

Good evening Arising Church,

We hope that our last study's exploration of Exodus 21 was enlightening for you, and we look forward to continuing this journey of revelation tonight in Exodus 22. Last session, we comprehensively taught the often-overlooked laws following the Ten Commandments, emphasizing the profound wisdom and importance displayed in the Torah. These laws were intended to show the world the nearness of Adonai to the nation of Israel. The introduction last week set the stage by highlighting how these chapters are foundational for understanding God's righteous statutes and the creation of a just society, intended to reflect Adonai as a bride reflects her groom. The teaching urged you not to dismiss these laws as obsolete but to see them as vital wisdom for living, with both Old and New Testament support for their continuing relevance.

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We worked diligently to contextualize Israel's receipt of the Law: newly freed from Egyptian slavery, the nation was portrayed as a family and a bride entering into covenant with God. The Ten Commandments form the moral and spiritual "table of contents," from which all other laws flow, as Jesus later summarizes: love God, love your neighbor. The teaching compelled an introspective review of the laws because these commandments are not to be divided and dismissed but understood in their fullness and purpose as the wisdom of God.

A major theme last week was the biblical concept of slavery, which is to be carefully distinguished from the brutal chattel slavery known in modern history. Instead, biblical "slavery" often meant indentured servitude, with protections and rights ensuring dignity and eventual restoration. The laws of Exodus 21 show concern for the well-being and freedom of Hebrew servants, both male and female, with provisions for their release, fair treatment, and, in some cases, elevation to direct close familial status within the master's household. These laws were progressive, safeguarding women's rights and setting penalties for abuse or broken faith because the integrity of the family is important to Adonai.

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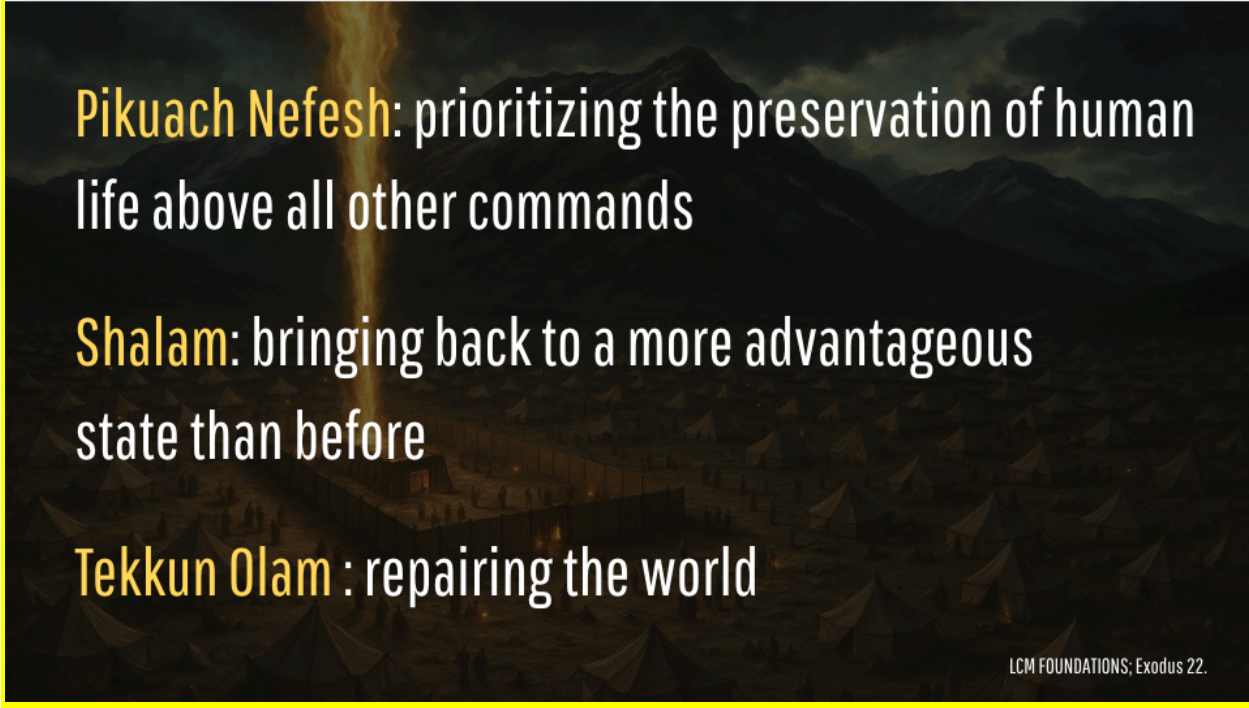
Our section on restitution and justice highlighted the Torah's focus on preserving life, preventing cycles of violence, and ensuring that penalties are proportional to the harm done. We noted that the law recognizes the difference between intentional and accidental harm, providing for cities of refuge to protect the innocent. Laws against kidnapping, murder, and abuse reflect the sanctity of life and the importance of justice. The principle of "eye for an eye" was explored in both judicial and personal contexts, and our teaching addressed Jesus' clarification of this principle, distinguishing between state justice and personal forgiveness.

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Finally, throughout the evening, we drew parallels between the Divine Laws and the teachings of Christ, portraying them as foreshadowing His role as mediator and bondservant—one who, out of love, willingly serves and redeems. Our hope was to highlight and affirm the eternal value of the law for shaping a righteous people and to urge you in ongoing study and appreciation of these statutes as a foundation for both personal transformation and societal well-being.

