

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Good morning – we will be continuing our study through the book of Exodus.

Our text today will be Exodus 22 –

Let's pray...

So last week we started to go over some of the laws that God gave directly to Moses.

These were laws that were specific to every day disputes and situations that would arise among the Children of Israel.

These were supposed to be guidelines on how they were supposed to interact with one another and show accountability for their actions.

[Exo 22:1-31 NKJV] 1 "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.

The idea is that the thief has stolen and either killed the animal or gotten rid of it by selling it, when he is caught his penalty is to pay four or five times what he has stolen.

And I had you make a note of the word restore –

And the reason is that as God gives these laws to Moses, He emphasizes the need for the violators of His law to do some form of restitution.

In other words, it emphasized personal responsibility – if one did something against another person, the way it was made right was by you offering restitution for what you did directly to the individual.

Notice that God didn't say, if a thief comes to your house and takes a sheep, he is to spend 2 weeks in jail or he is to be fined \$2500.

That is not restitution –

So here in this instance, the Lord states that the restitution that must be paid by the thief should be 5x's for an ox and 4x's for a sheep.

So why is the restitution higher for an ox than for sheep?

Does God not like sheep???

Why didn't God simply state that if one stole one ox, he should then pay back the owner with another ox???

The reason was that the restitution was not supposed to represent the value of the ox itself.

The restitution was supposed to represent the value of the ox to its owner.

And for the owner, an ox was how he made a living. The owner depended on his ox to pull the plow and work the fields.

Plus, the owner also spent countless hours training his ox to do the work that was required.

The sheep were more of a commodity – that is why only four were required.

Since we are talking about sheep now – this coming Wednesday evening, we are going to see the Prophet Nathan provide David with a parable of a man taking the sheep of someone else.

And Nathan will imply that David took Uriah's sheep (Bathsheba)

Do you realize that David pays fourfold for that in his life?

He lost the baby

He lost Ammon

He lost Absalom

And Tamar was raped and ruined.

Now, turn with me to the gospel of Luke 19 – because we are going to see an example of restitution in the New Testament.

[Luk 19:1-10 NKJV] 1 Then [Jesus] entered and passed through Jericho. 2 Now behold, [there was] a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a

sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that [way]. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw [it], they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Zacchaeus was guilty of defrauding people, he was remorseful over his past actions, but notice that it didn't stop there.

Zacchaeus repented, and his sincerity was evident in his immediate desire to make restitution.

Here was a man who was repentant and remorseful, and the proof of his conversion to Christ was his resolve to atone, as much as possible, for past sins.

Now, this is important, restitution is to be a result of our salvation—it is not a requirement for salvation.

If we have received forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ, all of our sins are forgiven, whether or not we have been able to make restitution for them.

2 "If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, [there shall be] no guilt for his bloodshed. 3 "If the sun has risen on him, [there shall be] guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

If a thief broke into one's house in the middle of the night and you killed him, you were not guilty of for his death.

However, if he broke into you property during the day time and you killed him, then you were guilty of murder.

Why the difference?

The key is intention – if the thief breaks into your house in the middle of the night, when it is pitch dark – there is no way to determine whether he is coming in to steal or to kill you. In the confusion of the night, you were given the right to defend yourself.

However, during the day time, you could see his face – and therefore be able to identify him and assist in bring charges upon him later on.

Notice the last portion of verse 3, because God is showing no partiality toward those that were poor.

Even if you were poor, you still had to pay restitution – and if you didn't have the means to pay it, then you would have to work as a servant for up to six years.

And we looked at some of the laws regarding servants last week.

4 "If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

So here God is commanding that if someone catches a thief stealing their animals and they haven't sold them or killed them yet, he is still required to pay restitution – in this case, it would be double.

5 "If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. 6 "If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

These two verses have to do with negligence regarding your neighbor's land.

Their land was their livelihood – if your animal went into their land and grazed in their land, then you have to allow their animals to graze in your land.

Or if your negligence causes one of your burns to get out of control and burn up your neighbor's land, you had to pay restitution.

Some of us by now might be thinking –

I don't have oxen, donkeys or sheep – my neighbor doesn't have oxen, donkey or sheep – we don't even have yards. How does all of this apply to us???

And the way it applies to us is that we need to be responsible for our actions and the things that belong to us.

When we bump into a parked car at the mall – we are responsible for it.

When your dog does its business in the neighbor's front yard – we are responsible for it.

I live in a community where the majority of people do not pick up after their dog on the walking trails.

God wants us to be responsible for our actions and responsible with our stuff.

7 "If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. 8 "If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges [to see] whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods.

If you asked your neighbor to watch a few items for you and the items get stolen – then the thief would have to pay restitution – assuming that he is caught.

However, if he is not caught, then the owner of the house would have to stand before the judge and he would decide whether you were actually the thief.

9 "For any kind of trespass, [whether it concerns] an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, [or] for any kind of lost thing which [another] claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; [and] whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

According to God's commands, there is no such thing as finders keepers – losers weepers.

Let's say I was in the possession of a sheep that walked into my property one day and someone came to me and said, "Hey – that is my sheep. It went missing 4 months ago" we would have to go before a judge to decide whose sheep it was – and if it was his sheep, I would have to pay restitution even though I was not involved in the sheep's disappearance in the first place –

Sometimes I see stories in social media of an individual being praised because they found a wallet full of cash and they turned it in to the authorities –

And people will be amazed by that.

