

Good Evening TAC,

We are embarking on an exciting journey together, one that invites us to re-engage with and rediscover the profound teachings of the Torah. Unfortunately, bad doctrine, superficial interpretations, and outright misunderstandings of Paul's letters have led many believers to diminish the importance and beauty of the Law. This is particularly regrettable as it poses a significant stumbling block in ministering to the Jewish people, who are the original recipients of Adonai's affection. Moreover, this error distorts our understanding of God and the construction of His Bible.

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You have come to understand that Exodus 20 is a love story that stylizes Adonai as the triumphant groom and Israel as the bride called into devotion. It's ironic that much of the Christian world views the giving of the Law with more similarity to a funeral than a wedding. This view is the product of the sinful nature and is inconsistent with the larger volume of Scripture that clearly says:

- **Psalm 19:7–10 (NIVUK84)**

7 The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul.

The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring for ever.

The ordinances of the LORD are sure
and altogether righteous.

10 They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the comb.

~

We have come to the revelation that the Ten Commandments serve as the foundational framework under which all other revelations are communicated. You would be well served in understanding the Ten Commandments as the table of contents or the Jewish umbrella(chopa) under which every other Law revealed to the nation fits neatly. They are easily seen in relation to how a groom wants to be treated by his bride and how he would want his wife to behave towards the world around her.

(READ SUMMARIES)

FOUR AND SIX

GOD {

1. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

These four commands illustrate the way that the bride would now relate to Adonai as the groom.

MAN {

5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's... (anything)

These six commands illustrate the way that the bride would reflect the greatness of Adonai as the groom to the rest of the world.

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Messiah affirmed this view of the Law on numerous occasions, but one of our favorites is in the gospel of Mark:

- **Mark 12:29–31 (NIVUK84)**

29 “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your

neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

You can see in Jesus' statement the first four commands of the Sinai Theophany summarized as loving God with all your heart and then the next 6 commands of the Sinai Theophany enumerated as loving your neighbor. It is important not to reduce the commands to generalized statements, but rather to understand all of the commands as aiming at these two principles. In short, ALL 613 commands are about love for God and love for your fellow man. None are irrelevant and any attempts at classifying the commands should properly account for the larger context of loving Adonai and loving your fellow man. This is the purpose of every commandment that proceeded from the mouth of God.

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We were blessed to see that at least one commentator held this view:

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ONLY RIGHT RESPONSE TO THE LAW

When the whole covenant is considered, preamble and all, then it becomes clear that the motivation for obeying the commands is the person and the work of the covenant God—the one who redeemed his people. **Obedience then becomes a response of devotion and adoration to the Redeemer who set them free. It becomes loyal service...** The point could be worded this way: God requires that his covenant people, whom he has redeemed, and to whom he has revealed himself, give their absolute allegiance and obedience to him. This means they will worship and serve him and safeguard the well being of each other.

Biblical Studies Press, The NET Bible First Edition Notes (Biblical Studies Press, 2006), Ex 20:21.

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After gaining this perspective, we moved on to Exodus 21, where we began to take note of the vast difference between the way that many Christians refer to the Law and the way that the Bible itself speaks of the Law. We have all been immersed in decades of preaching that portrayed the Law as a harsh task master; however, the Law, Prophets, and Writings consistently refer to the Torah as a "Covenant of Love".

(DO NOT READ)



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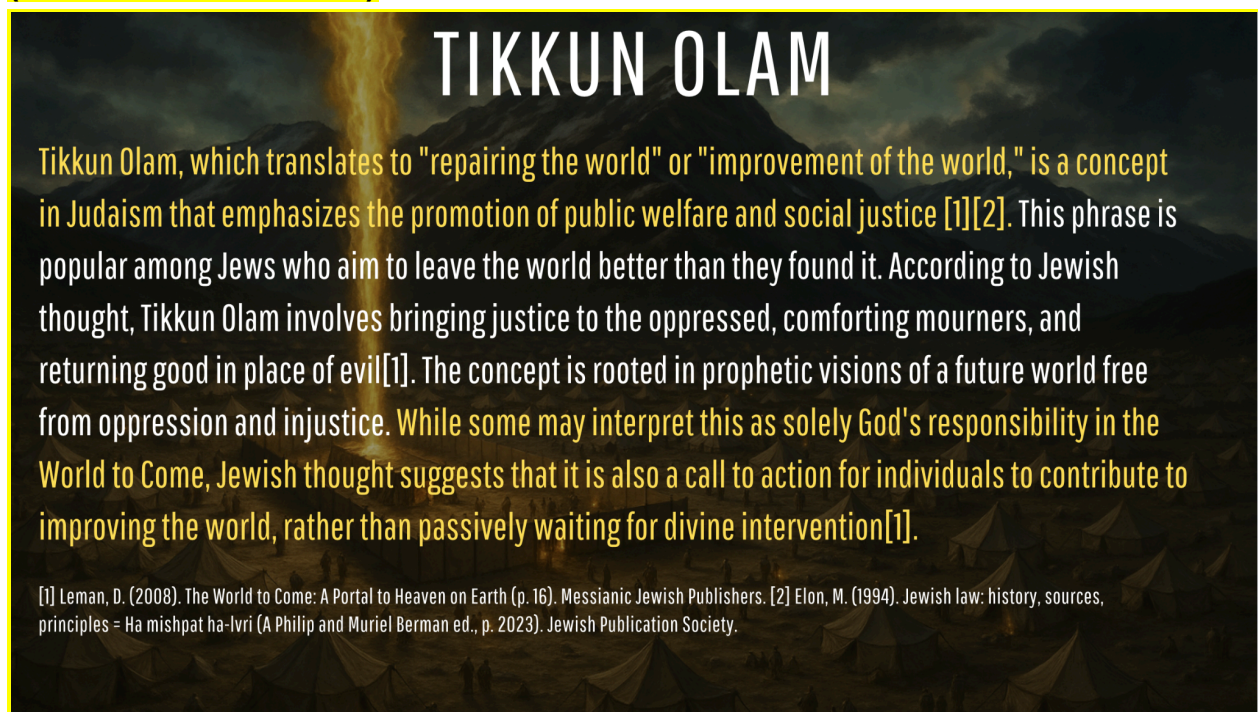
During that chapter, we tackled the difficulties that the error of eisegesis presents as one imposes their own ideas or biases onto the Older Testament. We noted the crucial differences between chattel slavery—where people are treated as property with no rights, as seen in the transatlantic slave trade—and slavery as described in the Bible. While chattel slavery was permanent, hereditary, and extremely dehumanizing, however, biblical slavery among the Israelites, was more akin to indentured servitude and employment with set terms, certain rights, and protections, including for health, family, and eventual freedom. The biblical term for "slave" (ebed) often referred to individuals who could be part of a household or even considered potential heirs, and the laws outlined in

Exodus granted them a measure of dignity and security unknown in chattel slavery. The net result was that we came to view Exodus 21 as a new kind of "slavery" that involved a bondservant who loved his master and had no desire to be set free from service to him.

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Last week in Exodus 22, we began to see that the Law not only contained life but that every commandment was itself life. We even began to see the intent of the Law as "repairing the world".

(READ HIGHLIGHTS)



TIKKUN OLAM

Tikkun Olam, which translates to "repairing the world" or "improvement of the world," is a concept in Judaism that emphasizes the promotion of public welfare and social justice [1][2]. This phrase is popular among Jews who aim to leave the world better than they found it. According to Jewish thought, Tikkun Olam involves bringing justice to the oppressed, comforting mourners, and returning good in place of evil[1]. The concept is rooted in prophetic visions of a future world free from oppression and injustice. While some may interpret this as solely God's responsibility in the World to Come, Jewish thought suggests that it is also a call to action for individuals to contribute to improving the world, rather than passively waiting for divine intervention[1].

[1] Leman, D. (2008). The World to Come: A Portal to Heaven on Earth (p. 16). Messianic Jewish Publishers. [2] Elon, M. (1994). Jewish law: history, sources, principles = Ha mishpat ha-Ivri (A Philip and Muriel Berman ed., p. 2023). Jewish Publication Society.

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So then, the Law communicated the character and heart of Adonai that his people were to reflect in the same way that a bride is to reflect her husband. This reflection on earth was meant to be the "repairing of the world" or Tikkun Olam. We noted that the Jewish culture took this so seriously that they formulated a prayer that is recited at the closing of every formal service held within their community.

(READ SLIDE)

THE ALEINU

It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to acclaim the greatness of the One who forms all creation. **For God did not make us like the nations of other lands, and did not make us the same as other families of the Earth.** God did not place us in the same situations as others, and **our destiny** is not the same as anyone else's. And we bend our knees, and bow down, and give thanks, before the Ruler, the Ruler of Rulers, the Holy One, Blessed is God. The One who spread out the heavens, and made the foundations of the Earth, and whose precious dwelling is in the heavens above, and whose powerful Presence is in the highest heights. Adonai is our God, there is none else. Our God is truth, and nothing else compares. As it is written in Your Torah: "And you shall know today, and take to heart, that Adonai is the only God, in the heavens above and on Earth below. There is no other." Therefore we put our hope in You, Adonai our God, to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth, and to completely cut off all false gods; **to repair the world**, Your holy empire. And for all living flesh to call Your name, and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You. May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know that to You **every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty**. Before You, Adonai, our God, may all bow down, and give honor to Your precious name, and may all **take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule**. And may You reign over them soon and forever and always. Because all rule is Yours alone, and You will rule in honor forever and ever. As it is written in Your Torah: "Adonai will reign forever and ever." And it is said: "Adonai will be Ruler over the whole Earth, and on that day, God will be One, and God's name will be One."

Eisenberg, Ronald L. The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions. PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2004;

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There is much to be said about this beautiful prayer. For instance, Philippians 2 echoes the sentiment of "to you every knee must bow and every tongue swear loyalty." Similarly, Jesus' words in Matthew 11 resonate with the phrase, "take upon themselves the yoke of your rule."

However, the most significant concept we wish to highlight is "Pikuach Nefesh," an essential principle derived from the Law. This principle, which guides the practical application and interpretation known as "Halakah," emphasizes the preservation of human life above all else. Let's refresh our understanding by reviewing a slide on this topic.

(READ SLIDE)

PRESERVATION OF LIFE

Pikuach Nefesh (י) is a fundamental Jewish principle that **prioritizes the preservation of human life above all other religious obligations**[1][2]. This concept, derived from Leviticus 19:16, permits the violation of most Jewish laws, including Sabbath restrictions, to save a life[1]. The Talmud justifies this by arguing that if circumcision, which affects only one part of the body, can suspend Sabbath laws, then saving an entire life certainly takes precedence[1]. Pikuach Nefesh applies to both immediate threats and potentially life threatening conditions[1]. It requires swift action without seeking prior permission, such as breaking a door to save a trapped infant or extinguishing a fire on the Sabbath[1]. This principle extends to providing necessary medical treatment, allowing seriously ill individuals to eat on fast days like Yom Kippur, and even permitting the consumption of non-kosher food if required for recovery[1][2].

[1] Eisenberg, R. L. (2004). The JPS guide to Jewish traditions (1st ed., p. 548). The Jewish Publication Society. [2] Eisenberg, J., & Scolnic, E., Jewish Publication Society. (2001). In The JPS dictionary of Jewish words (p. 126). Jewish Publication Society. [3] Young, B. H. (2012). The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation (p. 112). Baker Academic.

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The Law, which aimed at repairing the world and preserving life, placed significant emphasis on the concept of restitution after a damaging event, as detailed in Exodus 22. It went beyond a simple one-for-one system of repayment for wrongs. Instead, the Law sought to improve the situation, surpassing the original state before the wrongdoing occurred. This approach was not merely about balancing an equation; it was about **enhancing and bettering the circumstances**. The word that described this kind of restitution in Exodus 22 was:

(READ SLIDE)

BUILD BACK BETTER

shalam (7999, שָׁלַם), "to finish, complete, repay, reward." The Hebrew root denotes **perfection** in the sense that a condition or action is "complete." This concept emerges when a concrete object is described. When sufficient building materials were at hand and workmen had enough time to apply them, "the wall [of Jerusalem] was finished" at the time of Nehemiah (Neh. 6:15). However, this Hebrew root is also found in words with so many nuances and applications that at times its original and basic intent is all but obscured. In the NASB, for example, shalam is represented with such words as: "**fulfill, make up, restore, pay, repay, full, whole, wholly, entire, without harm, friendly, peaceably, to be at peace, make peace, safe, reward, retribution, restitution, recompense, vengeance, bribe, peace offering.**"

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). In Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 1, p. 44). T. Nelson.