Tonight we are going to double-down on these concepts and further them. Before we continue, we wanted to educate you on a few Hebrew concepts that are crucial to our teaching tonight. We will be defining them further as we go along with etymological sources and examples, but we wanted to put them all on a slide together so you can begin to familiarize yourself with them.

**(READ SLIDE)**



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

**Shalam:** bringing back to a more advantageous state than before

**Tekkun Olam :** repairing the world

LCM FOUNDATIONS; Exodus 22.

We will show these basic definitions again and expound on them throughout the teaching, for now, let's begin with Pikuach Nefesh— a concept thoroughly rooted in the Torah that emphasizes it's intent.

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**(READ SLIDE)**

# PRESERVATION OF LIFE

Pikuach Nefesh (פיקוח נפש) is a fundamental Jewish principle that prioritizes the preservation of human life above all other religious obligations<sup>[1][2]</sup>. This concept, derived from Leviticus 19:16, permits the violation of most Jewish laws, including Sabbath restrictions, to save a life<sup>[1]</sup>. 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<sup>[1]</sup>. Pikuach Nefesh applies to both immediate threats and potentially life-threatening conditions<sup>[1]</sup>. 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<sup>[1]</sup>. 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<sup>[1][2]</sup>. The only exceptions to Pikuach Nefesh are the prohibitions against murder, idolatry, and incest<sup>[2][3]</sup>.

[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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"Pikuach Nefesh," a Hebrew term meaning "the preservation of life," embodies the profound principle that saving a life is the most significant aspect of the Law and its ultimate purpose.

When different commands of the Law appear to be in conflict in a specific situation, the principle of "Pikuach Nefesh" guides individuals in determining the correct "Halakha," or proper way to follow the commands. This principle has been evident throughout Jewish history, such as during the Maccabean wars around 150 B.C. During this time, the Jewish nation fought against the Greek-Seleucid empire, which sought to capture Jerusalem and enslave the Jewish people.

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The Greeks strategically planned their attacks on the Sabbath, knowing that the Jews would not fight back due to their observance of the Sabbath commandment to refrain from work. After suffering heavy casualties, Jewish leaders applied the principle of "Pikuach Nefesh," concluding that preserving life takes precedence over the Sabbath commandment. Consequently, the people of Israel were permitted to defend their lives on the Sabbath.



Let's take a look at the Law so that we can see where the principle, "Pikuach Nefesh", is derived from...

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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.

In our exploration of the 613 commands, we will encounter some that are highly specific and others, like this one, that have a broad application. The command to "not do anything to endanger your neighbor's life" should be understood in conjunction with the other 612 commands, collectively guiding the community of God to grasp the overarching intent of the Torah.

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In our next verse, you will be able see Jesus' own understanding and commentary on Leviticus 19:16.

- **Matthew 23:23 (ESV)**

23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

In this passage, Jesus emphasizes that the Torah contains instructions on both weightier and lighter matters. The scribes and Pharisees, who were devoted to the Torah and fellow Israelites of Jesus, are engaged in a family discussion about the Law. This conversation aims to return to the true intent of the Law and strengthen its foundation. Jesus is not suggesting that paying tithes should be neglected; rather, he is urging them to prioritize justice, mercy, faithfulness, and the promotion of life, while still observing their tithes. The key point Jesus is making is that they should give greater weight to the latter without disregarding the former.

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What is beautiful about this encounter is that after the time of Jesus, Judaism as a whole began to embrace the teaching of "Pikuach Nefesh", and that is how we as gentiles have been made aware of the principle...

To see the progression of this line of thought within Judaism, let's take a look at what the Apostle John wrote on this topic well after the time of Jesus.

- **1 John 5:16–17 (ESV)**

16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.

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Just like there are weightier and lighter matters of the Law, there are weightier and lighter ways to break the Law.

Because you are all Christians who love the Lord, you should be able to recognize our constant tendency to miss the intent of the Law in our daily application just like the Pharisees did.

Have you ever decided that it was more important to attend fellowship because you gave a verbal commitment while knowing that your children and your marriage are in need of serious repair and you should be pastoring your home? All of us have done it and we should be able to recognize the wisdom of Jesus' words: "You should have practiced the latter without neglecting the former."

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There are many instances in the Newer Testament regarding the importance of keeping commands and also doing good. One of the more frequent occurrences is the subject of healing on the Sabbath. Let's get into that subject with a shocking statement made by Jesus.

- **Matthew 12:5-8 (NIVUK84)**

5 Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? 6 I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. 7 If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. 8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

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Most Christians have never considered that a priest could be viewed as breaking the Sabbath because he is working harder on that day than any other day. Jesus perfectly displays the intent of the Law by demonstrating that the priests are innocent because they are reflecting God's desire to save lives. This is how Pikuach Nefesh works. The Law was never actually intended to promote legalism, it was intended to protect you from legalism and promote life.

Let's look at another more specific example of a healing controversy.

- **Mark 3:1–5 (ESV)**

3 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. 2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3 And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." 4 And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. 5 And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

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In this poignant example, you can see that Jesus perfectly reflects the Father's anger over the hardness of heart that twisted his Law against its very own purpose. The Law was intended to bring life, so of course the healing of a man is lawful on the sabbath. This is another example of Pikuach Nefesh. The need to bring life is greater than the general application of resting 1 day in 6.

The problem within these particular Jewish leaders is that they are so far from the intent of the Law that they actually have murderous hearts as the chapter goes on to describe how they sought to kill Jesus after this event.

As always, there is no problem with the perfect Torah of God, the problem lies in the hardness of the hearts of sinful men...

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Let's discuss a few practical examples.

Imagine you are a Pastor, eager to teach the noble principle of Hebrews 10:24-25, which urges believers not to forsake gathering together.

