

Exodus 23:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.

Analysis

Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.

This command shapes Israel's covenant community life, applying moral law to social relationships. God's justice concerns everyday matters—truthfulness, fairness, compassion. The accumulation of ordinances creates comprehensive ethic governing Israelite society. These aren't arbitrary rules but revelations of God's character. He is just, merciful, truthful; His people must reflect these attributes. New Testament ethics build on this foundation, radicalizing commands while maintaining their spirit.

Historical Context

The Book of the Covenant concludes with liturgical calendar and worship regulations, integrating Israel's civil, moral, and ceremonial life under God's comprehensive rule.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

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

מַדְבֵּר	שֶׁ קֶר	תִּרְחֹק	וְנֹקֵי	וְצַדִּיק	אֶל
matter	from a false	Keep thee far	and the innocent	and righteous	H408
H1697	H8267	H7368	H5355	H6662	
תִּהְרֹג	כִּי	לֹא	אֶצְדִּיק	רָשָׁע:	
slay	H3588	H3808	thou not for I will not justify	the wicked	
H2026			H6663	H7563	

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:25 (Parallel theme): Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Exodus 34:7 (Parallel theme): Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Exodus 23:1 (Righteousness): Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Deuteronomy 27:25 (Parallel theme): Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.

Leviticus 19:11 (Parallel theme): Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

Romans 1:18 (Righteousness): For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

1 Thessalonians 5:22 (Evil): Abstain from all appearance of evil.

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