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The fundamental principle conveyed in the Law regarding restitution is to go beyond merely addressing the damage caused by sin. It emphasizes creating a sense of "shalom" by improving the world, even after sin has occurred. This was dramatically illustrated in the first 4 verses of Exodus 22:

(READ SLIDE)



EXODUS 22 & THE PRINCIPLE OF RESTITUTION

- Exodus 22:4 - animal is stolen and found alive = 200% restitution
- Exodus 22:1 - sheep is stolen & slaughtered/sold = 400% restitution
- Exodus 22:1 - ox is stolen & slaughtered/sold = 500% restitution

As we begin our exploration into Exodus 23, the themes we've explored will continue to build upon each other. Our goal in revisiting these topics is to help you maintain the continuity of themes throughout our weeks of study. Exodus 20 depicted a wedding story, Exodus 21 illustrated the covenant of love, and Exodus 22 taught us how to preserve life, repair the world, and make restitution that not only addressed sinful events but also improved the outcomes beyond their original state. One of the strongest themes that you will notice in Exodus 23 is the "reversal of the entropy that results from sin".

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Tonight, as we prepare to read the chapter, we are going to depart from our traditional prayer in Psalm 119:18, which says, "*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law,*" because we can see that prayer is already being answered and you have had your eyes opened. Instead, we are going to pray according to:

- **Psalm 119:174–175 (NIVUK84)**
174 I long for your salvation, O LORD,
and your law is my delight.
175 Let me live that I may praise you,

and may your laws sustain me.

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Each of us are waiting for the final redemption of our bodies and the total restoration of the world. In short, we are waiting and longing for salvation. In the interim between the hope of salvation and its fulfillment, we are learning to delight in the Law that reveals Adonai's character and intentions to the world all around us. These laws refresh and sustain us while we endeavor to repair the world and reverse the process of sin. In Yeshua, we will go way beyond just reversing the process of sin and we will become, along with Israel, glorified sons of God that bring about a world free from sin, pain, mourning, and death. A world where all hostility is gone and even the animal kingdom is in harmony and shalom.

Pray & Read

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Exodus 23:1–33 (NIVUK84)

23 “Do not **spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness.**

This command may seem simple at first, but upon closer examination, it reveals a deeper complexity that is not immediately apparent. Take a look at this next slide where you will see the Hebrew word that is being translated as "Spread".

(DO NOT READ)

NASA נָשָׂא

XU (ns'), VB. carry; lift, lift up; raise; bring, take or take away; raise high; exalt; maintain; have a longing for.

Brannan, R., ed. (2020). In Lexham Research Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible. Lexham Press.

The Hebrew word "Nasa" translates to "spread" and conveys the idea of lifting up, raising, or carrying something. In this verse, the concept is that a false report about a fellow Israelite has taken root among their brothers, and as a result, the report is now being carried or "lifted up." This notion becomes even more striking when considering how the LXX translates this verse.

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(READ SLIDE)

DON'T SPREAD IT

Exodus 23:1 (LES2) LXX:

23" "You shall not **accept** a pointless report; you shall not agree with the person in the wrong and become an unjust witness.

Exodus 23:1 (Brenton)

Thou shalt n (1) Thou shalt not **receive** a vain report: thou shalt not agree with the unjust man to become an unjust witness.

The Hebrew text emphasizes the act of "lifting" a false report, while the Greek text focuses on the acceptance of slander. Both perspectives are relevant to this passage, and they converge in the command. For a false report to spread within the community, it must first be accepted or received by an individual or a group. Thus, its not only speaking the slander that is egregious in Adonai's sight, but also the listening to slander!

To underscore the gravity of this issue, let's examine another passage in the Torah that reiterates this principle with additional details.

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- **Leviticus 19:16 (NIVUK84)**

16 " 'Do not go about spreading slander among your people.

" '**Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life.** I am the LORD.

The verse equates the prohibition against spreading slander with endangering a neighbor's life. According to the Torah, slander involves

sharing harmful or destructive information about a person's name, character, or reputation without proof of the accusation or any intention of restoring what is being accused. This applies to both receiving and spreading the slander.

The Torah emphasizes the preservation of life, and this chapter focuses on reversing the entropy caused by sin. Since Genesis 4, sin has led humanity to harbor hatred and violence against one another. This command aims to protect life by discouraging the reception of or transmission of any attempt to harm a fellow servant of God with words. Let continue in Leviticus with verse 17.

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- **Leviticus 19:17-18 (NIVUK84)**

17 “ **Do not hate your brother in your heart.** Rebuke your neighbor frankly so that you will not share in his guilt.

18 “ **Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people,** but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

The verses we just read show a clear progression: Verse 16 equates slander with endangering someone's life, while Verse 17 addresses the underlying motive, which is hatred, as seen in Genesis 4. The solution offered in Verse 17 is to avoid accepting or spreading reports about a fellow servant of God. Instead, aim to improve the brother's situation by speaking to him directly. Verse 18 continues this progression by warning against holding grudges or seeking revenge, which can result from unresolved hatred among God's family members.

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The Torah emphasizes the importance of preserving life in all its forms, including through our speech. This passage highlights the profound impact our words can have, revealing that they are not merely empty sounds but powerful tools that can spread hatred, endanger lives, and foster vengeful grudges.

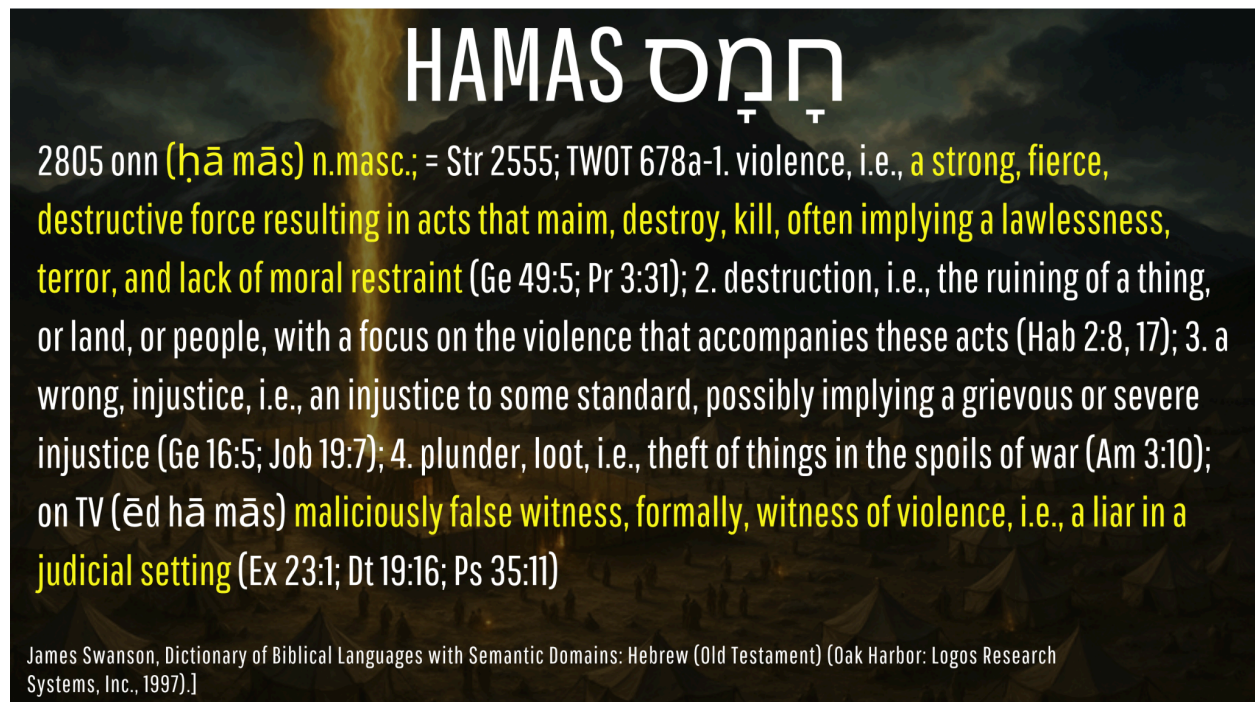
With that said, let's re-read verse 1 again so that we can comment on the last part of the verse:

- **Exodus 23:1** “Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness.

On this next slide, let's take a look at the Hebrew word that is translated as "malicious".

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(Read highlighted portions).



HAMAS חָמָס

2805 onn (חָמָס) n.masc.; = Str 2555; TWOT 678a-1. violence, i.e., a strong, fierce, destructive force resulting in acts that maim, destroy, kill, often implying a lawlessness, terror, and lack of moral restraint (Ge 49:5; Pr 3:31); 2. destruction, i.e., the ruining of a thing, or land, or people, with a focus on the violence that accompanies these acts (Hab 2:8, 17); 3. a wrong, injustice, i.e., an injustice to some standard, possibly implying a grievous or severe injustice (Ge 16:5; Job 19:7); 4. plunder, loot, i.e., theft of things in the spoils of war (Am 3:10); on TV (עֵד חָמָס) maliciously false witness, formally, witness of violence, i.e., a liar in a judicial setting (Ex 23:1; Dt 19:16; Ps 35:11)

James Swanson, Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).]

The Hebrew word "Hamas" translates to "malicious." In fact, we have discussed this word before, as it also describes the very manner in which the World became so full of sin that a global flood to destroy almost all life on the planet was the only way right response.

- **Genesis 6:13 (NIV)**

¹³ So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

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The word violence is *hamas*. So, when a false report is accepted and begins to spread, it leads to **violent** or **destructive** consequences, akin to physical harm or the destruction of the victim's reputation. The phrase "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me" is well-intentioned but fundamentally untrue. The book of James illustrates that the tongue has the power to steer a person like a rudder steers a ship and can cause immense destruction, much like a small spark can ignite a forest fire. Likewise, Proverbs states our words even hold the power to bring life or death!

- **Proverbs 18:21 (NIV)**

21 The tongue has the power of life and death,
and those who love it will eat its fruit.

This isn't merely a metaphor; it underscores the real and tangible violence that can be perpetrated through our speech to others.

- **Genesis 1:27 (NIVUK84)**

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

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The ultimate goal of vicious and malicious slander is rooted in more than personal animosity towards an individual or their actions. Since humanity is created in the image of God, such slander constitutes an attack on that divine image. This behavior attempts to discredit God while elevating ourselves to a position of superiority over others made in His image. Often, we engage in this form of attack to obscure our own need to be further transformed into God's likeness. With this in mind, slander should be seen as an act of violence towards our fellow man because we are attempting to avoid the continued transformation that is needed in our own lives. Cain may have used an object to kill Abel, we tend to use words.

- **Exodus 20:7 (NIVUK84)**

7 “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

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Since humanity is created in God's image, any attempt to slander or spread harmful violence toward another person through our words is a serious offense to God. God's name represents His body of work, attributes, and character, and the same applies to humans who bear His image. Because God's name is upon His people, it is crucial to reconsider before accepting, promoting, or spreading violent and destructive speech about another person's character, work, or attributes.

Take a look at the next verse because this should give you some very practical insight regarding what constitutes slander.

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- **Deuteronomy 19:15 (NIVUK84)**

15 One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any **crime** or **offence** he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Slander involves making accusations that cannot be substantiated without the testimony of at least two witnesses. A malicious witness is someone who condemns another in their heart and/or words without evidence, spreading the accusation without any intention of improving the situation or leaving it better than before.

We want to give you a few passages on this topic in the Newer Testament before we move on... As you look at this slide, pay attention to who is being addressed...

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(READ SLIDE)

DO NOT SLANDER

1 Timothy 3:11 (NIVUK84) 11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, **not malicious talkers** but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

2 Timothy 3:1-3 (NIVUK84) 3 But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. 2 People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 without love, unforgiving, **slanderous**, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

Titus 2:3 (NIVUK84) 3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, **not to be slanderers** or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.

1 Peter 2:1 (NIVUK84) 2 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and **slander of every kind**

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We are going to need to move on, but before we do, let's finish this topic with one more reference from the Newer Testament.

