

# Exodus 21:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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**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.**

This provision regulates Hebrew servitude (עֶבֶד עִבְרִי, eved ivri), protecting indentured servants from exploitation. Unlike ancient Near Eastern chattel slavery, Israel's system limited bondage to six years with mandatory release, reflecting God's concern for human dignity. These laws temper economic necessity with compassion, ensuring even servants retain personhood and future hope. The regulations reveal God's heart for the vulnerable and point to ultimate redemption—Christ freed us from sin's slavery to serve Him voluntarily.

## Historical Context

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Debt-servitude in ancient Israel allowed impoverished persons to work off obligations while maintaining basic rights. These protections were revolutionary compared to surrounding nations' perpetual slavery systems.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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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

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וְכִי	יִכֶּה	אִישׁ	אֶת	עֵינָיו:	עַבְדּוֹ	אֹ	אֶת	עֵינָיו:
H3588	<b>smite</b>	<b>And if a man</b>	H853	<b>his eye's</b>	<b>of his servant</b>	H176	H853	<b>his eye's</b>
	H5221	H376		H5869	H5650			H5869

אֶמֶת	וְ	אֶת	וְ	אֶת	וְ	אֶת	וְ	אֶת
<b>of his maid</b>		<b>that it perish</b>	<b>free</b>	<b>he shall let him go</b>	<b>for</b>	<b>his eye's</b>		
H519		H7843	H2670	H7971	H8478	H5869		

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