However, an Elder in your church has a house that has been severely damaged by a thunderstorm, leaving the roof open and the house vulnerable to the elements. With church service starting in an hour, you face a dilemma: Do you leave the Elder and the house to attend church, or do you stay and help the Elder repair the roof to protect the family from the storm? Which of these two options promote life to the greatest extent?

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You are traveling at night to a service where you are a featured speaker and you see a woman with small children with a flat tire in a dangerous part of town. Is your preaching of the word that evening more important or is it more important to make the congregation wait so that you can take care of the woman and children?

Let's draw from one more example... Leviticus 19:17 says that you are **not** to hate your brother in your heart, but you are to rebuke him frankly and yet Ephesians 4:29 says that you are to only speak what is uplifting and helpful for building up your brother. How are you to resolve these two commands? Are they actually in contradiction? Or is the most uplifting thing that you can do for your brother is to speak to him frankly? The principle of Pikuach Nephesh is about the preservation of his life and that should be the basis for choosing your words.

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Now that you have wrestled with this, it is interesting to note that much of the New Testament displays most of the Jewish leadership on the wrong

side of this principle, however, in the years following that period, the majority of the Jewish leadership did get this right and they enumerated the principles of Pikuach Nephesh and codified it in the Talmud. Consider that fact in light of this statement in Romans.

- **Romans 8:29 (NIVUK84)**

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

It would seem that the Nation of Israel is destined to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus, who is the living and breathing Torah. This happens when the principles of the Torah get worked into the people and they are falling in love with the substance of Jesus without knowing it.

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This is one of the many reasons that it is important for us to understand the aim of the Torah because it is the aim of Christ and it will be the means by which the nation comes to know him.

The Law could be summed up as "Loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength, and loving your neighbor as yourself." This makes the scenarios that we just wrestled with easy to solve.

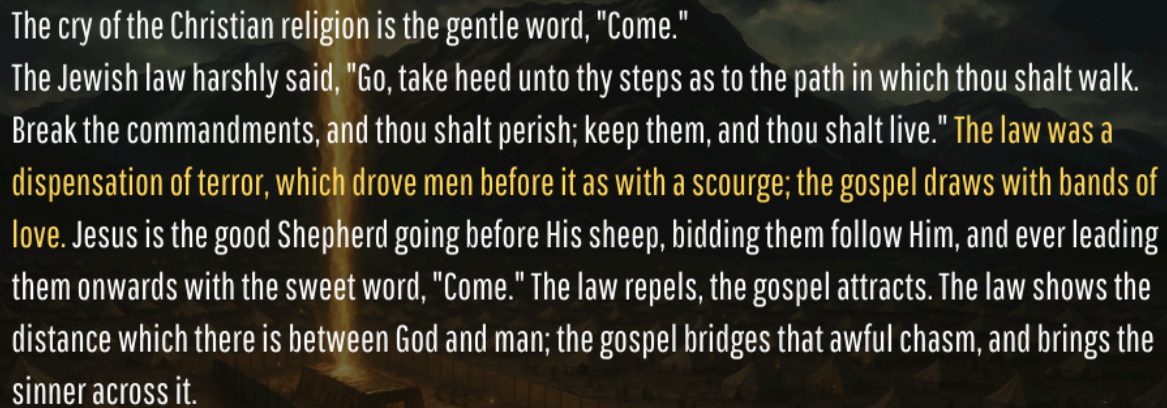
Unfortunately, this is not the way that Christians throughout our context view the Law of the Lord. Most grew up or were introduced the Law in a similar fashion to this excerpt we are about to read from Charles Spurgeon.

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Before we do, its worth noting that Spurgeon was a man who loved the Lord and did a great many things for Jesus that still echo today. These statements do not negate those acts, but we hope it serves as an example of how eloquence with error is dangerous, and all of us must filter our understanding of the Bible from the right end of the book.

**(READ SLIDE)**





The cry of the Christian religion is the gentle word, "Come."  
The Jewish law harshly said, "Go, take heed unto thy steps as to the path in which thou shalt walk. Break the commandments, and thou shalt perish; keep them, and thou shalt live." **The law was a dispensation of terror, which drove men before it as with a scourge; the gospel draws with bands of love.** Jesus is the good Shepherd going before His sheep, bidding them follow Him, and ever leading them onwards with the sweet word, "Come." The law repels, the gospel attracts. The law shows the distance which there is between God and man; the gospel bridges that awful chasm, and brings the sinner across it.

(from Spurgeon's Morning & Evening, Biblesoft formatted electronic database Copyright © 2014 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

This is undoubtedly verbiage most of you would connect with prior churches and sermons. Unfortunately, this perspective that the Law was terror and the Gospel is love would be impossible to ascertain if one properly surveyed the older testament. Let's take a minute and read some passages we referenced in recent weeks but have not taken the time to read in their entirety.

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- **Deuteronomy 7:9 (NIV)**

<sup>9</sup> Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

As early as 1500 years before Christ, Moses describes the covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai and all its Law's as a "covenant of love". Love did not begin with Jesus and the cross, the perfect Law from Sinai was completely loving in every way.

- **1 Kings 8:23–24 (NIV)**

<sup>23</sup> and said: “Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way.

<sup>24</sup> You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

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500 years later during the days of Solomon, what Adonai initiated at Sinai with his covenant and all his Laws is still be described as a "covenant of love".

For the entire period of Joshua's conquest, the time of the judges, Samuel, and King David, every single citizen of Israel would have known and considered the Law as a covenant of Love, not terror, and certainly not a scourge.