- **Mark 14:55–59 (NIVUK84)**

55 The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, **but they did not find any**. 56 **Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.**

57 Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him:

58 “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.’ ” 59 **Yet even then their testimony did not agree.**

In this particular generation, those who were entrusted with the Law and dedicated their lives to upholding it, ultimately condemned the living embodiment of the Torah to death. The key lies in verse 55, revealing their evil, unrepentant hearts that sought an opportunity to kill him. Their hatred for the righteous example of the Law led them to violate every principle meant to preserve life and eradicate sin, culminating in the execution of

Jesus. This hatred bred slander, which in turn led to false testimony, resulting in the physical death of the Law's embodiment.

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As we move to verse 2, our suggestion is to look twice at your own Nabal traits before commenting even once on someone else's. The Torah lays out the foundational framework that aims to preserve life and it tells us how to properly reflect Adonai and bring about the reversal of the effects of sin. This process involves not speaking maliciously, but also includes not receiving malicious speech from others. Perhaps we would all be benefited by heeding the Apostle Peter's advice:

- **1 Peter 4:11 (NIV)**

¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God.

2 “Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, 3 and do not show favoritism to a poor man in his lawsuit.

~

Remember that the aim of what we are reading is the reversal of the entropy in the community of God that is a result of sin. We have taught on this concept before, so we will not teach on it in detail, but the Hebrew word for "lawsuit" in this passage is the word "riv," which can be any kind of legal dispute or quarrel.

Drawing from the book of James, we can understand that these quarrels are a result of covetous desires that are warring within the People of God and this Law is given to ensure that when judgments are made in a dispute, they are centered around justice and righteousness and not favoritism.

For starters, when there is a quarrel or a dispute, you are commanded not to side with a wrongful crowd due to "peer pressure" or fear. Take a look at this slide:

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(Read top and bottom passages only).

DON'T FOLLOW THE CROWD....

1 Samuel 15:24 (ESV)

24 Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice.

Proverbs 1:10-15 | Matthew 27:24-25 | Revelation 9:20 | Romans 1:32 | Galatians 2:11-13

HEAR FROM HEAVEN

Deuteronomy 4:36 (ESV)

36 Out of heaven he let you hear his voice, that he might discipline you. And on earth he let you see his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire.

1 Kings 8:30-32 | Nehemiah 9:13 | Matthew 17:5 | Revelation 10:4 | 2 Peter 1:16-19

When you follow the guidance you receive from above, you stand strong even if you're surrounded by those who distort justice. Hearing God's voice and standing firm on His word empowers you to face any challenge with confidence. The second part of verse 2 makes this command even more interesting...

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Not only are you to avoid siding with a crowd, but you are also to prevent yourself from showing any kind of favoritism to a "poor man" based on his lowly state!

Showing favoritism to someone you perceive as disadvantaged implies that you should treat them as a victim, as if God isn't as good to them as He is to you, making God himself unjust. This mindset suggests that you need to step in to compensate for the perceived injustices in their life. This would cause justice to be perverted and a victimization to occur in the fellow man by failing to hold him to righteous actions, irrespective of his circumstances.

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Ironically, we do this with ourselves by positioning ourselves as the poor man and giving ourselves excuses for sinful behavior.

We do this with our wives (positioning them as the poor man) when we accept that there is a reason why unrighteous behavior is showing up in them, and fail to call them to righteous actions

We do this with our children (positioning them as the poor man), when we side with their weakness and fail to uphold the requirement for righteous actions.

The point of verses 2-3 is that justice and righteousness should not be perverted for the sake of the majority nor the sake of the minority. Justice and righteousness should be upheld in every situation because right judgment based on the Law is the only way to preserve life while reversing the effects of sin in the community of the righteous. If favoritism gets in the way in any circumstance, then sin is allowed to continue to destroy the life that God intended to abound in any circumstance!

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Before we conclude this verse, let's explore a divinely inspired commentary that offers some practical applications.

- **James 2:8-13 (NIVUK84)**

8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right.

9 **But if you show favoritism**, you sin and are convicted by the law as law-breakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a law-breaker.

12 **Speak and act** as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,

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To start with, it could not be any more obvious that James is reflecting and commenting on the Torah. He refers to it as the "royal law" and affirms that it brings you freedom. Showing favoritism is subverting the aim of the Torah and allowing sin to reign in the life of the community. Your responsibility as a man or woman of God is to see the Law that gives freedom abound in every situation. You are not allowed to sit silently and avoid having to act in a scenario because you are not sure what to do or the task has become difficult. Silence is another kind of favoritism: favoritism for your self-preservation. Your role as an agent of God is to speak and act in accordance with the Word of God so that the effects of sin are reversed and life increases!

4 “If you come across your enemy’s ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him. 5 If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help him with it.

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As we dive into these verses, it's important to remember that we are exploring the divine revelation that shaped the foundation of a nation. It's truly remarkable that Adonai included a provision in the Torah and the constitution of Israel for the care of an animal burdened by a heavy load. This raises the question: is it solely the animal that Adonai is concerned about?

(READ SLIDE)

REVERSAL OF ANIMOSITY

Rabbi Alexandri explained it like this:

Two mules were being led along a road by two men who despised each other. Suddenly, one of the mules collapsed under its load. As the second man passed by, he saw the other man's mule lying on the ground and thought to himself, "Isn't it written in the law: 'If you see the donkey of someone who hates you lying under its burden, you must not walk away. You must help him lift it' (Exodus 23:5)?" So what did he do? He turned back to help the other man reload the mule and walked with him along the road. While they worked together, he began to speak to the owner of the fallen mule, saying, "Let's loosen it a bit here, let's tighten it there," and together they reloaded the animal. As a result, peace was made between them. The man whose mule had fallen said to himself, "I can't believe he hates me—look how concerned he was when he saw me and my mule in distress." Eventually, they entered an inn, shared a meal and drinks, and grew deeply attached to one another.

Midrash Tanchuma, Mishpatim 1

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In the introduction tonight, we began by telling you that the Law displays the behavior that Adonai wants reflected in the actions of his bride. These divine principles begin the process of reversing the effects of sin on earth. Adonai desires the restoration of all things and that process starts with the bride properly reflecting the groom.

One of the many benefits to learning these things is that you will begin to understand the actions of Jesus and the writings of the Newer Testament in greater clarity. Remember, Jesus is the living-breathing-walking Torah. Consider this popular story:

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- **Luke 10:30–33 (NIVUK84)**

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other

side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

The Torah commanded concern for an animal that had fallen under a heavy load. How much more is this true of a human being who has fallen under a heavy load? In every story, every action, and every teaching, Jesus is commenting on and reflecting the heart of Adonai displayed in the Torah.

~

This phenomenon is not limited to Jesus. When the Apostle Paul is speaking of the restoration of a man burdened under the weight of his own sin, he also draws from this passage:

- **Galatians 6:1–2 (ESV)**

6 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 **Bear one another's burdens**, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Just in case you are missing this, the Torah expressed concern about a fallen animal. Jesus applied the same principle with even greater veracity to a man fallen physically. Then Paul applied it to a man's spiritual state. In every way, the Torah is life and there is life in every facet of the Torah.

~

The patterns in Jesus' actions are deeply intertwined with those compelled by the Torah. In the verses we've been discussing, we see reconciliation between people prompted by concern for an animal. The truth is that the Torah aims for the reconciliation of all things, and Jesus, as the living Torah, is bringing about this universal reconciliation. While numerous examples could be cited, we'll whet your appetite with just one slide before moving on for the sake of time.

(READ SLIDE)

JESUS, ADAM, & THE REVERSAL

There is a whole field of scholarship dedicated to studying how Christ is portrayed as a new Adam or a new Son of Man. Mark 1:12-13: "Immediately the Spirit cast out into the wilderness. And He was in the wilderness forty days being tested by the Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him." The phrase "cast out" (Grk. εκβαλλω) is first used in the Old Testament account of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden of Eden (Gen 3:24). Both of these stories are meant to be analogous to each other. Jesus is in the wilderness (garden) with the wild animals (Adam and Eve) in the presence of the angels (cherubim and cosmic mountain). Whereas Adam failed the temptation in the garden and was cast out, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, a setting associated with Israel's testing and failure. Unlike Adam, Jesus does not fail the test, and in both stories of Adam and Jesus "expulsion" the same Greek word ekballo is employed. In the wilderness, Jesus is with the wild animals, but remains unharmed, which is supposed to strike the reader as unusual. Jesus' peaceful coexistence with the wild animals signifies his authority over them and recalls Adam's original dominion over the animals in the garden. Like Adam, Jesus has been granted the worldwide dominion, becoming the instrument of God's dominion over the world.

Brandon Crowe, *The Last Adam: A Theology of the Obedient Life of Jesus in the Gospels*, 24

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Admittedly, we just threw a lot at you and it warrants more time and study. So let us help you with the connection. Adam transgressed God's Torah and was driven out of the Garden. Jesus, in the Gospel of Mark, is said to be "driven", not "led", into the wilderness, intentionally utilizing the same Greek wording as in the Genesis event. The point is that the 1st Adam transgressed Torah and brought death and hostility to even the animal kingdom, while Jesus embodied the Torah and was among the wild animals in harmony with them. A more thorough examination of this topic is not within the scope of our study tonight, but the Torah shows concern for the restoration of both animals and men... the Prophets will go on to describe the world to come as one where former predators and prey live in harmony with each other and mankind. This feat is only achieved when the earth is said to be full of the knowledge of the LORD, i.e. the Torah.

~

6 "Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. 7 Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty.

It's heartening to consider that, despite the frequent miscarriages of justice in our country, divine justice remains unwavering. Even if a high-profile lawyer like Johnny Cochran famously argues, "If the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit," leading to O.J. Simpson's acquittal, true accountability is inevitable. According to the Torah, God will ultimately hold the guilty accountable, ensuring that no one truly escapes justice.

~

You may remember that earlier we were told to "not show partiality" to a poor person. Now we are also being told not to "deny justice to" the poor. These passages were so deeply ingrained in James "the brother of Jesus" that they form the bulk of his comments in the 2nd chapter of his epistle:

- **James 2:1–9 (ESV)**

1 My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with **evil** thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? 8 **If you really fulfill the royal law** according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

~

We have more to cover on this subject, but again, you can see that James is relying upon and commenting upon the Torah in his address to believers. Most believers are probably unaware that the second chapter of Jacob, or

James' epistle, is commentary on our chapter in Exodus tonight! This would have been top of mind for the Jewish readers of his day, and second nature to them, that adherence to the Torah reverses the effects of sin in the world and makes way for the new creation that Adonai is building on earth. As he contemplates Exodus 23, he states that those who judge with partiality do so with evil thoughts. Be careful not to soften your perception of partiality, according to Jacob and the royal law, partiality is evil!

8 “Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous.

