

Exodus 23

That it might go well with you...

I. Justice for All: Instruction to Judges

1 "You shall not circulate a false report.

Matthew 12:36 [Jesus] I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

- **Sins of the Tongue?**

1. Gossip
2. Slander
3. Malice
4. Backbiting: Opposite of loving one another...

Galatians 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

Bite: daknō; Lit. To bite with teeth. Metaphor: Wounding the soul, rend with reproaches

What are you saying about others when they are not there to defend themselves?

5. **Spreading rumors:**

"You shall not circulate a false report..."

James 3:2 [Read] ...we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. **See how great a forest a little fire kindles!** 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

- **Rumors** [true or false] **spread like forest fire:** Don't fuel the flame...

Proverbs 26:20 Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.

- **Stop a false report:** Like Game Telephone; don't pass it on
- **Sacrifice of "shutting up":** Rumors destroy people's lives

1b...Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

- Don't join the wicked in lying about another

2 You shall not follow a crowd to do evil nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice.

- **Mob mentality:** May Day
 1. Don't cave to peer pressure
 2. "Any dead fish can float downstream"
 3. We are called to be people of TRUTH
- Mob mentality waged against Moses will not go well for the mob
- Korah gathered 250 men:
 1. Gossiped about Moses
 2. Drew others to himself
 3. Slandered Moses
 4. Bore false witness and accused Moses saying...

Numbers 16:3b... [Korah said] "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?"

Numbers 16:28 [Moses said] "By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. 29 If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. 30 But if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the Lord."

- Crowd/ Those that scream the loudest are not always right

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

- God calls us to take individual responsibility for what we say and do:
 1. **Say no** to wickedness even when "everybody's doing it"
 2. Have courage when everything in you wants to take path of least resistance

**Stand for God while others bow to political correctness
E.g. Daniel and 3 Friends/ Esther/ for such a time as this we are here!**

- Continuing instructions for Judges

3 You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute.

Law always addresses a sinful temptation...nice is not always right!

- **Temptation:** To pervert justice and show favoritism to poor?
- Law should be Blind

Lady Justice is an allegorical personification of the moral force in judicial systems. Her attributes are a blindfold, a balance and a sword.

- **Blindfold:** No favoritism; objectivity...just the facts ma'am...regardless of money, wealth, fame, power, or identity
- **Balance:** Fairness
- **Sword:** Punishment

Romans 2:11 ...there is **no partiality** with God.

Acts 10:34 [Peter] "In truth I perceive that God shows **no partiality**.

4 "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.

- **NOTE: Kindness infused in Law:** Love your enemy in the OT

Galatians 5:14 ...all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- See lost animal of someone you don't like...bring it back to him in person
- See struggling animal of someone who doesn't like you and you intend to ignore it...**instead bring it back** to him in person

Why is Kindness Commanded? To Reveal God's Heart to Others

- **Love:** Incremental "**mountain climb**" to Love as taught by Jesus
 1. Love your **brother**: Blood siblings, those at church
 2. Love your **neighbor**: Those around you who don't cause much trouble
 3. Love your **enemy**: Loving those who you hate/hate you. e.g. Good Samaritan

Surprise people with Grace and Mercy as God does with you

6 "You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute.

- Opposite of v3. Here, don't favor the rich

James 2:1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, **with partiality**. 2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," 4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

- **Don't favor the rich:** We don't know the heart of people by outward appearance

7 Keep yourself far from a false matter...

- **Keep yourself:** Run from Lies/Evil and seek Truth/Goodness

Amos 5:14 Seek good and not evil, That you may live; So the Lord God of hosts will be with you, As you have spoken. 15 Hate evil, love good...

- Meditate on things that build up not tear down

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything

praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

- Keep yourselves from falseness

7b...do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked.

- **Murder of the Innocent:** Abortion in America
 1. Over 3000 per day
 2. Over 1 Million per year
 3. 56 Million American babies murdered since 1973 [Roe V Wade]

For I will not justify the wicked

- **Murder of the Righteous:** Martyrs in the World

The Christian persecution watchdog group Open Doors has released its annual list of countries where Christians face the greatest persecution and found that it has reached unprecedented levels worldwide as over 7,000 Christians were killed for their faith between Nov. 1, 2014, and Oct. 31, 2015.

For I will not justify the wicked

8 And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous.

- **Take no bribe:** Lit. Gift/Present in exchange for doing what is right
 1. **Blinds the discerning:** Lit. A bribe "Puts out the eyes of the clear sighted"
 - Politics
 - Business
 2. **Perverts words of righteous:** Lit. A bribe twists/distort/overturn/ruin the words of the Just and Lawful

9 "Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

- Don't forget where you came from; a stranger to God in bondage to sin
- **Justice for All**

II. Law of Sabbaths

10 "Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, 11 but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow

- **Word Sabbath not here/concept is**
- **Instituted at creation**

Genesis 2:2 And on the **seventh day** God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

- **First mention of word Sabbath and adherence to Sabbath...**

Exodus 16:23 Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is a **Sabbath rest**, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'"

- **Sabbath:** shab·bāth' from root shā·vath' Lit. cease, rest, cause to desist, celebrate
- **Sabbath of Years**
 1. Six years of sowing/reaping:
 2. 7th year let sit/lie fallow

11b...that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove.

- **Rational for keeping the Sabbath year with regard to land use**
 1. Poor can eat from what you leave in the field
 2. Animals can eat from what the poor leave
- Nutrients depleted during 6 years are replenished the **7th year** [made Complete]
- **Thought:** Dirt as an agent to grow food? Things we take for granted.

First Sabbath of years next Sabbath of Days...

12 Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed.

