

# Exodus 22:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

## Analysis

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**If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.**

Restitution exceeds theft—'five oxen for an ox' (חמשה בקר, chamishah vaqar) means 500% repayment for oxen, 400% for sheep. Why the difference? Oxen are working animals; stealing one damages victim's livelihood more. The restitution is restorative justice—victim is made whole plus penalty discourages theft. This contrasts with retributive systems (punishment without restitution). Zacchaeus offers fourfold restitution (Luke 19:8), applying this principle. The gospel is ultimate restitution—Christ pays infinitely more than we stole (His life for our sin). Where sin increased, grace abounded more (Romans 5:20).

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern law codes varied on theft penalties. Hammurabi required 30-fold for temple theft, 10-fold for palace theft, or death if unable to pay. Israel's graduated restitution (4-5x) was humane while deterring theft.

## Related Passages

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

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

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. Why does restitution exceed the theft (400-500%)—what principles of justice does this teach?
2. How does Christ's payment for sin exemplify ultimate restitution—paying infinitely more than we owe?

## Interlinear Text

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מִכָּר וְאֵל וְטָבַח וְהָשָׂה: אֹן הַשׁ וֹר אִישׁ יִגְנֹב כִּי  
H3588 shall steal H1589 If a man H376 an ox H7794 H176 for a sheep H7716 and kill H2873 H176 it or sell H4376

צֶאֱן וְאַרְבַּע הַשׁ וֹר תַּחַת יִשְׁלַם בְּקָר רֵמֶשֶׁשׁ הַ  
H2568 five H1241 oxen H7999 it he shall restore H8478 an ox H7794 and four H702 sheep H6629

תַּחַת הַשָּׂה: תַּחַת  
H8478 for a sheep H7716

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 19:8** (Parallel theme): And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

**2 Samuel 12:6** (Parallel theme): And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

**Proverbs 6:31** (Parallel theme): But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.

**Numbers 5:7** (Parallel theme): Then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

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