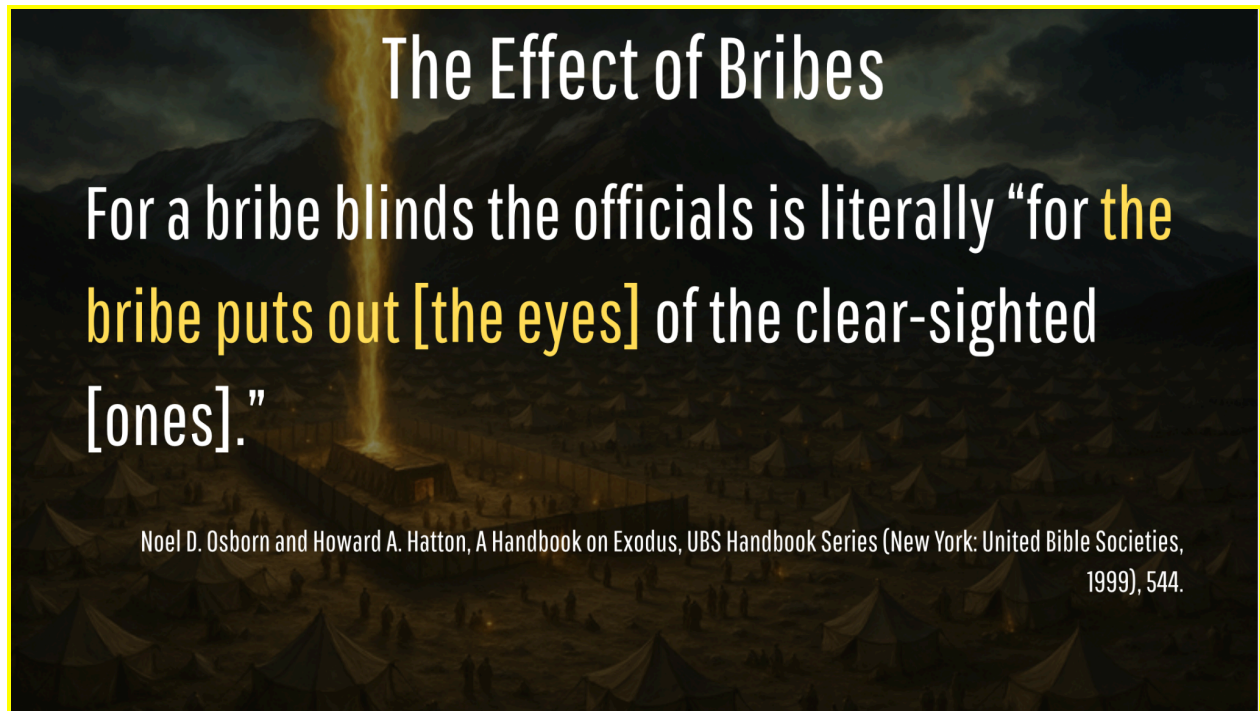
As we examine this passage, verse 8 highlights the seriousness of refusing a bribe. We've already seen this warning once before earlier in the book of Exodus.

- **Exodus 18:21 (ESV)**

21 Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe,

In Exodus 18 Jethro instructed Moses that judges whom he should appoint must hate a bribe. In our passage tonight, the prohibition against taking bribes is expanded—not just applying to judges, but to the general population as well. The reason given is that bribes blind and subvert righteousness. Observe what the UBS states:

(Read Slide)



Notice that the Hebrew states that bribes literally will put out the eyes of those who see! This life giving theme is not precluded to the book of Exodus alone, but is found in every section of the Tanak.

(Read Slide)

Bribes in the Tanak

Deut 10:17	God takes no bribes
Deut 27:25	Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe
1 Sam 8:3	Samuel's sons rebuked for taking bribes
Micah 7:3	Judges accepting bribes and perverting justice
2 Chron 19:7	God's warning to judges not to accept bribes or show partiality
Ps 15:5	Those who seek to dwell on God's mountain, must refuse bribes
Prov 15:27	Hating a bribe will lead to life
Prov 17:23	The wicked accept bribes in secret
Ecc 7:7	Bribes corrupt the heart

As you can see, the principle of refusing bribes becomes replete throughout the Law, prophets, and writings. God does not take bribes, priests are rebuked for it, leaders are condemned, and multiple explicit warnings are repeated.

Let's take a closer look at one of the verses from this slide.

- **Ecclesiastes 7:7 NIV1984**

Extortion turns a wise man into a fool, and a **bribe corrupts the heart.**

A bribe not only perverts justice given to others, but also corrupts the heart of the one receiving the bribe! You must take personal care not to be swayed by a bribe for your own sake and the sake of others.

Although you may not think you are in the practice of taking bribes think about whether or not you have ever been offered a promotion, bonus or even more favor with a superior at work in exchange for dishonest or unethical work.

The consequence and warning against bribes is shown well in the story of Balaam. Balak attempts to bribe Balaam to curse Israel. While he initially refuses, he is eventually swayed by the allure of dishonest gain. Apostle Peter comments on it in his epistle.

- **2 Peter 2:15 (ESV)**

¹⁵ Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing

Again, the scripture is consistent from cover to cover in warning the people of God against gaining personally from any act or service with evil or selfish intentions. We want to note that to many this may not always be obvious in our current environment. But imagine for a moment that your family asks you not to bring up the gospel, Israel, or some other aspect of the Word in an effort to keep peace at a family function and to maintain favor amongst family members. Is that really any different?

Before we move on we want to address two more verses on this topic from the New Testament.

- **Titus 1:7 (NIV)**

⁷ Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.

When describing the requirements for overseers, Paul states that they must not be "pursuing dishonest gain". Although Paul does not explicitly mention bribes, he does address the heart posture behind taking a bribe—dishonest gain. This principle he no doubt learned from passages like the one we are discussing tonight in Exodus.

- **John 12:42–43 (NIV)**

⁴² Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved human praise more than praise from God.

John's epistle recounts the Pharisees of Jesus' day actually believed Jesus, yet remained silent for the sake of personal gain. This is what it looks like to be bribed by selfish ambition to bend the knee on personal convictions and the truth. For us, we must always hold in our hearts the praise of God and righteousness higher than all else in this life.

9 “Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know how it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt.

You probably catch the import of these verses, but the NIV translation obscures something that we want to point out. Let's read these two verses in the ESV so that we can draw your attention to it:

- **Exodus 23:8–9 (ESV)**

8 And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

9 “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the **heart of a sojourner**, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

These verses not only address actions such as accepting bribes and oppression, but they also deal with the condition of the heart. While most legal systems focus solely on actions, the Torah goes further by judging the attitudes and intentions behind those actions that concern your own heart. Perhaps this is why the writer of Hebrews said this in chapter 4:

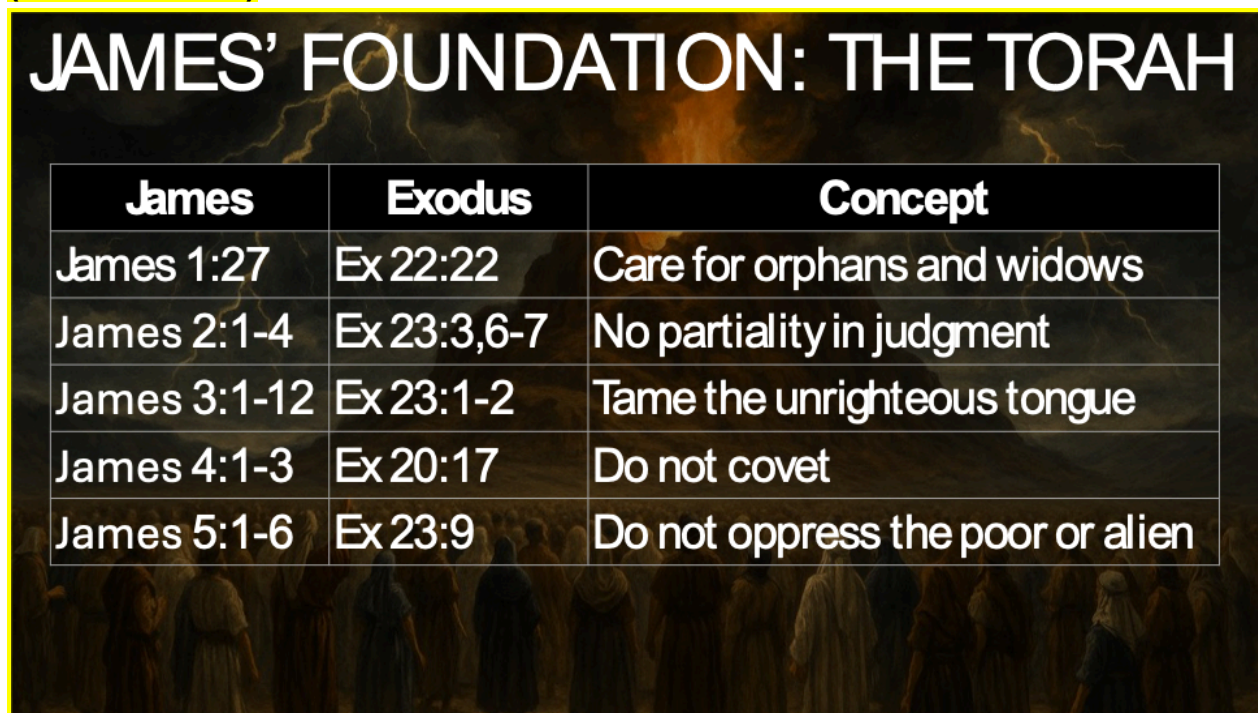
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- **Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)**

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Our point is that the Torah is living and active! The Law that we are studying is so prominent in the Newer Testament that it could be said that the Newer Testament is Torah-centric. Consider a brief overview of the chapters in James:

(READ SLIDE)



The slide features a dark, dramatic background with a stormy sky and silhouettes of people in the foreground. The title 'JAMES' FOUNDATION: THE TORAH' is prominently displayed at the top in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. Below the title is a table with three columns: 'James', 'Exodus', and 'Concept'. The table contains five rows of data, each linking a specific verse in James to a corresponding verse in Exodus and a theological concept.

James	Exodus	Concept
James 1:27	Ex 22:22	Care for orphans and widows
James 2:1-4	Ex 23:3,6-7	No partiality in judgment
James 3:1-12	Ex 23:1-2	Tame the unrighteous tongue
James 4:1-3	Ex 20:17	Do not covet
James 5:1-6	Ex 23:9	Do not oppress the poor or alien

~

It is astonishing that so many scholars, preachers, and commentators have overlooked this for years, likely due to misguided dispensational thinking that categorized the Bible into more and less relevant sections. However, it is evident that the Torah serves as the foundation for all revelation in the Newer Testament. Understanding that the Torah is life is a great beginning but learning to see life in every commandment is better still.

10 “For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, 11 but during the seventh year let the land lie unploughed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what they leave. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove. 12 “Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household, and the alien as well, may be refreshed.

For many, the inclusion of verses 10-12 may seem to be disjointed or disconnected from the preceding verses and the content of chapters 20-23 as a whole, since we have been primarily dealing with various laws that concern slavery, restitution, and social justice.

~

While verses 10-12 might initially seem like a surprising shift in the chapter, they are deeply intertwined with the themes we've explored so far. Exodus 20 depicted a wedding story, Exodus 21 illustrated the covenant of love, and Exodus 22 taught us how to preserve life, repair the world, and make restitution that not only addressed sinful events but also improved the outcomes beyond their original state. Exodus 23 primarily deals with reversing the entropy caused by sin.

(DO NOT READ)



Pikuach Nefesh: prioritizing the preservation of human life above all other commands

Shalam: bringing back to a more advantageous state than before—wholeness

Tekkun Olam : repairing the world

LCM FOUNDATIONS; Exodus 22.

Our discussions have emphasized the Law's foundation in principles such as "Pikuach Nefesh," which focuses on the preservation of life, "Shalam," which signifies wholeness, and "Tikkun Olam," meaning the repair of the world. Additionally, this is not the first time the Sabbath is mentioned in the Torah, let alone in the book of Exodus, so we must ask ourselves why the Sabbath is being mentioned again in this particular section.

~

Because we have been dealing with foundational principles such as perfection, wholeness, restitution, preserving life, repairing the world, and the reversal of entropic sin, it can be understood that the mention of the Sabbath here is hinting at a much larger principle than we have previously noticed.

To help you grasp this, take note of the fact that the first time that the Sabbath is mentioned in the Bible, it is described as a day of rest for God himself, being that he ceased from his work in creating.

In Exodus 16 & 20, we learn that the 7th day is intended to be a day of rest for man so that he can rest from his work and image God in what he does.

Now, in Exodus 23, the Sabbath is mentioned in a third and unique way, revealing other facets of this divine principle...

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Not only is the principle of 1 in 7 intended to be a day that was set apart by God for man, but we are seeing that the Sabbath rest was also intended for the **land** and the **animals** as well!

It also cannot be missed that this iteration of the command also includes a peculiar provision for the poor among the people of God!

To help you understand why this is so astonishing, we want to show you what the Hebrew says that the Sabbath is intended to produce in the land, animals and the poor that are mentioned. The end of the section in verse 12 outlined the ultimate goal of this command and it is "so that they may be **refreshed**". Take a look at this next slide.

(DO NOT READ)

"Refreshed"

<p>וַיִּנְפֹּשׁ</p> <p>and · (he they) may be refreshed and · donkey · your</p> <p>C · Vdw3MS</p>	<p>וְחִמְרְךָ</p> <p>C · NC-SC · RS2MS</p>
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nepesh (" ,5315 ,נֶפֶשׁsoul; self; life; person; heart." This is a very common term in both ancient and modern Semitic languages. It occurs over 780 times in the Old Testament and is evenly distributed in all periods of the text with a particularly high frequency in poetic passages...

