

Exodus 23

Verses 1-3

“You shall not bear a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert *justice*; ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his dispute.

Do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness

This is an extension of the 9th Commandment which states, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

This command states that one should not help a wicked person in a wrongful law suit

You shall not follow the masses in doing evil

Truthful decisions are based on what is just and equitable not on what is popular in the eyes of the public.

Nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his dispute.

Don't show favoritism to any person in court, for any reason

Verses 4-5

“If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him. ⁵ If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying *helpless* under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release *it* with him.

People have a responsibility to help their enemies

See Matthew 5:43 - 48

Did you notice verse 43 of Matthew 5?

You have heard that it was said; you shall love your neighbor, **and hate your enemy**

Apparently, the rabbis were teaching something contrary to the law

Verses 6-9

You shall not pervert the justice *due* to your needy *brother* in his dispute.

⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty.

⁸ “You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.

⁹ “You shall not oppress a stranger, since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you *also* were strangers in the land of Egypt.

You shall not pervert the justice *due* to your needy *brother* in his dispute

In verse 3, favoritism toward the poor based on sympathy was forbidden

Here, discrimination against the poor is prohibited.

Do not kill the innocent or the righteous

False testimony that leads to a death penalty of an innocent or righteous person will bring God's judgment

You shall not take a bribe

This was a problem in Israel. See Isaiah 1:23 and Micah 3:9-11

You shall not oppress a stranger

Why should the stranger be protected?

Personal experience says you should

Verses 10-13

¹⁰ “**You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield,** ¹¹ **but *on* the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard *and* your olive grove.**

¹² “**Six days you are to do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease *from labor* so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave, as well as your stranger, may refresh themselves.** ¹³ **Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let *them* be heard from your mouth.**

You shall sow your land for six years, but *on* the seventh year you shall let it rest

You are to do the same with your vineyard *and* your olive grove.

It seems that Israel never paid much attention to this law

See 2 Chronicles 36:20 - 21

The 70 year Babylonian captivity made up for the years this law was ignored

They had not followed this law for 490 years

So that the needy of your people may eat

This was part of their feeding the poor program, but it was also good for the land

Since the Dust bowl farmers routinely allow a portion of their land to go fallow, usually on a field rotational basis. Each year one 7th of their land gets a Sabbath year rest.

In a material world everything needs rest. Man gets to rest every 7th day, land every 7th year and machines whenever they break down. ☺ ☺

Six days you are to do your work

This is strait from the 4th commandment.

Many people consider Sunday to be a day of rest, but for others that work service jobs such as retail and restaurant work, they often rest on a week day.

Be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let *them* be heard from your mouth.

The Book of Samuel avoided the name Baal

Instead of Baal, the word [~bosheth] meaning shame was introduced

See Pic 2305

Scripture	Baal changed to bosheth (shame)
Judges 6:32	Therefore on that day he named him <u>Jerubbaal</u>
2 Samuel 11:21	Who struck down Abimelech the son of <u>Jerubbesheth</u>
1 Chronicles 8:33	Saul became the father of Jonathan, Malchi-shua, Abinadab and <u>Eshbaal</u> .
2 Samuel 2:8	But Abner the son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken <u>Ish-bosheth</u>
1 Chronicles 8:34	The son of Jonathan was Merib-baal, and <u>Merib-baal</u> became the father of Micah
2 Samuel 4:4	And his name was <u>Mephibosheth</u> .

Verses 14-17

¹⁴ “Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. ¹⁵ You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. ¹⁶ Also *you shall observe* the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors *from* what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in *the fruit of* your labors from the field. ¹⁷ Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord God.

Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to me

These three festivals were known as Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

1. Passover celebrated Israel leaving Egypt

The Feast of unleavened bread was often referred to as the week of Passover.

2. Pentecost celebrated the first fruits of their crops

3. Tabernacles celebrated the final harvest of their crops

See pic 2310 3 Jewish Feasts

Three Jewish Feasts						
Feast	Scripture	Date Observed	Roman Calendar	Sabbath	Offerings	Commemorates
Passover	Lev. 23:05	Nisan 14 Near sunset	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Oldest son saved from death
Festival of Unleavened Bread	Lev. 23:6-8	Nisan 15-21	March/April	Day 1 & 7 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 28:16-24	The hasty flight from Egypt
Feast Of Weeks (Pentecost)	Lev. 23:15-22	50 days after F.F.	May/June	Special Sabbath	Numbers 28:26-31	beginning of the wheat harvest.
Tabernacles Temp. Shelters	Lev. 23:33-34	Tishri 15-22	Sept/Oct	Day 1 & 8 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 29:12-38	End of harvest

Verses 18-19

¹⁸ “You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning. ¹⁹ “You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord your God. “You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning.

This is a reference to the Passover regulations

You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord

This is a reference to the Feast of weeks

This established giving as an essential part of worshiping God

You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother

Why would God make this kind of restriction?

The pagan use of "a kid (baby goat) boiled in its mother's milk" was a magical formula they used to increasing the fertility of the land

The milk was sprinkled on the crops with the thought that the new life of the kid added to its mother's milk produced double fertility

Therefore, the mixing of meat and milk dishes is not kosher for a Jew

Verses 20-24

²⁰ "Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ²¹ Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since my name is in him. ²² But if you truly obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. ²³ For My angel will go before you and bring you in to *the land of* the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will completely destroy them. ²⁴ You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their *sacred* pillars in pieces.

I am going to send an angel before you

This was Jesus in the form of an Angel

Do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression

When the people refused to take Canaan, they died in the wilderness.

The Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites

6 nations are mentioned here but we know there was a total of 32 kingdoms

You shall utterly overthrow them and break their *sacred* pillars in pieces.

Israel was commanded to do the following:

1. To make no covenant with them
2. But to kill all the people
3. And destroy their items of worship

Verses 25-27

²⁵ But you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst. ²⁶ There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. ²⁷ I will send My terror ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn *their* backs to you.

The Old Covenant contained a lot of physical blessing for serving God

1. Plenty of food and water
2. Good health
3. They will be blessed with children
4. Long life
5. Victory against their enemies

Many physical blessing are needed to maintain a healthy family but our motive for serving God should be love and appreciation.

Were all of these blessings conditional?

Yes they were, because it says: But you shall serve the Lord your God

I will send my terror ahead of you

See Joshua 2:8-11

God used the great miracle at the Red Sea to put fear in the hearts of the Canaanites.

He also used the battles against their enemies to reinforce that fear.

Verses 28-30

²⁸ I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. ²⁹ I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. ³⁰ I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.

I will send hornets ahead of you

Some think this might refer to hostile enemies, such as Egypt or other kingdoms

The simpler (and most obvious) explanation is that He used actual hornets

So that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you

The mention of only three nations here actually stands for all of them

I will drive them out before you little by little

The conquest of Canaan was meant to be a gradual process.

It took 7 years to conquer the land and then 7 more years to divide the land up

If it was done too quickly, then the other problems mentioned here would appear

It also gave God time to test their loyalty concerning his commands in verse 24.

Verses 31-33

³¹ I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River *Euphrates*; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you. ³² You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. ³³ They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against me; for *if* you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates

See Pic 2315 Red Sea to the Euphrates



The boundaries of Israel as outlined in verse 3 came about under David and Solomon.

See Pic 2320 David and Solomon



Ezion-Geber was at the head of that gulf where Solomon launched his great navy.

The boundaries under Joshua were more limited

See Pic 2325 Joshua