- **Nehemiah 9:32 (NIV)**

<sup>32</sup> “Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come on us, on our kings and leaders, on our priests and prophets, on our ancestors and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today.

As recent as 400 years before Christ, Nehemiah is still describing the Law the same way Moses did over 1000 years before him as a—"covenant of love". In fact, as we have shown you in weeks past— the Law is called 7 times in the scriptures, a "Covenant of Love".

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**(DO NOT READ)**



## Seven Times: "Covenant of Love"

1. Deuteronomy 7:9
2. Deuteronomy 7:12
3. 1 Kings 8:23
4. 2 Chronicles 6:14
5. Nehemiah 1:5
6. Nehemiah 9:32-33
7. Daniel 9:4-5

This is because the aim of the Law is Pikuach Nefesh, or the "preservation of life", and it was given by a loving husband and father to his bride so that their lives may go well and that they would live long in the land that they are going to possess.

You need to remember this when you come to a place in the Law where it seems that a penalty is being prescribed for a particular sin. The aim of the penalty is the preservation of life in the larger society and a love for the right standing of the community in their relationships with each other.

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To refresh your memory of what we taught last week, take a look at these next slides.

**(READ HIGHLIGHTS)**



# THE LAW = LIFE

Deuteronomy 30:19–20 (ESV)

19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that **I have set before you life** and death, blessing and curse. Therefore **choose life**, that you and your offspring may live, 20 loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Deuteronomy 32:47 NIV1984

47 They are not just idle words for you—**they are your life**. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."

Ezekiel 20:11 (CJB)

11 I gave them **my laws** and showed them my rulings; if a person obeys them, **he will have life through them**.

# THE LAW = LIFE pt 2

Proverbs 12:28 NIV1984

28 In the way of righteousness **there is life**; along that path is immortality.

Proverbs 19:16 NIV1984

He who obeys instructions (Mitzvot) **guards his life**, but he who is contemptuous of his ways will die.

Mark 3:3-5 NIV1984

3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." 4 Then Jesus asked them, "**Which is lawful** on the Sabbath: **to do good** or to do evil, **to save life** or to kill?" But they remained silent. 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Romans 7:10-11 NIV1984

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.

# THE LAW = LIFE pt 3

Revelation 20:4 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the **word of God**. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life** and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

1 Peter 1:23 (NIV)

<sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, **but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.**

1 John 1:1 (NIV)

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the **Word of life**.

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In this church it is easy to get you to agree quickly to the concept that the Law is life. However, ***the challenge before us is to actually see life in every individual law.***

With that in mind, let's read Psalm 119:18 so that we can gain the perspective of the original audience that received the Law.

- **Psalm 119:18 (NIVUK84)**

18 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

When we hear this passage, it's common to be interpreted as applying to the Newer Testament or the Psalms. However, the author of this Psalm is specifically speaking about the first five books of the Tanakh and highlighting the remarkable nature of all 613 commands. When we come across particular commands in the Torah that demand certain disciplinary actions, it is important to eliminate any thoughts that don't align with their true intent, which is the preservation of life.

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- **Matthew 13:52 (NIVUK84)**



52 He said to them, “Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old.”

When we hear this passage, it is natural for our church to associate the "treasures of old" with the teachings that have been handed down from our fathers to us. The straightforward interpretation of this passage specifically refers to the Torah, highlighting the immense value found in studying and implementing its teachings.

This means that every one of the 613 commands is a treasure that is aimed at life and is given as a part of the collective Covenant of Love.

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- **Deuteronomy 4:5–8 (NIVUK84)** 5 See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. 6 Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” 7 What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? 8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

Every one of the 613 commands was designed by God to display his wisdom and understanding to all who hear about the Torah. This is due to the fact that the aim of the Law is to preserve life and every command displays God's character.

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This is important to remember when we are looking at a command that may seem severe or difficult in its application because we often mistake the Law as a legalistic code that propagates penalty and restriction. The Law is actually a means to enhance, protect, and promote life where sin is involved and each command is given so that the maximum amount of life

can be protected in scenarios where sin would inevitably destroy the community.

As we get ready to read chapter 22, we wanted to remind you of one more concept that we taught in Exodus 21.

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### (ONLY 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.*

Many in the West are familiar with the Ten Commandments, though they may not fully appreciate their profound divine messages. Few realize that these commandments symbolize a significant wedding proposal and serve as the foundational framework for all other revelations. 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 will greatly enhance one's comprehension.

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### (NEXT SLIDE)



While scholars often categorize the Law into civil, ceremonial, and moral sections to aid understanding, these divisions are ultimately subjective interpretations that are flawed. It's important to resist the temptation to simplify Divine revelation into arbitrary sections, as this might prevent us from fully engaging with every word from God. We believe that every believer, regardless of their location or historical context, should engage with the original messages with the preservation of life in mind and determine how these Divine communications directly impact their own lives within their specific circumstances.

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Remember, that The Ten Commandments were delivered directly from heaven, with the people standing at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was present. God instructed Moses to send the people back to their tents while He conveyed His laws to Moses, who would then relay them to the people. The Ten Commandments are unique because the entire nation heard them directly from God, without any intermediary. In contrast, the rest of the laws were communicated through Moses, as the people had requested. It's important to note that Exodus 21

begins with the word "And," indicating that it is a continuation of Exodus 20, and this pattern continues into Exodus 22.

