

Exodus 23:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

Analysis

And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

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

הַשׁ חֶדֶד	ל א	תִּקֶּחַ	כִּי	הַשׁ חֶדֶד	יַעֲוֶר	פְּקֹדֵי יוֹם
for the gift	H3808	And thou shalt take	H3588	for the gift	blindeth	the wise
H7810		H3947		H7810	H5786	H6493
וְיִסָּלֶה	דְּבַר י	צְדִיקִים:				
and perverteth	the words	of the righteous				
H5557	H1697	H6662				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 16:19 (Righteousness): Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Isaiah 5:23 (Righteousness): Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Proverbs 17:23 (Parallel theme): A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

Proverbs 15:27 (Parallel theme): He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

1 Samuel 8:3 (Parallel theme): And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

Psalms 26:10 (Parallel theme): In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.

Proverbs 17:8 (Parallel theme): A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

Ecclesiastes 7:7 (Parallel theme): Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

Deuteronomy 10:17 (Parallel theme): For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:

1 Samuel 12:3 (Parallel theme): Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

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