The noun refers to the **essence of life**, the act of breathing, taking breath. However, from that concrete concept, a number of more abstract meanings were developed. In its primary sense the noun appears in its first occurrence in Gen. 1:20: "**the moving creature that hath life**," and in its second occurrence in Gen. 2:7: "living soul."

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). In Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 1, p. 237). T. Nelson.

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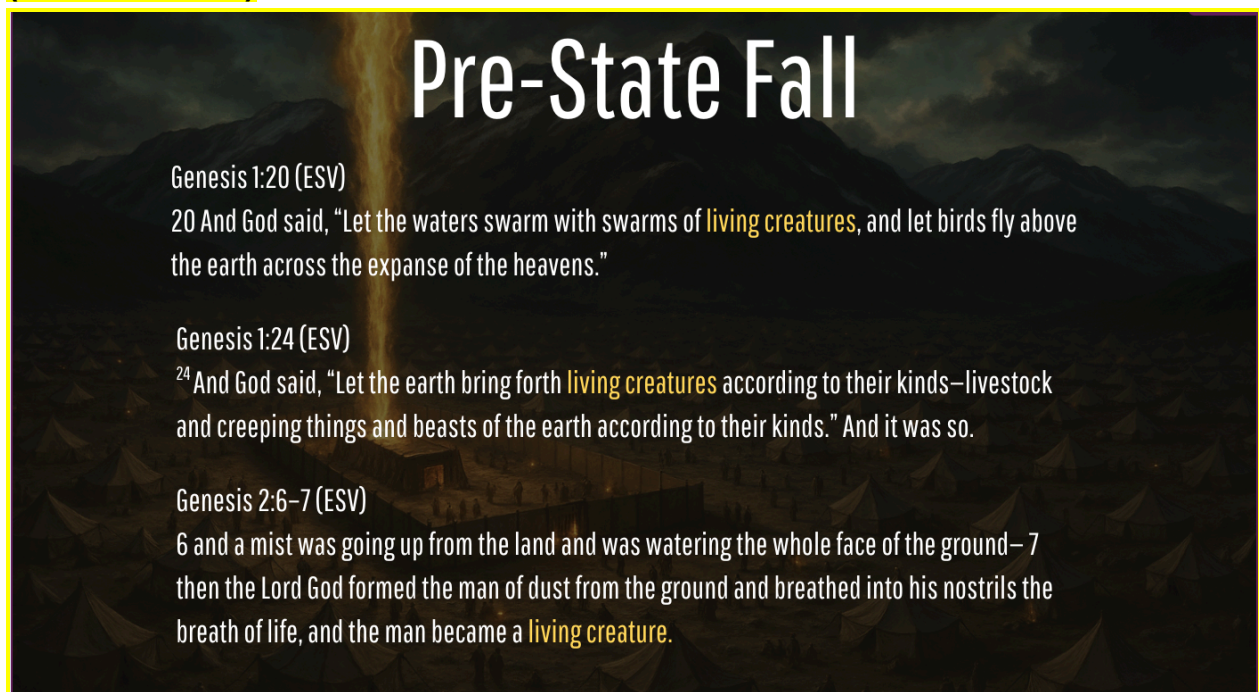
The word in Exodus 23:12 for "refreshed" is the word "nephesh". This word in Hebrew means soul, life, being, living, and is even translated as "spirit" in other places in the Bible.

So when Exodus 23:12 says that the Sabbath is given so that God's creation may be refreshed, the Hebrew is hinting at more than just a day where naps occur, it is hinting at the re-spiriting of his creation that causes it to be revived, empowered, and in union with the creator. Moreover, this refreshing seems to apply to mankind, the animal kingdom, and even the land itself.

On this next slide, we want you to take a look at the word "nephesh" in the creation account.

~

(READ SLIDE)



Pre-State Fall

Genesis 1:20 (ESV)
20 And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of **living creatures**, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens."

Genesis 1:24 (ESV)
²⁴ And God said, "Let the earth bring forth **living creatures** according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so.

Genesis 2:6–7 (ESV)
6 and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— 7 then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a **living creature**.

In the creation, God made the animals and human beings through the power of his word and they are all said to be "living creatures" or in Hebrew "nephesh chayah," and God saw all that he created and said "it was good", meaning that it was whole, pleasing, and in order. You should also

remember that in regard to man, God breathed into him the breath of life and the result is that he became a "living being".

~

With this in mind, it should not be hard to see in Exodus 23:12 that the command for Israel to take a sabbath day is rooted thoroughly in the aim to restore the creation to its original state that is defined by a nephesh that is good or said in another way, full of the spirit and breath of God in a wholistic, pleasing way that is in right order with God!

To make this point even more interesting, remember that Jesus refers to himself as the Lord of the Sabbath and this is what he said in Matthew 11.

- **Matthew 11:28–29 (ESV)**

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **rest**. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find **rest** for your souls.

The word for "rest" in this passage is the same as the one supplied by the Greek version (LXX) of Exodus 23:12, where our Bibles say "refreshed".

~

The connection is quite clear: Jesus' aim as the Lord of the Sabbath is that all who come to him would be revived, re-spirited, and empowered with the breath of life.

It's fascinating to note that in Exodus 23:10-12, the Sabbath is depicted not only as a time for human rest but also as a period of rejuvenation for the poor, the animals, and even the land itself.

The Torah's ultimate goal is Shalom, which encompasses the preservation of life and the repairing of the world. In Exodus 23, we see the anticipation of a sabbath rest for nearly every aspect of creation, hinting at a future state of renewal for the entire world. This state of re-spiriting is embodied in Yeshua, the Lord of the Sabbath.

~

These verses are remarkable because they extend beyond the weekly Sabbath. Initially, the Torah introduced the concept of a Sabbath through Adonai's example, which consists of one day of rest every seven days. This principle was then applied to humans, then to animals, and finally to the land itself. However, the verses in question take this concept even further, stating that one year out of every seven should be an agricultural Sabbath. This year of rest is intended to re-spirit the land and provide for the poor and animals. It doesn't take a Master's of Divinity to begin to see how the Torah reverses the entropy caused by sin and begins the pathway towards building the World to Come. The Torah is Life, and there is life in every command within it.

Let's take a moment to explore the foundational patterns that were established in the opening lines of the Torah and have been developed through each commandment up to our current reading in Exodus 23.

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GOD COUNTS BY SEVENS

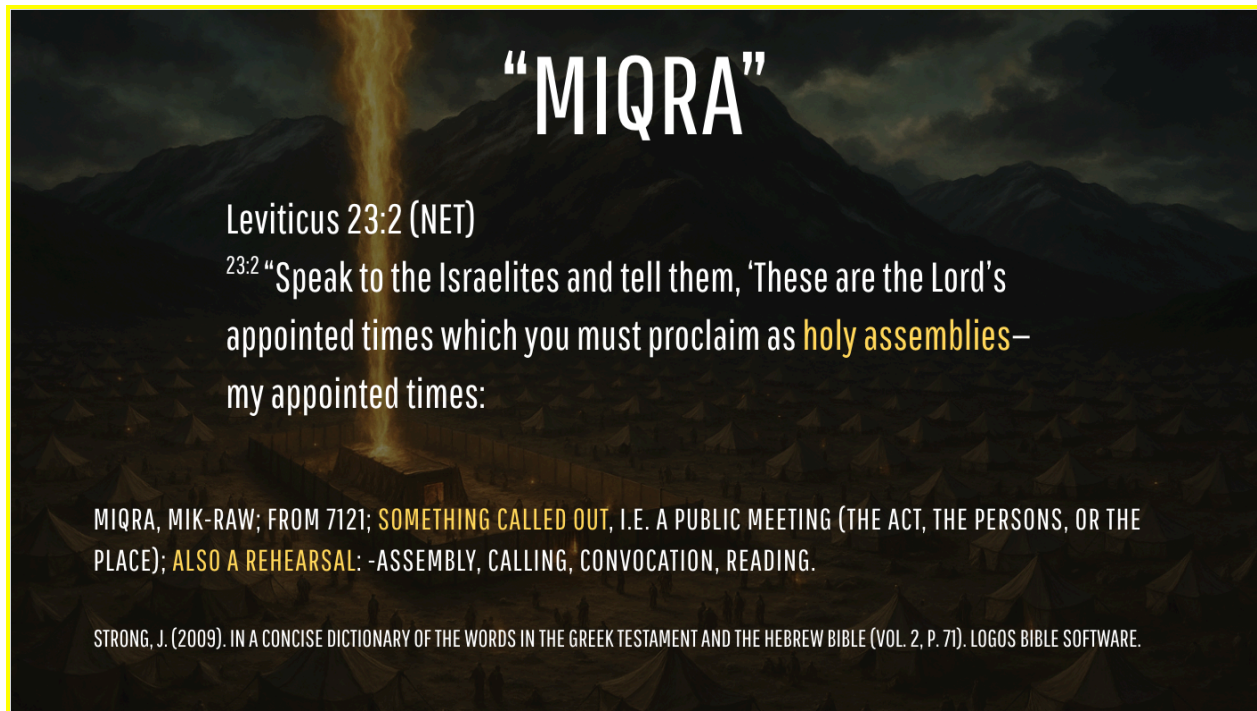
- DAYS: SABBATH, ON THE 7TH DAY (GENESIS 2:2; EXODUS 20:11)
- WEEKS: FEAST OF WEEKS, 7 WEEKS (LEVITICUS 23:15-16)
- MONTHS: NISAN TO TISRHI, 7 MONTHS (EXODUS 12:2, LEVITICUS 23:24)
- YEARS: SABBATICAL YEAR, EVERY 7 YEARS
- GROUPS OF YEARS: JUBILEE, TIME OF FREEDOM AND RELEASE EVERY 49 YEARS OR 7x7 YEARS (LEVITICUS 25:1-22, 26:33-35, DEUTERONOMY 15, EXODUS 23:10-11, 2 CHRONICLES 36:19-21)

This is one of the many reasons that the calendar functions as a Jewish catechism. In other words, the Torah displays Adonai counting in 7's and completing tasks in periods of time divided by 7's. Everyone is aware of the weekly Sabbath, but as you can see on the slide and in our chapter tonight, the weekly Sabbath is just the beginning. The same principle applies to years and weeks of years.

This all becomes even more intriguing when you realize that the words for the 7 feasts or Holy Assemblies is "Miqra."

~

(READ SLIDE)



“MIQRA”

Leviticus 23:2 (NET)
^{23:2} “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘These are the Lord’s appointed times which you must proclaim as **holy assemblies**—my appointed times:

MIQRA, MIK-RAW; FROM 7121; **SOMETHING CALLED OUT**, I.E. A PUBLIC MEETING (THE ACT, THE PERSONS, OR THE PLACE); **ALSO A REHEARSAL**: -ASSEMBLY, CALLING, CONVOCATION, READING.

STRONG, J. (2009). IN A CONCISE DICTIONARY OF THE WORDS IN THE GREEK TESTAMENT AND THE HEBREW BIBLE (VOL. 2, P. 71). LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE.

The Torah's repetitive counting by sevens suggests a rehearsal for a grander aspect of Adonai's redemptive plan. This implies that the Torah is fundamentally laying the groundwork for the world's redemption and restoration. Let's take a moment to reacquaint ourselves with the feasts of Israel and their sequence.