As we prepare to pray and begin the exposition on our Chapter, let's look at one last familiar Scripture and seek to view it in the light of the original audience:

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- **1 John 1:1–2 (ESV)**

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us—

When we encounter this Scripture it is only natural that we jump to the conclusion that it is speaking about Jesus, of course it is; but notice the manner in which John approached the subject. He first mentioned the word of life! This is the Torah. Then John tells you that the Torah was manifest as life and it has been seen, testified to, and proclaimed. Then he comes to the conclusion that the Torah or Word of Life had always been with the Father and was now manifest to us. This should cement the concept in your minds that Jesus is the Torah manifest in human form. Moreover, this means that when you read Exodus 22 you should see Jesus in every command and also that in every command you should see the actions of Jesus.

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Let's pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand the preservation of life that is the aim of the Torah that we might better understand the substance of Messiah as well as develop the foundational underpinning to properly interpret his actions.

**Read and Pray**

**1 “If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay back five head of cattle for the ox and four sheep for the sheep.**

As we start our chapter, we want you to know in advance that the first 16 verses of Exodus 22 are dealing with the **loss of an individual's property and the appropriate restitution** that is required. First, we would like to look at this verse from a ground level perspective and then we are going to make a few overview observations about what we are going to read in verses 1-17.

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It is interesting to note in verse 1, that the price of restitution is not the same for oxen as it is for sheep. If a man steals a sheep and kills it or sells it, he is only required to pay back fourfold while an ox demands a fivefold pay back. This begs the question why?

The idea is that because sheep are more numerous and less valuable, then the payback is less and because an ox is more expensive and provides more benefit to the owner, then the payback should be more. Consider a modern example, if someone stole your bicycle, then the payback would be less. But if someone stole a tractor that you used on your farm, then the payback should be far greater because the tractor is your livelihood.

Take a look at a few Rabbi's comments on this topic.

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**(READ SLIDE)**



# PROPER COMPENSATION

Says R. Meir, "Come and see how great is the power of work. **When a thief prevents an ox from doing its work**, he must pay five oxen; for a sheep, **which does no work**, only four." "Ox" and "sheep" are specified twice in the verse to make clear that these special amounts apply only in these particular cases.

RASHBAM

Five oxen. Our Sages say, "Since he prevents the ox from doing his work, he must pay five."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Five oxen for the ox, and four sheep for the sheep. The punishment for the ox is steeper for two reasons: First, it is easier to steal a sheep, and it can be carried away secretly; only an experienced thief can steal an ox. **Second, oxen are used for plowing, so when a man's ox is stolen, he suffers great damage.**

*Carasik, M., ed. (2005). Exodus: Introduction and Commentary (M. Carasik, Trans.; First edition, p. 184). The Jewish Publication Society.*

As we said in our introduction, the Torah aims at the preservation of life, even in matters where a man's livelihood may be at risk. This is precisely because if a man's ability to provide for his family is taken from him, his wife and children are now at risk.

A deeper dive into the specific Hebrew word that is used for "pay back" is going to reveal a broader concept.

**(READ SECOND HIGHLIGHT)**



# “PAY BACK”

y<sup>e</sup>šāl·lēm'

2401 שָׁלֵם (šālēm) be complete, sound.

Derivatives

- 2401a שָׁלוֹם (šālôm) peace.
- 2401b שֵׁלֶם (šelem) peace offering.
- 2401c שָׁלַם (šālam) be in a covenant of peace. Denominative verb.
- 2401d שָׁלֵם (šālēm) perfect, whole, full.
- 2401e שָׁלַם (šillēm) recompense (Deut 32:35, only).
- 2401f שָׁלְמוֹן (šalmōn) reward, bribe (Isa 1:23, only).
- 2401g שָׁלוּם (šillûm), שָׁלֹם (šillūm) recompense, reward.
- 2401h שְׁלֻמָּה (šillūmâ) reward (Ps 91:8, only).
- 2401i שְׁלֹמֹה (šēlōmōh) Solomon.

The general meaning behind the root š-l-m is of completion and fulfillment—of entering into a state of wholeness and unity, a restored relationship.

*G. Lloyd Carr, “2401 שָׁלַם,” in Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 930.*

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You can see in the family of words, a relationship between "Shalom" and the word for pay back. The concept of "pay back" is not simply paying back what was stolen, but rather bringing the situation to a **far more advantageous state than before the sin occurred**. If a man stole an ox, he is not simply required to pay back one ox, he has to pay back 5 oxen and bring the offended party into a better position. **This law is aimed at the improvement of life not just the righting of a wrong.**

This also shows us that the Law's view on repentance is not just saying sorry or apologizing... Repentance according to the Law must include actions that make restitution and leave the situation better than before the sin occurred.

~

Take a look at Vine's Expository Dictionary for the definition of this word.

**(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.*

~

One would think that if you stole an ox, that the repayment of a singular ox would make things complete. However, in the mind of God, returning things to the original state is not nearly enough. He seeks to **improve the state** so that it is not subject to fundamental flaw. In other words, it is not enough to erase a sinful action, **the situation must be bettered to the point that sinful actions do not occur.** This is not merely punishment and penalty... it is restoration and hints at glorification. After the sin has occurred and been dealt with, the situation is better than before the sin occurred.

For instance, when a man is saved, he does not simply stop sinning, he begins to act like God. He is not simply saved from wrath and returned to his original state, he is to become glorified and move **beyond** his original state.

~

Believers encountering this command will need re-think what it means to repent. It is not enough to stop what you were doing or to repay one for one. The believer must transcend the behavior and go beyond towards actions that benefit all mankind.



Consider Zaccheus:

- **Luke 19:8 (NIVUK84)**

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, **I will pay back four times** the amount."

