

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

"THE ADVANCE OF JUSTICE" | EXODUS 20:22 – 21:36 | PASTOR BRIAN

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is a law you would create for today's society that you think would help people get along?

"Altars" - (Exodus 20: 22-26)

The Israelites were allowed to make altars to worship God wherever they were at, just as long as they followed some simple guidelines. What does this show about who God is and His heart towards us?

"Slaves and Servants" - (Exodus 21: 1-11)

Many people today reject the Bible because of how slavery is presented in different ways. What parts of this passage and Pastor Brian's explanation can help people understand God was not encouraging slavery?

"Homicide, Assault, Trafficking, Injuries" - (Exodus 21: 12-36)

These laws are more descriptive ways of applying the 10 commandments of do not steal, do not murder, honor your father and mother and set guidelines for courts. What does it say about God that He gives courts of justice guidelines?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Pastor Brian started this message by explaining that we learn a little of how the ancient Israelites were to love God and love others through these laws. Have you thought lately of how you can love God and love others on a daily basis? Pray that God would reveal specific ways you can do that in modern society.

The Advance of Justice

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-5 Lar: Youth. CK. CG. Foundations.
- B. We are moving *Sun Night of Prayer* from Next Sun (Labor Day) to Sun.12th.
- C. Slide6a-c Want to help? Here's how you can. [1st, largest *hostage crisis* in history]
 1. **Afghanistan** - Chad Robichaux along w/2 other org's have teamed up (SaveOurAllies). Have already flown out **8911** (allowed 4100). **Now resettle Alb.**
 - a) Q: Would you take an Afghani child, temp.? 1 of our organization partners is trying
 2. **Haiti** - Food4theHungry a longtime partner *is in the disaster zone* providing **critical assistance** such as *food, clean water, and emergency supplies* to devastated communities.
 3. **Belize HT** - (Human Trafficking Institute) w/Chris Lick. **1 vehicle for 5 investigators.** Gov of Belize is hurting economically & cannot help at this time. We'd like to raise \$10,000 for this Vehicle. **The vehicle will be purchased in Belize** (so don't have to pay **duty taxes**).
 - a) How to give: our **website / church app**, *choose from drop down menu.*

II. Slide7a Intro: The Advance of Justice

- A. Slide7b Pentateuch Break Down: Gen.1-11 **Beginnings** - Gen.12-50 **Promises**.
Ex **Redemption** - Lev **Holiness** - Numb **Testing** - Deut **Instruction**.
- B. This morning we are going to talk about *not showing your nakedness while doing sacrifices, how to give ear-piercings on your front porch, when to & when not to put your neighbor to death if their ox goads a neighbor, and some hot button topics* like capital punishment, slavery, and Human Trafficking.
 1. It's basically, **how to live in community**. If you've had a roommate before, you know *it's hard to live with people*. If you've gotten married, you know *it's hard to live with people*. To live w/someone you need to have **guidelines**.
- C. So these are Israel's guidelines or Case Laws.

1. This is the *application* of the 10 Commandments. (*shall we run through the 10 on our fingers again?).

D. So how do you *live-these-out*, on an ordinary, day-to-day, life basis?

1. We live in a different day. We don't live in a theocracy. We are not Israel, we are the church.
2. So not everything in this section are we going to *adopt wholesale*. But we are asking that same question: *How do we Love God and neighbor on an everyday, ordinary life basis?* Because that's where most of us live our days ... is in the *ordinary*.
3. *Loving your neighbor* can be a very *abstract idea*, but here God *earths-it* into day-to-day living.

E. Slide8a We also see in a section *the character of God*. We will see a God that is *just*, a God that is *compassionate*, a God who wants His people *to reflect Him*.

1. Slide8b 1 verse you can hang over this whole section is Micah 6:8, *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

F. We noticed that this is a *different* section:

1. With these we need to look at *culture & context* to try to understand them.
2. 2 mistakes you can make: Completely omit them. Or adopt them as *Case Law* for CM.
 - a) What we will extract is the *principles* that are still *binding and relevant*.

G. 6 categories:

III. Slide9a 1) **DIY - ALTAR (20:22-26)** *Worship*

A. Here is an expansion of the 2nd commandment. *Find 4 things here ...*

1. *Simplicity* (24a,25) - it's really just a BBQ.
 - a) My heart for *our place of worship* here at CM: *simple, clean, and beautiful*.
2. *Slide9b Purity* (26) - when it comes to worship, no nakedness.