~

(READ SLIDE) - we have this somewhere probably

The Seven Feasts of Israel

Hebrew Name	English Name	Scripture References	Time of Year
Pesach	Passover	Leviticus 23:4-5	14th of Nisan (1st month)
Chag HaMatzot	Unleavened Bread	Leviticus 23:6-8	15th of Nisan (1st month)
Bikkurim/Reishit	Firstfruits	Leviticus 23:9-14	Nisan (1st month)
Shavu'ot	Weeks, Pentecost	Leviticus 23:15-22	Sivan (50 days after Firstfruits)
Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah	Trumpets, New Years	Leviticus 23:23-25	1st of Tishri (7th month)
Yom Kippur	Atonement	Leviticus 23:26-32	10th of Tishri (7th month)
Sukkot	Tabernacles, Booths	Leviticus 23:33-44	15th of Tishri (7th month)

In this church, you may have become acquainted with the idea that these feasts represent the eschatological plan as it plays out within the 1st and 2nd comings of Christ. However, most of you are not aware that the pattern began in the days of creation and was developed through weekly and annual Sabbaths so that it could even be applied to 7 millennial periods of time. Let's show you how the days of creation, the ordering of millennia, and the feasts can be correlated with one another.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION & THE FIRST MILLENNIUM

THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION, WHICH SAW THE CREATION OF LIGHT AND SEPARATION FROM DARKNESS, EMBODIES THE EVENTS OF THE FIRST MILLENNIUM. IN THE SAME WAY GOD'S LIGHT HAD PERMEATED OR FILLED THE EARTH IN THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION, WITHIN THE FIRST MILLENNIUM, MAN WAS CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE AS A SOURCE OF HIS LIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE. MAN WAS BLESSED BY GOD AND TOLD TO PERMEATE OR FILL THE EARTH, THUS FILLING THE EARTH WITH GOD'S IMAGE OR LIGHT EVERYWHERE MAN WENT. THE FIRST DAY OF CREATION IS MARKED BY THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD, IN THAT HE TOOK WHAT WAS TOHU AND VOHU AND BEGAN TO FILL IT WITH WHAT WAS "GOOD". THE FIRST MILLENNIUM IS ALSO MARKED BY THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD IN THAT HE BEGAN TO FILL THE EARTH WITH WHAT WAS "GOOD"...THAT IS, MAN MADE IN HIS OWN IMAGE. THIS DAY IS ALSO PARALLEL WITH THE FIRST FEAST OF ISRAEL, PASSOVER, WHERE A SACRIFICIAL LAMB WOULD PROVIDE SALVATION IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS. LATER, THIS IMAGERY COMES TOGETHER CLEARLY IN THE LAMB OF GOD, THE MAN JESUS, WHO BROUGHT LIGHT TO THE WORLD.

When we began the book of Exodus, we worked hard to show you that the book itself was a continuation of Genesis. In fact, the first words of Exodus are "Ve Elleh Shemot" or "And these are the names". You are beginning to see why that was so important. The patterns begun in Genesis continue and are expanded through the rest of the Torah and Bible. What we are doing now is showing you how to put together the larger picture. Let's move to the next day of creation, millennium, and feast.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE SECOND DAY OF CREATION & THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

THE SECOND MILLENNIUM WAS MARKED BY GOD DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN WHAT WAS "SO" AND WHAT WAS "GOOD" THAT EXISTED IN HIS CREATION. DURING THE SECOND MILLENNIUM, THE PURE HUMAN RACE DESCENDING FROM ADAM HAD BECOME CORRUPTED BY IMPURE SPIRITUAL POWERS THAT HAD CREATED AN UNHOLY MIXTURE IN THE FORM OF GIANTS THAT WERE HALF HUMAN AND HALF ANGELIC. GOD SHOWED HIS HOLY DISCRIMINATION AND SEPARATION OF WHAT WAS "SO" FROM "GOOD" BY FLOODING THE EARTH, WIPING OUT EVERYTHING THAT WAS IMPURE BUT SAVING NOAH'S FAMILY AND THE ANIMALS OF THEIR VARIOUS KINDS. IN EFFECT GOD REMOVED ALL THE YEAST FROM HIS CREATION LEAVING ONLY WHAT WAS PURE UNLEAVENED BREAD. THIS DAY CORRESPONDS DIRECTLY TO THE SECOND FEAST OF ISRAEL, UNLEAVENED BREAD, BECAUSE IT IS MARKED BY THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL SEARCHING THEIR HOMES FOR YEAST AND REMOVING IT SO THAT THERE IS A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT BELONGS AND WHAT DOES NOT BELONG.

The days of creation all eventually lead to a Sabbath. The 7 feasts of the Lord all eventually lead to a Sabbath. The millennia will also eventually lead to a Sabbath. Looking at what has occurred in Biblical history and the pattern laid down in the Sabbaths and feasts help you to form an anticipatory parallel of what to expect in our future even before it unfolds. Everything is pointing towards a special Sabbath for the World.

Let's progress to the 3rd Day, Feast, and 3rd Millennium.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE THIRD DAY OF CREATION & THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, MANY EXCITING AND BEAUTIFUL EVENTS OCCURRED. THE WORLD HAD GONE FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF GOD'S LIGHT IN THE FIRST DAY TO THE PURIFICATION OF HIS CREATION IN THE SECOND DAY WITH NOAH'S FLOOD AND SEPARATION OF THE CREATION MIXTURE. THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, CORRESPONDING TO THE THIRD DAY, WAS FILLED WITH NEW LIFE THAT SPRUNG FROM HOLY BOUNDARIES. IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM GOD SEPARATED OUT FOR HIMSELF ONE MAN, ONE PEOPLE AND ONE NATION CALLED ISRAEL, BEGINNING WITH THE MAN ABRAHAM. IT IS IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM THAT THE SEED OF THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD WAS PLANTED IN THE MAN THAT ALL NATIONS WOULD BE BLESSED THROUGH AS THEY IMITATED HIS FAITH. BEFORE THE CLOSE OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, THE TORAH OR LAW OF MOSES WAS REVEALED FROM HEAVEN AND CODIFIED BY MOSES. THE FIRST THREE MILLENNIUMS TAKE US FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF LIGHT TO WHAT WAS "SO," AND THEN INTO THINGS THAT WERE "GOOD." THIS MILLENNIUM IS RIGHTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE FEAST OF FIRST-FRUITS, BECAUSE IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE FAMILY OF ISRAEL AND THE LAW OR ANCIENT PATH OF GOD!

We hope you see the beauty in this as we do. The Law is life, from the selection of Abraham to Moses receiving and transmitting the Torah, it is the firstfruits of what Adonai is bringing upon the earth. The Torah aims at life, restoration, and ultimately a glorification.

Let's continue to walk through Biblical history, seeing the correlation between millennia, days of creation, and the progression of the feasts of Israel.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE FOURTH DAY OF CREATION & THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM

THE FOURTH DAY OF CREATION, IN WHICH GOD CREATED THE TWO GREAT LUMINARIES WITH THEIR CHILDREN, THE STARS, CORRESPONDS TO THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM, IN WHICH THE FIRST AND SECOND TEMPLES WERE BUILT IN JERUSALEM. THE FIRST AND SECOND TEMPLES STOOD AS GREAT LIGHTS IN THE WORLD, AND THEIR CHILDREN, THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, SHONE LIKE STARS AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF A DARK WORLD. IT WAS LATER, IN THIS SECOND TEMPLE, THAT ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST, TONGUES LIKE FIRE DESCENDED ON TWELVE ISRAELITE SONS WHO BECAME LIKE STARS SHINING IN THE DARK WORLD. THE FOURTH DAY OF CREATION, THE FOURTH FEAST OR REHEARSAL, PENTECOST, AND THE FOURTH MILLENNIUM ALL CORRESPOND TO ONE ANOTHER. THIS FOURTH STEP IN THE PATTERN IS ABOUT EMPOWERMENT TO BRING IN THE REST OF GOD'S HARVEST FROM THE DARKEST CORNERS OF THE EARTH, OR GOD'S FIELD.

In the fourth feast, the fourth Millennium, and the fourth day of creation, a very great light began to shine! We trust that you are starting to pick up on the pattern that began in the opening lines of the Torah and is being developed on every page.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE FIFTH DAY OF CREATION & THE FIFTH MILLENNIUM

THE FIFTH DAY OF CREATION WAS MARKED BY THE CREATION OF VARIOUS TYPES OF LIFE INCLUDING THE GREAT MONSTERS OF THE DEEP LIKE SERPENTS, CROCODILES AND OTHER REPTILIAN PREDATORY CREATURES. THE FIFTH MILLENNIUM WAS MARKED BY THE DARK AGES WHEN THE WORD OF GOD WAS WITHHELD FROM THE COMMON PEOPLE, AND THE WORLD PLUNGED INTO A PERIOD OF CAPTIVITY TO THE PREDATORY NATURE OF THE INSTITUTIONALIZED CHURCH AND ISLAM. DURING THIS MILLENNIUM, THE INSTITUTIONALIZED CHURCH BURNED MEN AT THE STAKE FOR DISAGREEING WITH IT, AND ISLAM BEGAN TO MILITARILY EXPAND ALL OVER THE WORLD. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS CORRESPONDS TO THE FIFTH DAY OF CREATION AND THE FIFTH MILLENNIUM, SIGNALING THAT THE TIME FOR REDEMPTION AND ATONEMENT DRAWS NEAR. THIS IS ALL COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE THAT "THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE EARTH WILL NOT LAST FOREVER."

The Torah aims at life. The Torah reverses the entropy in the world from sin. When men are Torah-less, wickedness prevails. The Torah lays out the pattern of expectation regarding what must happen to build the World to come...

Let's move to the 6th millennium, the 6th day of creation, and the 6th feast of Israel.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE SIXTH DAY OF CREATION & THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM

THE SIXTH DAY, WHOSE EARLY HOURS SAW THE CREATION OF THE BEASTS OF THE EARTH, WAS FOLLOWED BY THE CREATION OF MAN, WHO WAS TOLD TO SUBDUE AND RULE; THIS IS OUR MILLENNIUM. THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM IS MARKED BY STRONG, FORCEFUL EMPIRES, WHOSE BEASTLY RULE WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE RETURN OF MESSIAH, THE PERFECT MAN WHO WILL SUBDUE ALL THAT IS IN OPPOSITION TO GOD AND USHER IN HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH. THE SIXTH DAY WHERE MEN AND BEASTS WERE CREATED, THE SIXTH FEAST WHERE REDEMPTION IS BROUGHT, AND THE SIXTH MILLENNIUM ARE ALL CONNECTED AND POINTING TO THE SAME TIME PERIOD. WE MUST FACE "THE BEAST" IN THE PERIOD OF TRIBULATION, THEN MESSIAH WILL RETURN TO DELIVER, REDEEM, ATONE AND MAKE AN END OF "THE BEAST" FOR ISRAEL AND THOSE IN CHRIST.

The recurring pattern that has been evident since the creation week and the Sabbath is further emphasized through the weekly, yearly, and even the Sabbaths consisting of weeks of years in the Torah. The feasts, which also follow a cycle of sevens, help to illuminate this pattern clearly. Throughout our chapter tonight, we have seen the Torah showing concern for mankind, the animals, and even the land... this is because the Torah points us toward a greater Sabbath in the 7th Millennium.

Let's look at the correlation between the 7th day, 7th feast, and 7th Millennium.

~

(READ SLIDE)

THE SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION & THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM

THE SEVENTH DAY MARKED THE COMPLETION OF GOD'S WORK. HE THEN RESTED FROM ALL THAT HE "HAD BEEN DOING". THIS SABBATH REST WAS NOT DUE TO FATIGUE, BUT RATHER, IT WAS GOD'S DEMONSTRATION OF A DIVINE PATTERN, A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HIS PLAN TO REDEEM ISRAEL AND THE WORLD. THE SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION REPRESENTS THE CULMINATION OF THE PREVIOUS DAYS OF CONSECRATION, PRODUCING HOLINESS. THE SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION CORRESPONDS TO THE SEVENTH FEAST OR REHEARSAL, KNOWN AS SUKKOT. SUKKOT, AS THE SEVENTH REHEARSAL, FALLS IN THE SEVENTH MONTH, CULMINATING WITH A SEVENTH DAY AND 70 SACRIFICES. THIS MARKS THE END OF THE HARVEST SEASON WHEN ALL 70 NATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE BROUGHT IN, AND GOD'S DWELLING IS WITH MAN. THIS ALIGNS WITH THE FUTURE EVENTS OF THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM, WHICH WILL INCLUDE HOLY REST FOR GOD'S PEOPLE—A CULMINATION OF THE PRIOR SIX DAYS OF CONSECRATION EFFORTS THAT PRODUCE SOMETHING COMPLETELY HOLY, AND A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS UNDER MESSIAH JESUS. THE SEVENTH DAY OF CREATION, THE SEVENTH FEAST OF ISRAEL, AND THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM TO COME ARE ALL DIRECTLY PARALLEL WITH ONE ANOTHER. THE FIRST WEEK OF CREATION LAYS OUT A PATTERN, THE FEASTS TEACH US ABOUT THIS PATTERN THROUGH REPETITION, AND THE COMING EVENTS OF THE SEVENTH MILLENNIUM WILL FOLLOW THE FORECASTED PATTERN. YHWH ALWAYS FINISHES WHAT HE STARTS, AND HE WILL BRING HIS REDEPTIVE PLAN FOR ISRAEL AND THE WORLD TO FINALITY.