Zaccheus apparently did not believe that he stole anyone's ox or harmed anyone's right to work, but was in danger of having taken away their sheep which is like taking food from their mouths, or money from their pockets.

~

In Zaccheus' understanding, saying "sorry", or claiming that he was forgiven without making restitution was not enough... It was now **his responsibility to make a better world**.

Understanding this subtle point reveals an extraordinary difference between Hellenistic thought and the worldview of biblical Judaism. Hellenistic thought may seek to balance an equation but the Biblical Mandate is **to better the equation**. Let's get into the subject of Tikkun Olam...

Our discussion is going to begin with what God said about the creation at the time of creation:

~

**(Read slide)**



The Biblical view is that God's creation is good and that sin is an intruding contaminate that was introduced into what God created as good or very good. The Hellenistic thought is that every physical thing is inherently bad and the creation must be escaped into another realm of existence like "Elysium". For instance, Jews pray to thank God for making food grow out of the ground and Greeks pray to make their food clean or blessed. The fundamental difference is that Jews believe what God has given is already good and Greeks seem to believe the material world is inherently bad.

~

The consequence of these two worldviews are that Jews seek to better the world **and** Greeks seek to escape it. You can see in the Law the principle of going beyond righting the wrong and bettering the world around you. In Judaism this is called "Tikkun Olam" or "Repairing the World". Let's review the principle of "Tikkun Olam".

**(Read Slide)**



# 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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The eschatological implications of these opposing worldviews is apparent. Greeks seek to escape this world and go to another realm, while Jews seek to participate in building the world to come (on earth) by repairing it through their actions daily.

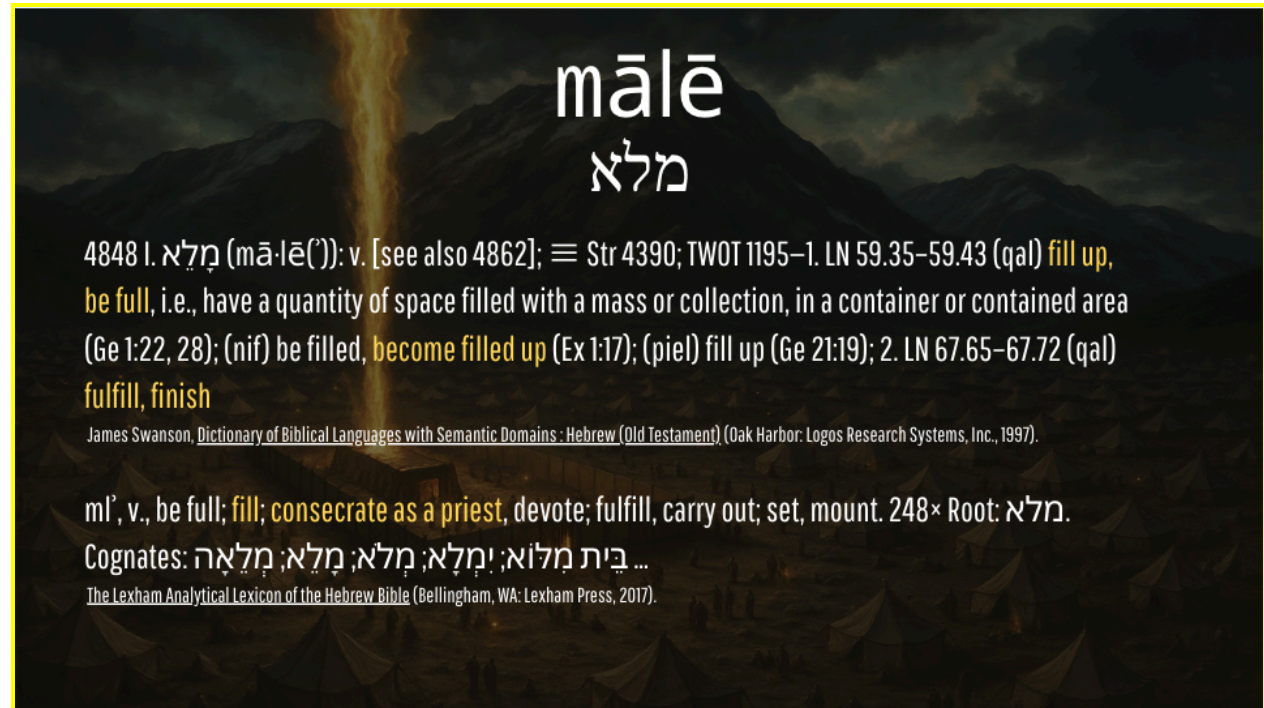
When most Christians think of returning good for evil, they tend to think of balancing the equation. However, when you think deeply about the subject, that is not *truly good*; that is simply bringing the situation back to neutral. The Torah reveals the truth that good in return for evil requires the betterment of the situation not simply returning to the previous status quo.

~

The Law taught the Jews to view themselves as agents of betterment in the world and not simply as lowly, flawed individuals whose only hope is to stop sinning or making mistakes. Christians, think about this with us for a moment... Salvation is not simply the cessation of sin, it is the ultimate glorification of man into a position that is higher than when he started. Man was not to be in a neutral position, but his task was to fill the earth and subdue it... bringing the heavenly realities into the earthly realm.

$\sim$ 

**28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

 $\sim$ 

# mālē

## מלא

4848 I. מָלָא (mā-lē(')): v. [see also 4862]; ≡ Str 4390; TWOT 1195–1. LN 59.35–59.43 (qal) **fill up, be full**, i.e., have a quantity of space filled with a mass or collection, in a container or contained area (Ge 1:22, 28); (nif) be filled, **become filled up** (Ex 1:17); (piel) fill up (Ge 21:19); 2. LN 67.65–67.72 (qal) **fulfill, finish**

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

ml', v., be full; **fill; consecrate as a priest**, devote; fulfill, carry out; set, mount. 248× Root: מלא.