- a) **Slide10** Explain: priest robes & the **ramp** to get up to the altar.
 [*Purity especially for those in leadership*] (Ex.28:42 designer underwear for priests)
- b) **For us?** When you come here to worship, *wear clothes!*
3. **Slide11a Locality** (24b) - you don't have to return the Sinai. ***In every place where I cause My name to be remembered I will come to you & bless u.***
- a) And now *after Pentecost*, people all over the world are meeting in cafeterias and cathedrals, mud huts & on Main St. **And** we are worshiping because **God inhabits the praises of his people.**
- b) Jn.4:21,24 *Jesus said to her, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain (Mnt Gerizim/blessings; Ebal/curse, *in West Bank*) nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father ... the true worshipers will worship the Father **in spirit & truth**, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*
- (1) There is no reason for a holy pilgrimage somewhere.
4. **Slide11b Sacrifices** (24) - **burnt and peace offerings.**
- a) **Burnt** - burnt completely to make *atonement* for sins.
- b) **Peace** - shalom/*fellowship* offering. To give thanks. Didn't burn it, but enjoyed this bbq with others in *fellowship*.
- (1) Of course all sacrifices point to **Jesus**. *Forgiveness of sins, and He brings peace and reconciliation.*
- c) Hebrews says, *Jesus is our altar* (13:10-13).
- (1) **The altar** proclaims that God & man **may meet**. **All sacrifices** to be done there. (Lev.15, 5x's)
- (2) **The altar** is **the cosmic collision** of a **holy God and sinful man**.
- (3) **The altar** screams of sacrifice **where** God is pleased and alienated man is reconciled.
- (4) We commemorate **this altar** on **Good Friday**, because **this altar** is **the Cross**.

IV. Slide12a 2) SLAVERY/SERVANTS (21:1-11) *spend most time here, most misunderstood*

- A. **Some things to clarify.** Slavery here is **not** how we normally think of slavery.
1. **Slide12b** From the Lexham Bible Dictionary. **Slavery**: the practice of 1 person owning another as property, **OR** one person owing a debt to another and repaying that debt via their labor. *No single description of slavery fits the various forms it took in the ancient world. However, it was quite different from the slavery practiced in the West during the 18th & 19th centuries.*
- B. **There were many diverse slave experiences.** Some included torture, rape, and death (*i.e.* down in Egypt to the Hebrews). **But** there was also *protection & participation*.
- C. **Etymology**/word history doesn't really help us, as the most common terms for slaves **in Hebrew and Greek** refer to both slaves and servants.
- D. **Slide12c** Let's start with this, if you wanna know **God's heart** on *slavery as we know it*, **then** read about the Exodus of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt. **That's what God** thinks a brutal slavery when a persons life is stolen from them. (see 20:2)
1. As you look at laws in their *ancient cultural context*, you'll see **God is working with Israel as He finds them**. **Then pushes them towards justice**.
 2. Slavery **isn't abolished** in the bible, **but** it is undermined. **For example: Israel was to reenact the Exodus by releasing slaves and releasing all debts, every 7 years.** This was revolutionary in the ancient world.
- E. **It's people often in deep debt** who would *hire themselves out* to masters.
1. They are like **contract workers**, who would agree to work for a # of yrs, **and then** be **set free** from their contract.
- F. To say that the Bible is OK with slavery *as we think of it*, it's just not true. **See** (21:16). This was a type of *servanthood* that is very diff than American slavery.
- G. There is no single or coherent attitude toward slavery in the **NT**, except that slavery is accepted as an institution - **not endorsed, but accepted**. Just as in the OT, slavery is taken for granted and is not explicitly condemned in the NT.
1. Paul even wrote **a book of the bible** to a slave owner (Philemon). Asking him to accept back his *runaway slave* (Onesimus). Though once was a **thief & fugitive**, is now **saved & repentant**.

2. Both Jesus and Paul use slave imagery as metaphors with positive connotations. For example, Jesus portrays *a true follower* as a slave. And likens slavery to discipleship. He also tells many parables in which slaves are characters. [what if He *didn't* talk about slaves, when in Rome at the time they estimate 400,000 as slaves, about 40% of the pop.]

- H. Slide12d 1st It was voluntary (u hired yourself out). 2nd It was temporary (6yrs thn free)
1. 3rd It was civil it was often viewed as *the master helping 1 get out of debt*.
 2. 4th It was not racially-based or oppressive. The Hebrews had lived under a system of slavery. God gave them freedom and isn't going to place them under another one here?
 3. 5th It was Concerned about the family unit. Did you know *arranged marriages* actually work in a large percentage of our world (4).
 - a) (4b) He shall go out alone - this seems strange, but she also had *a debt to pay off* and couldn't just leave. He could wait for her (think Jacob working for both Rachel & Leah 14yrs!). He could purchase her freedom early, from whatever trade he had learned. Or, he could work permanently w/this master (5,6).
- I. Slide12e While the OT does not condemn slavery outright, the Bible could be read as showing a consistent theme of liberation from slavery.
1. This liberation culminates in Luke 4:18,19, in which Jesus states that God sent Him *to proclaim liberty to captives*. Due to Christ's role in liberation, Paul declares, *there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free* (Gal 3:28).
- J. (5,6) I love my master (if serving over 6 years).
1. This was done before God. It was a public ear piercing outside on the door post (i.e. not under coercion inside secretly).
 2. It's a picture of *covenant, blood, permanence*.
 3. The ear is being bound to *that house*.

4. We are sons/daughters of the Master. We are eternally bound to him, in-service, *because we have to?* **No we choose to. We love our Master!**

K. (7-10) This sounds harsh, selling your daughter as a slave! (we met girls in Cambodia who shared their stories about their mother selling them into sexual slavery). **But again this is *different*.** Because of arranged marriages, there's a higher probability if your daughter worked for a rich man, a better opportunity for her marriage (9).