- **Reiteration of Exodus 20:10**

13 "And in all that I have said to you, be circumspect

- **All that I have said to you:** All previous laws from last three chapters of Exodus
- **Be circumspect:** zä·kar' Lit. to remember/to recall to mind...

13b...and make no mention of the name of other gods...

- Make no **mention** of the name of other gods
- **Mention:** zä·kar' word same as circumspect
- **Name:** sham Lit. Name, reputation, fame, glory

Remember to not dwell on the perceived attributes [name] of other gods...

13c...nor let it [the name of another god] be heard from your mouth.

- Don't be a student of falseness/evil

Romans 12:9b Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

- **Revelation 2:** Some in Thyatira were focusing on the "deep things of Satan"
 1. Freemasonry/Mormonism connection

2. Illuminati/Occult

Romans 16:19 For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf...but **I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.**

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

- Don't dwell of false gods/false religions/false doctrines

SUMMARY Law of Sabbaths of Years and Days

- Is there a 1000 year Sabbath/Jubilee coming after the first 6000 years of human history?

III. Three Annual Feasts

14 "Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: 15 You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); 16 and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field.

- **Three Feasts "to the LORD" each year**
 1. Feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread
 2. Feast of Firstfruits
 3. Feast of Ingathering/Pentecost

I. Feast of Unleavened Bread

1. Eat bread with no yeast for seven days
2. Month of Abib: Same month of Exodus
3. None shall "appear before Me empty"?

II. Feast of Firstfruits [Feast of Harvest]

1. After reaping the first of the fruit of their labor

III. Feast of Ingathering

1. End of the Jewish Calendar Year
2. After reaping the last of the fruit of their labor

17 "Three times in the year all your **males** shall appear before the Lord God.

- Three times per year all men and boys appear for Feast
- More on Three Feast to the Lord in Leviticus

18 "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning.

- Fire of the sacrifice must consume everything

19 The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

- Give God the First and Best

19b...You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

- Do not imitate what was a **Common Pagan Ritual**
- Jews today do not eat meat and milk at the same meal

"Against nature to make the mother an accomplice in the death of her child" [Meyer]

IV. Angel and Promise

20 "Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.

I am sending an **Angel** to keep you now on the journey and bring you later to the Promise

- **Send:** shä·lakh' Lit. To send, send away, stretch out
- **Angel:** mal·äk' Lit. Messenger/Representative/Ambassador

The Angel of the LORD: Pre-Incarnate Jesus Christ always with Israel

21 Beware of Him and obey His voice...

- **Beware** of Him: Fear Him as you fear God for He is God
- **Obey** Him: Obey His Word as you obey God for He is God

21b... do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions;

- Don't provoke Him?
 1. By not Fearing
 2. By not Obeying

21c...for My name is in Him.

- **Name:**
 1. Character and all a Person is.
 2. My Name is "in" Him. Note not "on" Him.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

John 10:30 I and My Father are one."

- **My Name is in Him:** Provoke Him [Angel] and you are provoking Me!

22 But if you indeed obey His voice and **do all that I speak**, 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 Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.

Obey His voice and do all that I speak? Jesus is deity. When Jesus speaks it is God speaking

- **If** you obey **then**: Enemy to your enemies
- **OT**: Blessing almost always based on obedience; i.e. if/then
 1. I will bring you to your enemies
 2. I will give you victory over your enemies

Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 being tempted for forty days by the devil.

- **Brought to our enemies**: Build trust, faith, endurance, character

Ain't much spiritual growth happening on the beach

24 You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars.

- **No Quarter**: No tolerance for other gods. Period.
 1. Don't bow down
 2. Don't serve
 3. Don't adhere to their doctrines

...but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars.

- **Sacred Pillars**: Sacred to them not to God
- George W Bush/ Barack Obama: Koran is a "Holy Book"? Wrong.

25 "So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. 26 No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.

- **Serve the Lord alone**
 1. Bless your physical sustenance
 2. Bless your health
 3. Bless your pregnancies
 4. Bless you with long life

I will take care of you and destroy your enemies before you. How?

27 "I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the

people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. 28 And I will send hornets before you

- Before you even see you enemies
 1. I will send My fear to them
 2. I will send Confusion to them
 3. I will send Pain [hornets] on them

28b...[These things...] shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you.

- Fear, Confusion and Pain
- **It will take time...**

29 I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.

- **Not quickly:**

Why does God do thing the way He does in the time He does. Because Father knows best!

1. Land would become dust
2. Animals would take over

30 Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.

- I will set the boundaries of the Promised Land:

31 And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River.

- Israel has not possessed these boundaries...yet

31b...For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. 32 You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.

- **God's part**

1. Deliver enemies into your hand
2. Drive them out before you

- **People of God's part**

1. Don't make any agreement with them [covenant] Joshua disobeyed and paid
2. Don't make any agreement with their gods?

33 They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me.

- They are not to dwell in your land [Palestinians]
- **Rational:** Make you sin against Me

33b...For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."

- Assyria would carry away Israel 700 years later in 722 BC **Reason?**

2 Kings 17:15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. 16 So they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 17 And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. 18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone.

- Fear and Obey and He will take care and deliver
- Take God for granted and Disobey and there will be certain consequences

...For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a **snare to you."**

- **Snare:** mō·kashe' Lit. trap, noose for catching animals, a hook for the nose, iron ring through the nostril of a beast

There are many examples revealing Assyrian severity. A captured king was taken to the capital and compelled to pull the royal chariot of triumph. Rings were put through their lips or noses and sometimes hands, feet, noses and ears were cut off, they were blinded and their tongues were torn from their mouths. Prisoners were skinned alive and set on fire. Their skins were also hung near enemy city gates in order to collect tribute. The Lord allowed the ruthless Assyrians to capture the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC because of Israel's rebellion against Him. [Bible History online]