Cognates: מְלֵאָה; מְלֵאָה; מְלֵאָה; יִמְלֵא; בֵּית מְלוּאָה ...

The Lexham Analytical Lexicon of the Hebrew Bible (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2017).

The point is that the first principle of the Adamic mandate is to fill, finish, fulfill, and satisfy the world around you by multiplying and filling the earth with the image of God. The Laws that we are reading tonight all involve going way beyond a 1 for 1 restitution and participating in the betterment of the world (Tikkun Olam) by filling what was broken with an abundance of goodness.

Lastly, the second principle in the Adamic mandate is to "subdue" the earth. Again, any good lexicon will tell you that this word is "Kabash" and it speaks of forcefully gaining control over something that is resisting you.

~

**(Do not read)**

**KABASH**  
כָּבַשׁ

†[כָּבַשׁ] <sup>3533</sup> S <sup>951</sup> TWOT <sup>3899</sup> GK vb. **subdue**, bring into bondage (NH id., press, oppress; Aramaic כָּבַשׁ, חָבַשׁ (kbaš) **tread down**, beat or make a path, subdue; Arabic كَبَسَ (kabasa) press, squeeze, knead (body or limb, as in the bath, massage), also attack, assault)

Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 461.

The word can even be translated as to enslave. So the task of mankind is to fill "Male`" the world with the image and actions of God and to also "Kabash" or forcefully subdue and enslave elements that are resistant to God's rule.

Let's run through a few conceptual links to these principles as we explore Tikkun Olam and the preservation of Life found in the Torah:

- **1 Kings 8:10–11 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud **filled** the house of the Lord, <sup>11</sup> so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

~

God's presence filled "Male`" the temple in the same way that man was told to fill the earth with the image of God. The Law does not stop at righting a wrong; it requires the betterment of the situation filling the scenario with abundant life. Similar scenes of Adonai filling a situation can be observed in Isaiah 6:1, Jeremiah 23:24, and 2 Chronicles 7:1 but let's move to conceptual links in the Newer Testament:

- **Acts 2:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

In the book of Acts the fire-validated Apostles, were filled with the Holy Spirit and began repairing the world. They did not just right wrongs; they went way beyond that and into Tikkun Olam or the repairing of the world.

~

- **Acts 2:43 (ESV)**

<sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

The Torah required a multiplied effort to both make restitution for a sin and leave the situation far better than it had been previously. None of the Jewish Apostles were simply forgiven for their sins, in the sense that we tend to think about it. They all went on to repair the world by extending the



image of God into the previously broken situation and even perform signs, wonders, and miracles. They did this because they were "filled" with the one who wants us to "fill" the world with the image of God. This principle was first presented in the Genesis section of the Torah and was then expanded upon in the Laws that we are reading.

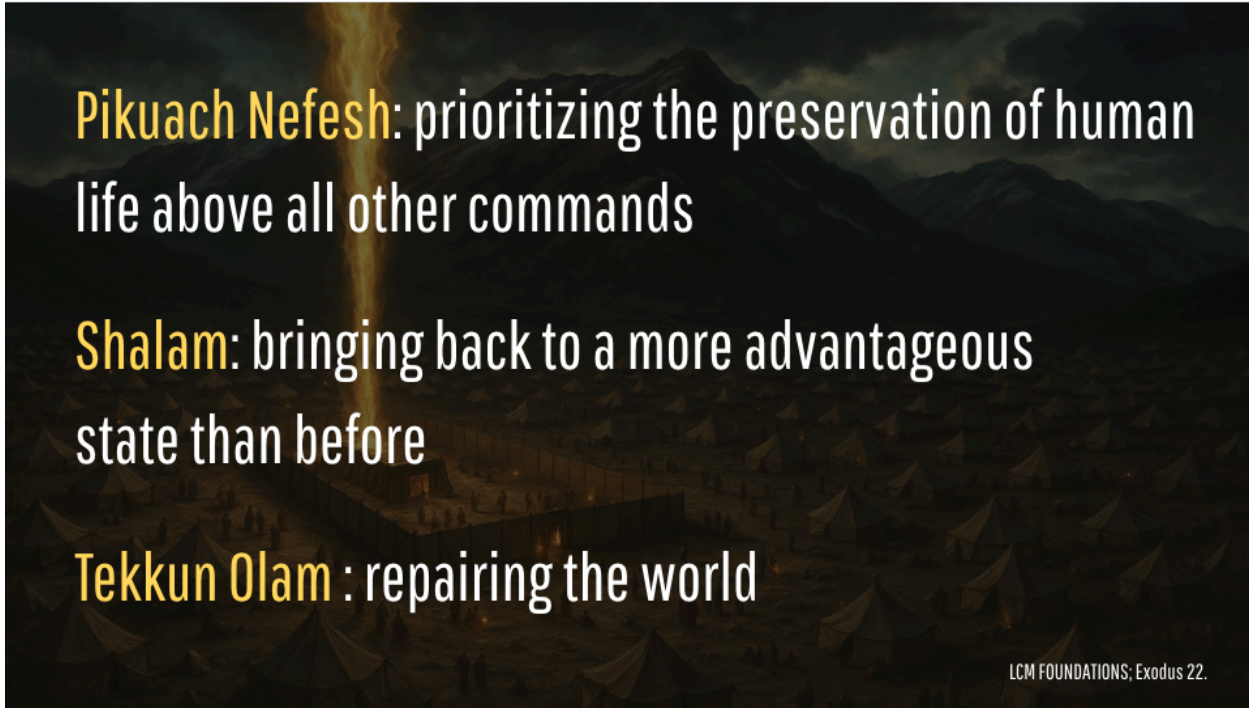
~

Look at this:

- **Acts 5:28 (ESV)**

**28** saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have **filled** Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

The Jewish Apostles were so active in accomplishing works for Adonai done in the name of Jesus Christ that the Sanhedrin said they had "filled" Jerusalem with this principle.