The concept that the days of creation and the feasts of Israel are all working towards a "greater" Sabbath to come is something Jewish sages have noted for almost a thousand years. We are taking the opportunity to familiarize you with this now because Exodus 23 has expanded the Sabbath from a weekly occurrence to an Agricultural Sabbath that was to occur every 7th year. Moreover, it was marked by a particular concern for the poor and even the animal kingdom. These are building blocks to a larger picture. Let's cover a few more details that will help you in the verses we are about to approach in Exodus.

~

(DO NOT READ)

7 Days of Creation	Light and separation from darkness	Sky and separation that promotes life	Land, seas & stars to govern	Sun, moon & stars to govern	Fish, winged animals, sea monsters	Man made to fill, subdue, rule & consecrate	Made holy. God rests
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
7 Feasts of the Lord	Sacrificial lamb brings light into darkness	Removal of what does not belong	Reminder of God's provision and promises	Spirit filled apostles shined like stars (2nd temple period)	Signals that the DoA is near. Repentance & Anticipation	Redemption is brought & earth starts to be restored	70 nations brought in. God dwells with man
	Passover	Unleavened Bread	Firstfruits	Pentecost	Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Sukkot
7 Millenniums	God fills what was TOHU and VOHU with his good image	God removes corruption in Noah's flood	God establishes: 1 man 1 people 1 nation & torah	1st & 2 nd temples were lights to world. Son of David stood in both	Dark ages when the word was withheld from common people	Beastly empire who messiah returns to crush	We reign with Messiah's kingdom on earth
	1,000 yrs	2,000 yrs	3,000 yrs	4,000 yrs	5,000 yrs	6,000 yrs	7,000 yrs

We are about to comment on a concept you have been shown briefly before—the regalia feasts (circled on this slide) and how they play into the 7 millennium's teaching we just went through. In our next verse range, the text is going to declare that all the men of Israel must appear before the Lord at these times. We have a slide for you that will summarize some of the key features:

(Read Slide starting in top row from left to right, then 2nd row.)

SHALOSH REGALIM - REGALIA FEASTS

Festival	Hebrew Name	Time of Year	Commemorates	Agricultural Significance	Key Practices	References
Passover	Pesach	14th of Nisan	The Exodus from Egypt	Barley harvest "Grain coming out of the ground"	Unleavened bread,	Exodus 12; Leviticus 23:4–8; Deuteronomy 16:1–8
Weeks	Shavuot	50 days after Passover	Giving of the Torah at Sinai	Wheat harvest "Grain as full as it can be"	First fruits offering	Leviticus 23:15–21; Deuteronomy 16:9–12; Exodus 34:22
Tabernacles	Sukkot	15th of Tishrei	Israel's desert wanderings	Final harvest "Grain brought into the barn"	Building/ dwelling in sukkot	Leviticus 23:33–43; Deuteronomy 16:13–15; Exodus 23:16

~

Again, the reason we are showing you this now is that the coming verses are going to speak heavily about things that are associated with the Shalosh Regalim. The entire aim of the Torah is the preservation of life and the Shalosh Regalim are conceptually associated with bringing about the "greater" Sabbath coming upon the world.

13 “Be careful to do everything I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

This statement serves as a prelude to the introduction of three specific times each year when the people of Israel are to present themselves before the Lord. It is both a kindness and a warning to future generations, emphasizing the importance of not mingling the names of other gods with the reverence due to the one true God, who is orchestrating the redemption of the world through this nation.

14 “Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me.

15 “Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the

appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

“No-one is to appear before me empty-handed.

16 “Celebrate the Feast of Harvest with the firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field.

“Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field.

17 “Three times a year all the men are to appear before the Sovereign LORD.

18 “Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast.

“The fat of my festival offerings must not be kept until morning.

19 “Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God.

“Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.

~

These verses are enigmatic for many reasons. The statement that compels all to appear before the Lord three times a year is repeated twice. The three specific feasts have several names in the Torah. Finally, there seem to be statements associated with each of the three special assemblies. Let's work through some of those details:

(DO NOT READ)

SHALOSH REGALIM - REGALIA FEASTS

Festival	Hebrew Name	Time of Year	Commemorates	Agricultural Significance	Key Practices	References
Passover	Pesach	14th of Nisan	The Exodus from Egypt	Barley harvest "Grain coming out of the ground"	Unleavened bread,	Exodus 12; Leviticus 23:4–8; Deuteronomy 16:1–8
Weeks	Shavuot	50 days after Passover	Giving of the Torah at Sinai	Wheat harvest "Grain as full as it can be"	First fruits offering	Leviticus 23:15–21; Deuteronomy 16:9–12; Exodus 34:22
Tabernacles	Sukkot	15th of Tishrei	Israel's desert wanderings	Final harvest "Grain brought into the barn"	Building/ dwelling in sukkot	Leviticus 23:33–43; Deuteronomy 16:13–15; Exodus 23:16

We know that the feasts being spoken about are: Passover, Shavuot, and Tabernacles. We are also aware of the key practices associated with those feasts. Now let's put the names that appear in Exodus 23 on a slide with the corresponding statements or commands that relate to them:

(READ SLIDE)

SHALOSH REGALIM - REGALIA FEASTS pt. 2

"Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread" Or <u>Passover</u>	"Celebrate the Feast of Harvest" Or <u>Shavuot</u>	"Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering" Or <u>Tabernacles</u>
Ex 23:18 ...No blood and yeast mixed, no fat kept until morning...	Ex 23:19a ...Bring best of the firstfruits into the house... harvest brought in....	Ex 23:19b Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk...

~

It is easy to see the correlation between Passover and the admonition in verse 18 to avoid the mixing of blood and yeast. It is also easy to see the correlation between Shavuot and the admonition in verse 19 to bring the best of the harvest in.

However, when you get to Tabernacles, the question has to be asked... what, if anything, does a prohibition on cooking a young goat in its mother's milk have to do with the feast?

(READ SLIDE)

MYSTERY

“WHATEVER THE REASON, GOD’S RULE NOT TO BOIL A KID IN ITS MOTHER’S MILK REMAINS ONE OF THE MORE PUZZLING COMMANDS IN THE SCRIPTURES, AND THE EXACT REASON FOR IT WILL NOT TRULY BE KNOWN UNTIL THE LORD HIMSELF EXPLAINS IT.”

FREEMAN, J. M., & CHADWICK, H. J. (1998). MANNERS & CUSTOMS OF THE BIBLE (P. 125). BRIDGE-LOGOS PUBLISHERS.

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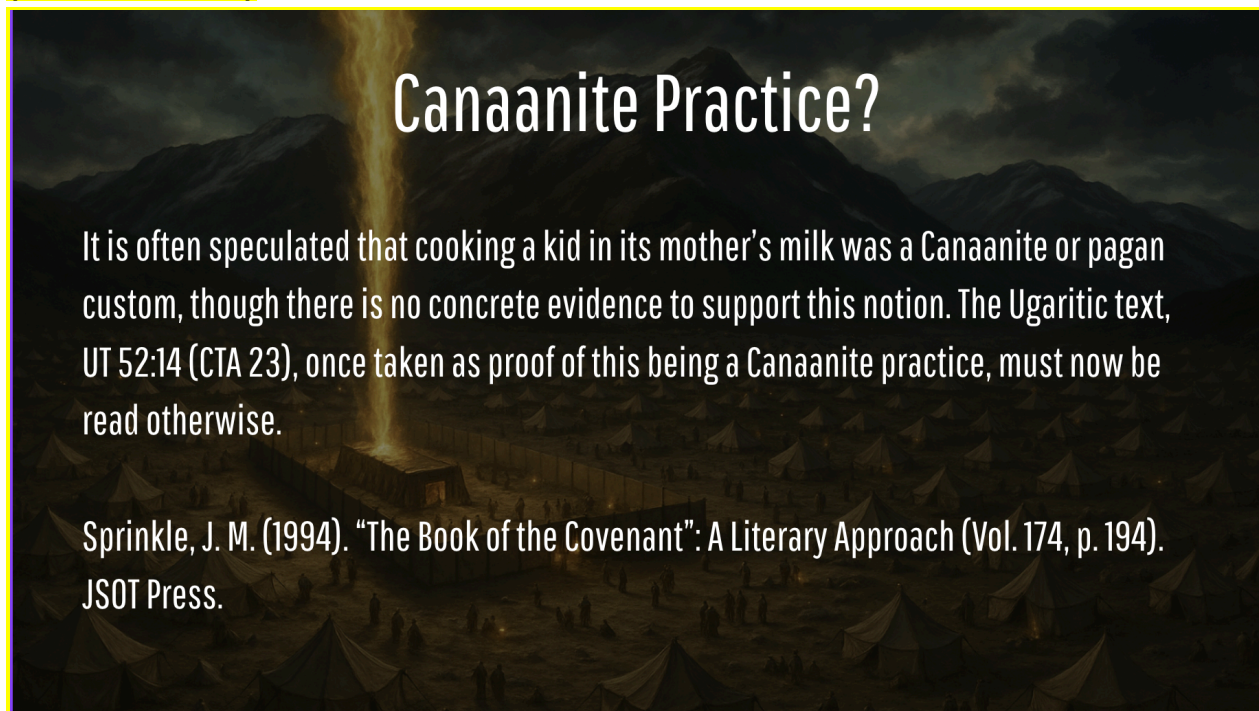
In past readings, we felt exactly like this commentator! The problem was severalfold. To start with, no commentator seems to associate any of the commands with the Regalia feasts at all. This seemed to us, as unwise, given that the three statements are made in the text between two statements commanding the people to appear before the Lord three times.

We then dug into Rabbinic literature, which largely attributes the commandment about not cooking a "young goat in its mother's milk" as the foundation for the Kosher law separating dairy and meat products. Additionally, some Rabbis speculated that this directive was intended to prevent the Israelites from adopting certain pagan rituals.

Upon reviewing all the relevant positions, we found them to be inaccurate. Following the commentator's advice on the slide, we sought divine guidance for a clearer understanding. We first recognized that each statement indeed pertained to one of the three Regalia feasts. The first two were fairly obvious for reasons we've already discussed. Next, we avoided viewing this solely as a Kosher designation, as that is not the context of the chapter. Finally, while it might be tempting to attribute this to some

undocumented Ugaritic practice, our examination yielded only speculation on that subject. The Theological Workbook of the Older Testament claims the existence of such practices, we found some commentaries that agreed, these could be true, but none of these that we found sited how they came to that conclusion and lacked compelling evidence in support of that claim. Additionally, the JSOT makes this claim concerning findings on this topic:

(READ SLIDE)



Canaanite Practice?

It is often speculated that cooking a kid in its mother's milk was a Canaanite or pagan custom, though there is no concrete evidence to support this notion. The Ugaritic text, UT 52:14 (CTA 23), once taken as proof of this being a Canaanite practice, must now be read otherwise.

Sprinkle, J. M. (1994). "The Book of the Covenant": A Literary Approach (Vol. 174, p. 194). JSOT Press.

So, let's look at the slide again:

(DO NOT READ)

SHALOSH REGALIM - REGALIA FEASTS pt. 2

"Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread"	"Celebrate the Feast of Harvest"	"Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering"
Or Passover	Or Shavuot	Or Tabernacles
Ex 23:18 ...No blood and yeast mixed, no fat kept until morning...	Ex 23:19a ...Bring best of the firstfruits into the house... harvest brought in....	Ex 23:19b Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk... ?

If two of the three commands clearly relate to the corresponding Regalia feasts, then how does the prohibition on cooking a young goat in its mother's milk relate to Tabernacles?

We have been making the case for several weeks now that the point of the Torah and the aim of the Law is the preservation of life. The Law works to reverse the effects of sin in the creation and bring us closer to the "greater" Sabbath coming upon the world. The Law is a life giving substance that was meant to nourish and foster life in the recipients. The Torah was not meant to become the instrument of execution for those it was intended to bring life too!

