

24 Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

27 And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

Laws About Property Damage

28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.

29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

30 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

31 Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him.

32 If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

33 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;

34 The owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his.

35 And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die; then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it; and the dead ox also they shall divide.

36 Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox; and the dead shall be his own.

HEBREW & GREEK WORD STUDIES

Altar — מִזְבֵּחַ (Mizbeach)

Altar, place of sacrifice

The Hebrew **mizbeach** (מִזְבֵּחַ) means altar—from the root 'to slaughter.' Altars were places where sacrifices were offered to God, pointing forward to Christ's ultimate sacrifice.

God — אֱלֹהִים (Elohim)

God (plural of majesty)

The Hebrew **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) is a plural form denoting majesty and fullness of deity. Though grammatically plural, it takes singular verbs when referring to the one true God, suggesting the Trinity's plurality within unity.

Judgment — מִשְׁפָט (Mishpat)

Judgment, justice

The Hebrew **mishpat** (מִשְׁפָט) means judgment or justice—God's righteous decisions and ordinances. God is the Judge of all the earth who 'shall do right' (Genesis 18:25), executing perfect justice.

Love — אַהֲבָה / חֶסֶד (Ahavah / Chesed)

Love / Loyal-love

Hebrew uses **ahavah** (אַהֲבָה) for love generally, but the covenant term **chesed** (חֶסֶד) describes God's steadfast, loyal love—faithful covenant commitment beyond mere emotion.

Redeem — לְאַגְּלָה (Gaal)

To redeem, act as kinsman-redeemer

The Hebrew **gaal** (גָּאַל) means to redeem or act as kinsman-redeemer (go'el)—buying back family property or relatives. It foreshadows Christ redeeming His people through His blood.

CROSS REFERENCES

Exodus 21:1 Judgment: Deuteronomy 4:14; 6:20

Exodus 21:2

Parallel theme: Exodus 12:44; 22:3; Deuteronomy 15:1; 15:18; 31:10; Nehemiah 5:8

Exodus 21:6 Parallel theme: Leviticus 25:40; Deuteronomy 15:17; 1 Samuel 28:2

Exodus 21:7 Parallel theme: Nehemiah 5:5

Exodus 21:12 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 20:13; Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 24:17; 2 Samuel 12:13; Matthew 26:52

Exodus 21:13 **Parallel theme:** 1 Samuel 24:4; 24:10; 24:18

Exodus 21:14 **Sacrifice:** Hebrews 10:26

Exodus 21:16 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 22:4; Genesis 37:28; Deuteronomy 24:7; 1 Timothy 1:10

Exodus 21:17 **Curse:** Deuteronomy 27:16; Proverbs 20:20; 30:11

Exodus 21:18 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 21:20

Exodus 21:22 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 21:30

Exodus 21:23 **Parallel theme:** Deuteronomy 19:21

Exodus 21:24 **Parallel theme:** Deuteronomy 19:21; Matthew 7:2; Revelation 16:6

Exodus 21:28 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 21:32

Exodus 21:30 **Parallel theme:** Exodus 21:22. **Redemption:** Exodus 30:12

Exodus 21:32 **Parallel theme:** Matthew 26:15

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