Church, God intended this to be the norm –

Society has deviated so far from the word of God that when we hear stories like this, we find them amazing.

10 "If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing [it], 11 "[then] an oath of the LORD shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods; and the owner of it shall accept [that], and he shall not make [it] good. 12 "But if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. 13 "If it is torn to pieces [by a beast, then] he shall bring it as evidence, [and] he shall not make good what was torn.

Here we have a situation where someone asks you to watch their dog and something bad happens to it (it gets eaten by a coyote) but there are no witnesses to corroborate what happened.

The owner of the dog is supposed to take my word for it.

However, if it was stolen from me, I would have to pay restitution.

But if the coyote got it, I was to bring a piece of evidence that it happened and I would not have to pay retribution.

14 "And if a man borrows [anything] from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not [being] with it, he shall surely make [it] good. 15 "If its owner [was] with it, he shall not make [it] good; if it [was] hired, it came for its hire.

So if I borrow something from my neighbor and it breaks or it dies, I was to pay retribution.

However, if I rented it from him and it broke or it dies, I don't have to pay retribution – because I paid to use it - it doesn't mean I don't have to take care of it.

So I like how all of these laws demonstrate that God is concerned with even the small details of our lives.

16 "If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her [to be] his wife. 17 "If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins.

So the first thing I want to point out here in verse 16 and 17 is that these verses are not referring to rape.

These verses are referring to a man who simply courts a virgin with no intent of ever marrying her. All he is looking for is to sleep with her.

So the restitution for that is that he would have to pay the dowry.

Now, the dowry was not a payment to the father.

Some people get the misconception that the fathers were selling their daughters in marriage – that is not the case.

The dowry was an insurance policy for the wife to be.

In case the husband died at a young age, the widow would then live off the dowry for the rest of her life.

So what we have here is what people used to refer to, a shotgun wedding.

Now, in verse 17 – the father still had the option of refusing to hand over his daughter in marriage to the man who slept with her – however, the man still had to pay the dowry.

18 "You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

Our society has made witchcraft and sorcery pretty appealing or at least pretty harmless.

I remember growing up in the 80's and Dungeons and Dragons was a big thing.

Now you have Harry Potter – people consider it cool to be witches and the like.

But God is pretty serious when it comes to things like this. Why?

Because these are things that take people away from the truth.

It is idea of you controlling power through charms or magic words instead of seeking the One True God.

[Isa 8:19 NKJV] 19 And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people seek their God? [Should they seek] the dead on behalf of the living?

19 "Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death.

Having intimate relations with any animal is a capital punishment.

20 "He who sacrifices to [any] god, except to the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

Making sacrifices to pagan gods was also punishable by death.

We see this in 1 King 18, when Elijah has his showdown with the prophets of Baal – Elijah executes them for making sacrifices to Baal.

21 "You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. 22 "You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. 23 "If you afflict them in any way, [and] they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; 24 "and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

These verses allow us to recognize something we haven't mentioned yet, but that is part of all God's dealings.

Our God is a God of compassion.

In this case, His compassion is shown by His heart towards strangers, widows and orphans.

God wanted the Children of Israel, and He wants the church, to be compassionate, as He is.

[Psa 146:9 NKJV] 9 The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; But the way of the wicked He turns upside down.

The lesson here is – don't abuse the helpless -

25 "If you lend money to [any of] My people [who are] poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest.

The Children of Israel were not allowed to charge interest when they loaned money to each other.

Once again, we see God showing compassion toward those that are poor.

And by commanding them not to charge interest to their own, this would enable them to care of each other – the Children of Israel would not go borrowing from their strangers knowing that their fellow Hebrew would provide a no interest loan.

Santa Cruz

26 "If you ever take your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. 27 "For that [is] his only covering, it [is] his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I [am] gracious.

The idea here is that when a poor person asked for a no interest loan, he would offer up his coat as collateral.

That was his promise to pay the loan.

However, because he was poor, he would need the coat to keep warm at night.

So what God is saying here is that you should return the coat to him so that he will not freeze at night.

God is asking to show grace towards those in need.

28 "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

This has to do with recognizing the authority God has over our life.

We belong to Him.

Yes we were set free by lamb's blood; but it was a freedom to serve God rather than sin.

The "ruler of your people" is God's delegated authority over us on the earth. I know - most of them seem ungodly. But we are to submit to them as unto the Lord.

29 "You shall not delay [to offer] the first of your ripe produce and your juices.

The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. 30 "Likewise you shall do with your oxen [and] your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me.

God is reminding the Children of Israel that they are supposed to give to Him what is owed to Him.

They were not supposed to delay in bringing it to Him.

This was something that we saw back in Exodus 13 -

[Exo 13:11-12 NKJV] 11 "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, 12 "that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males [shall be] the LORD's.

31 "And you shall be **holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn [by beasts] in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.**

The idea here in the last verse, goes beyond prohibiting the eating of road kill.

Notice the beginning of verse 31, God has called us to holiness – and the Holy Spirit produces holiness in us.

And that holiness understands that we have been given dignity by God.

That we are to be set apart and not be partaking of the roadkill that the world has to offer – things like pornography, drug addiction and alcohol addiction.

We are to be set apart – for His use and to bring Him glory.

Amen

Let's pray...