~

The feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot is the 7th and last feast in the cycle of feasts. When the feast is completed it points to a time when sin has been removed from the creation and all that remains is the life that Adonai always intended for His people. The truth is that the Torah does put people to death because of sin, however, when sin is not present then the Torah only brings life.

Have you ever used an idiomatic expression that is grounded in reality but also conveys deeper meaning? For example: "*Chad— things are going so well and you are handling that difficulty very well... Don't shoot yourself in the foot!*" Of course, you literally don't want Pastor Perot to shoot himself in the foot but you are also conveying a deeper meaning that concerns not turning a good thing into a mistake.

~

We take the statement "you shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk" to be a literal statement and also a statement with a deeper moral imperative. That is to say, "**Do not use what was meant to bring life, for death**". This point would be even more dramatic given that young goats are cooked during the feast of Tabernacles in Numbers 29 and Leviticus 6 where they are commanded to be boiled (although not in milk).

- **Romans 7:10–13 (NIVUK84)**

10 I found that the very commandment that was **intended to bring life** actually brought death. 11 For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. 12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

~

Paul's point is that the Law was originally intended to bring life, but sin became the problem, not the Law itself. Ironically, centuries of flawed theology have viewed the Law as an instrument of death, using it to metaphorically "boil" its recipients. The essence of the statement is to caution against turning something meant to bring life into a tool of destruction. When the final feast cycle is complete, sin will no longer exist, and the Torah will solely be a source of life for its recipients.


- **1 Peter 2:1–3 (ESV)**

2 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

It is only the sinful cruelty of the human heart in rebellion that would twist the pure spiritual milk of the Law into an instrument of death. You can see that Peter clearly thought of the Law as pure spiritual milk that caused men to grow up into salvation. In fact, your introduction to the fact that the Lord is good is found in the pure spiritual milk that is the Law. Let's put the "Shalosh Regalim" slide back on the screen and walk you through this as a narrative:

~

(DO NOT READ)

SHALOSH REGALIM - REGALIA FEASTS pt. 2		
"Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread" Or Passover	"Celebrate the Feast of Harvest" Or Shavuot	"Celebrate the Feast of Ingathering" Or Tabernacles
Ex 23:18 ...No blood and yeast mixed, no fat kept until morning...	Ex 23:19a ...Bring best of the <u>firstfruits</u> into the house... harvest brought in....	Ex 23:19b Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk... 

The three regalia feasts—Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot—form a theological arc that traces Israel's redemptive journey from national birth to divine restoration.

Passover, also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, marks the creation of the nation. It emphasizes purity and urgency: no blood and yeast are to be mixed, and nothing is to be left until morning. This haste signifies Israel's swift departure from Egypt and the requirement that the nation begin without leaven—symbolic of corruption or sin.

Shavuot, or the Feast of Harvest, represents the covenantal marriage between God and Israel. It coincides with the giving of the Torah and the outpouring of the Spirit. The offering of the best of the firstfruits into God's house signals a fullness of harvest, both physical and spiritual, affirming Israel's sanctification and alignment with divine law.

Sukkot, the Feast of Ingathering, envisions the ultimate restoration of the earth through Israel. A curious command surfaces here: "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk" (Exodus 23). This, along with the killing and cooking of goats for sin offerings during Sukkot, evokes a deeper imagery—the Torah as life-giving milk, and the goat as a symbol of what dies because of sin. The prohibition suggests that what is meant to nourish and sustain (the Torah) must not be mixed with the consequence of death (sin), highlighting the triumph of God's Word over death and decay.

~

New Testament passages likening milk to the Word of God amplify this metaphor, portraying the Torah not as a mere legal code but as the nurturing substance meant to foster life. Sukkot, therefore, draws the theological arc to its climax: through Israel, sin is addressed, the earth is healed, and Torah triumphs over death bringing us into the Tikkun Ha Olam.

When sin is removed at the restoration of all things the Torah will not be used to execute the offspring... all that will be left is the life it was intended to bring.

- **Zechariah 14:8–9 (NIVUK84)**

8 On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter.

9 The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name.

- **Verse 16 (NIVUK84)**

16 Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

~

You can see that a time period is coming on the world when every nation on earth will commemorate the achievements of Adonai through Messiah, who is the embodiment of the perfect law, in the feast of Tabernacles. The point of reading you this passage is that when sin has been dealt with all that remains is the great joy of Sukkot that will be celebrated on a global scale.

- **Micah 4:1–2 (NIVUK84)**

1 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples (nations) will stream to it.

2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." **The law will go out from Zion**, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

At this point in the Redemptive plan the Law will be viewed as the nourishing, life-giving, divine substance that it is... No one will errantly view the Law as an instrument of death because sin will be removed from the creation.

~

- **Isaiah 11:6–10 (NIVUK84)**

6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the **goat**, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of **rest** will be glorious.

Throughout the Law in Exodus, Adonai's concern for mankind, the animals, and even the land are prominent. These are the foundational principles that find their ultimate fulfillment in the "greater" Sabbath coming upon the world. The pure spiritual milk of the Law is meant to nourish you so that you can digest these deeper redemptive principles. Even the goat will lie down with the leopard and death will no longer be part of the equation.

~

As we are getting to the place that we will finalize a few topics and close, let us re-visit the Aleinu, remembering that it is the closing prayer for all formal Jewish prayer services:

(Read only the highlighted portion)

THE ALEINU

It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to acclaim the greatness of the One who forms all creation. For God did not make us like the nations of other lands, and did not make us the same as other families of the Earth. God did not place us in the same situations as others, and our destiny is not the same as anyone else's. And we bend our knees, and bow down, and give thanks, before the Ruler, the Ruler of Rulers, the Holy One, Blessed is God. The One who spread out the heavens, and made the foundations of the Earth, and whose precious dwelling is in the heavens above, and whose powerful Presence is in the highest heights. Adonai is our God, there is none else. Our God is truth, and nothing else compares. As it is written in Your Torah: "And you shall know today, and take to heart, that Adonai is the only God, in the heavens above and on Earth below. There is no other." Therefore we put our hope in You, Adonai our God, to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth, and to completely cut off all false gods; to repair the world, Your holy empire. And for all living flesh to call Your name, and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You. **May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty. Before You, Adonai, our God, may all bow down, and give honor to Your precious name, and may all take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule.** And may You reign over them soon and forever and always. Because all rule is Yours alone, and You will rule in honor forever and ever. As it is written in Your Torah: "Adonai will reign forever and ever." And it is said: "Adonai will be Ruler over the whole Earth, and on that day, God will be One, and God's name will be One.

Eisenberg, Ronald L. The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions. PA: Jewish Publication Society, 2004;

This prayer is very much in line with Paul's presentation of the achievements of Jesus

- **Philippians 2:9–11 (ESV)**

9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

~

This prayer is very much in line with the invitation of Jesus:

- **Matthew 11:28–29 (NIVUK84)**

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

This is because no part of Jesus ministry set aside the Law, but rather, Jesus is the embodiment and the goal of everything that is within the Law.

Let's finish our text with a few observations.

20 “See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared.

21 Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him.

22 If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you.

23 My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. 24 Do not bow down before their gods or worship them or follow their practices. You must demolish them and break their sacred stones to pieces. 25 Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you, 26 and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span.

27 “I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies turn their backs and run. 28 I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites and Hittites out of your way. 29 But I will not drive them out in a single year, because the land would become desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. 30 Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land.

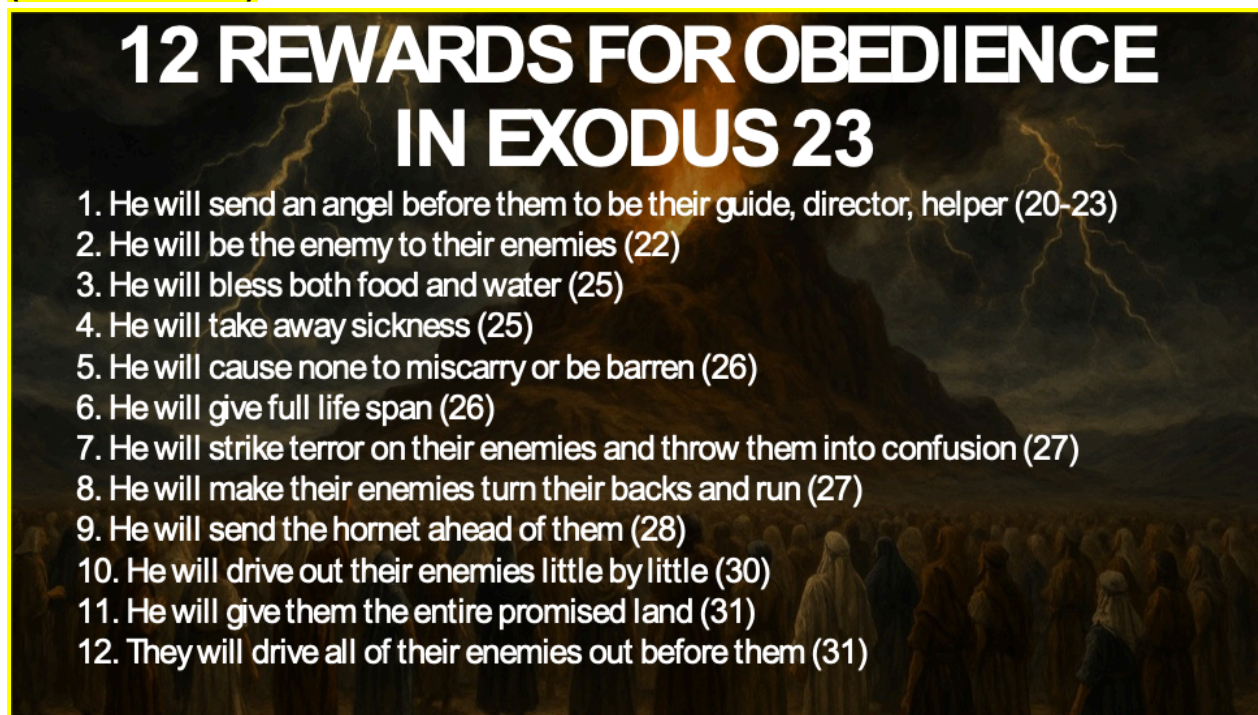
31 “I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert to the River. I will hand over to you the people who live in the land and you will drive them out before you.

32 Do not make a covenant with them or with their gods. 33 Do not let them live in your land, or they will cause you to sin against me, because the worship of their gods will certainly be a snare to you.”

~

On another night we will enter into full discussions on the nature of the angel sent before Israel. Additionally, we will explore the nature of the hornet sent to drive out enemies before the people of God. Lastly, we will derive a proper understanding of the Biblical land grant given to the nation of Israel. However, since those topics will all come up again in the book of Exodus, we thought it best to highlight the Twelve rewards for obedience promised in these verses:

(READ SLIDE)



12 REWARDS FOR OBEDIENCE IN EXODUS 23

1. He will send an angel before them to be their guide, director, helper (20-23)
2. He will be the enemy to their enemies (22)
3. He will bless both food and water (25)
4. He will take away sickness (25)
5. He will cause none to miscarry or be barren (26)
6. He will give full life span (26)
7. He will strike terror on their enemies and throw them into confusion (27)
8. He will make their enemies turn their backs and run (27)
9. He will send the hornet ahead of them (28)
10. He will drive out their enemies little by little (30)
11. He will give them the entire promised land (31)
12. They will drive all of their enemies out before them (31)

~

In every way, this chapter stands out as divine direction from Adonai as to how he would reverse the effects of sin in the world through his holy, chosen, and set apart people.

Through his Torah & his people who embodied, lived out, walked in the light of his commands, his wisdom would be put on display for all Nations as they observed how his nation functioned in the most practical of ways.

In the closing lines of tonight's chapter, Adonai is communicating to the people what their fixed boundary lines would be, from which the Law would

go out from Zion with the purpose of healing the gentile nations as they came under submission to him.

James 2:12–13 (ESV)

12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

~

This is the reason why the chapter ends with warnings to the people about the practices & peoples that could corrupt this holy calling of the entire nation...

With these commands, God is helping his people to shamar or guard the way back to life (much like the cherubim in Genesis 3) by admonishing them to guard the commands. Your guarding, watching over, and doing the commands are in the same way aimed at preserving life & reversing the effects of sin in the world as we repair the world. You have the opportunity to usher torah into the world through your actions.