

Exodus 21:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

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

This judgment (mishpat) from the Book of the Covenant applies moral law to civil society. God's justice is comprehensive—addressing economic disputes, family relations, and community welfare. The case laws teach covenant people how to love God and neighbor practically. Through detailed ordinances, God shapes Israel as holy nation, distinct from pagan neighbors. These laws reveal God's character: just, merciful, concerned with details of everyday life.

Historical Context

The Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22-23:33) is Israel's foundational legal code, predating later expansions in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It addresses civil, criminal, and ceremonial matters.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

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

וְכַרְעֵל	אָבִיךָ	וְאֶמְתָּן	וְמַתָּן	וְמַתָּן
And he that curseth	his father	or his mother	be put to death	be put to death

H7043 H1 H517 H4191 H4191

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 20:20 (Curse): Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

Deuteronomy 27:16 (Curse): Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Proverbs 30:11 (Curse): There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

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