1. It's simply their fathers desire that **she** would have the best opportunity to break out of *desperate perpetual poverty*. *This is God caring for His daughters*

V. Slide13a **3) HOMICIDE, INTENTIONAL & UNINTENTIONAL (21:12-14)** *not murder*

A. Slide13b Surrounding cultures never considered *intent* in homicide cases.

B. Capital punishment appears harsh. **But** it's because **God values human life above all things**. The death penalty was invoked, **not** out of *indifference* for human life, **but** because each human life is *of tremendous value*.

1. Wherever you personally land on the death penalty debate, please know this principle ... *"People matter to God!"*

C. Slide13c In some cultures there were stiffer crimes related to *possessions*, **than** crimes against **human beings**. In the code of Hammurabi (Mesop/Babylon) if 1 committed murder he could pay it back with \$ (so, *the rich* literally got away with murder).

1. The code of Hammurabi is the longest and best-organised legal text from the ancient Near East, the best-preserved, the law from king Hammurabi.

D. One can argue against the death penalty today by saying, *I agree with the **principal** but I don't like the **process** in a fallen world.*

1. So there are times where we should *disagree* with the death penalty, *because of process, not because of principle.*

VI. Slide14 **4) ASSAULT ON PARENTS (21:15 & 17)** *honor father & mother #5*

A. (17) **Strikes/Curses** - the cursing is *a more serious offense* than the mere utterance of a word in anger. It is essentially the *opposite* of the 5th commandment.

1. **Ancient Near Eastern cultures** considered curses to be a literal means of *inflicting physical harm or death*, especially if the name of a deity is invoked.

B. **Assault on parents** - maybe it shouldn't be the death penalty today, **but** at least hear how important the 5th commandment is, to *honor your father and mother*.

VII. Slide 15a **5) HUMAN TRAFFICKING/STEALING PEOPLE (21:16) not steal #8**

A. Again, the **code of Hammurabi** also said, you couldn't steal *rich people*, **but** the *common* people, you could.

B. **Slide 15b** Is there an issue with stealing people **today**? Of course, *Modern day slavery* (neo-slavery) *is the 2nd largest, fastest growing, international crime in the world*.

1. An estimated **\$150 billion-a-year** global industry.

2. **It comes in the form of:** Forced labor, debt bondage, domestic servitude, forced child labor (children may legally engage in certain forms of work in our world, **but** forms of *slavery or slave-like practices* are prohibited), sex trafficking (force, fraud, coercion), & child sex trafficking (under 18).

VIII. Slide 16a **6) LIFE THREATENING INJURIES (21:18-36) not MURDER #6**

A. **FIGHT CLUB RULES** (28-25) *If you get in a fight ...*

B. **Concerning a Slave** (20,21) A slave/servant is not **property**, you're not allowed to take their life.

C. **Concerning a Pregnant Woman as an Innocent Bystander** (22-25) The men need to take care of this. If there's no death, there is *a fine*.

1. **Slide 16b** If **life is taken then** it is *life for life*. **Notice the fetus is a life!**

D. This might sound barbaric, **but** this was *an advance of justice* in near Eastern codes. Punishment is to *fit the crime*.

1. This *eye for an eye* became known as the *Lex Talionis*, *the law of retaliation*. This law was set up *so the Rich* couldn't get off, normally they could pay any fine, which was different than say, a day labor.
2. *Eye for an eye* (ayin tachat ayin). Muslim countries that use *Islamic Sharia law*, *such as Iran or Saudi Arabia*, apply the rule *literally*.
 - a) *Slide16c* Coretta Scott King (wife MLKjr) used this phrase in the context of racial violence, *"The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everyone blind."*
3. *Did God mean it literally, No!* In (vs.18,19) the man was **fined**, he wasn't told to *go wound that man that wounded him*. In (vs.26) *if a slave lost his eye* he *wasn't* told to *go take his masters eye out*.
 - a) [This is largely trying to describe that the penalty must *hurt the person* who ruined someone else's eye, *as much as* he would be hurt, *as if* his eye was taken]
 - b) It was up to the **judges** to figure out *how to apply these things*.
4. **Jesus** basically communicated, this rule wasn't set up for *ordinary relationships* it was to *guide judges* in assessing damages.
 - a) Christians should seek to imitate *God's own generosity and mercy in personal relationships*. *i.e.* on the cross Jesus asked, *father forgive them*, *not* please crucify them.

E. *Don't Abuse Your Servants* (26,27)

F. *Laws About Animals* (28-32) If your dog has a history of biting people, you're going to get in trouble.

G. *These are basically property laws* (33-36) why it's important to have a good *H.O.I. Home Owners Insurance* (property insurance that covers a private residence).

1. Whether to choose *Progressive, Allstate, or Nationwide*, the bible doesn't say :)

H. Keywords: Justice, Case law, altar, God, principles, simplicity, purity, locality, sacrifices, slavery, servant, Human Trafficking, liberation, freedom, homicide, code of Hammurabi, eye for an eye, lex talionis.