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

**Shalam:** bringing back to a more advantageous state than before

**Tekkun Olam :** repairing the world

We are exploring the divine law contained within Exodus 22 tonight and it is beyond the scope of our meeting to teach on "Male`", "Kabash", and "Tikkun Olam" in a comprehensive fashion; but you should know that all of these principles are rooted foundationally in the Torah that is "Pekuach Nefesh" or the preservation of life.

This perspective might even lead you to rethink what Jesus meant when he said, "I have come to give you abundant life." Perhaps, this phrase is best understood as not just balancing the equation but **enhancing it**. In other words, despite the occurrence of sin, **both Jesus and the Law demand that the outcome be better than the original predicament**.

We are going to need to move towards verse 2 very soon but this is an excellent opportunity to introduce you to a Jewish prayer that has concluded every prayer service since the 2nd Temple period in Judaism.

~

**(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;

~

One can certainly see how the emphasis of this prayer takes note of the specially chosen status of the Jewish people to be Adonai's representatives

on earth. When you combine this prayer with the Shema (which is an exhortation to obey and love the LORD with all your heart), and the Amidah (which is a charge to uphold the responsibility of Jews to establish God's kingdom), and also the descriptions of the world to come in Isaiah 11, it is not hard to understand why Jews see themselves as those who are to Tikkun Olam or repair the world.

These principles are thoroughly rooted in every area of the Tanakh and Newer Testament. Those who called Adonai their King must "fill" the earth with His image and put the "Kabash" on sin. The Law and the Spirit of God compel us to do more than balance an equation, we are to bring abundant life to sinful situations and leave the situation far better than we found it.

~

**2 “If a thief is caught breaking in and is struck so that he dies, the defender is not guilty of bloodshed; 3 but if it happens after sunrise, he is guilty of bloodshed. “A thief must certainly make restitution, but if he has nothing, he must be sold to pay for his theft.**

We should not need to comment much on verse 2 and 3a because we covered the concept of using force extensively in chapter 20. We will however show you one slide that we covered in that chapter so that we can review the concept quickly.

**(Do not read)**



# Use Of Force

Force	Grey Area	Limit
Exodus 15:2-3	Luke 22:35-38	Matthew 5:38-41
Psalms 82:3-4	John 18:10-11	Romans 13:1-5
Proverbs 24:10-12		James 1:19
Genesis 14:14-16		Ephesians 6:17
Matthew 8:9		Nehemiah 4:13-14
Luke 3:14		
Acts 10:7		
Hebrews 11:32		

On the left of the slide are the areas of the Tanakh that promote the use of physical force in a specific scenario, on the right are passages that limit the usage of physical force, and in the middle are passages that contain "gray areas" where the use of physical force is neither promoted nor limited and must be approached with caution.

~

The idea that a homeowner would be charged guilty for killing a thief breaking into his house during daytime is very different from our own Texas-style sense of justice. This is because in our state, the right to use lethal force is valued higher than the preservation of life! God's own commitment to the preservation of his creation caused him to foresee events that could result in bloodshed unnecessarily and place restrictions on the amount of force that would be used when it could be avoided in the daytime...

Again, it is clear that God as the creator is very serious about the preservation of the very life that he created. Remember that man is created

in the image of God and he breathed his very own breath into man and gave him life. This should cause us to think twice before making quick assumptions about what vengeance should look like or what a man's fate should be.

~

On another note, notice that the law prescribes "Shalam" or "restitution" that must be paid back from the thief to the person that he stole from... Again, the balance of right and wrong is not the aim here, the aim is to leave the victim of the theft in a better place than he was in before...

Reflecting on last week's lesson, we learned that biblical slavery often took the form of indentured servitude, typically lasting seven years, and frequently resulted in the servant becoming a willing and integrated member of the household. This command, therefore, has a restorative nature. If a thief cannot make restitution, they have the opportunity to join the household as a means of repayment. This integration could lead to transformation, where the individual may choose to remain with the household. **This mirrors our own experience:** we were indebted beyond our ability to repay, yet we have offered ourselves as lifelong servants to the Messiah, who has forgiven our debts. The Law serves as a foundational framework for preserving life and creating genuine shalom, ultimately leaving people in a far better state than their original predicament.

The Law is concerned with the life of the victim of crime, but also the perpetrator. The Law does not allow for a homeowner to exercise any level of force he deems fit if someone breaks in—in fact, too much force would but the victim of the break-in as guilty!

Additionally, the Law does not just fund the criminals room and board for a few years, it actually has a structure of rehabilitation to teach and instruct the criminal so their life can be saved.

~

**4 “If the stolen animal is found alive in his possession—whether ox or donkey or sheep—he must pay back double.**

Notice that earlier it was commanded that if a thief stole an animal and killed it or sold it, he is to pay back 4-5 times what was lost. Now in the event that a man stole an animal and the animal was found alive in his possession, he is required to pay back double even though he has the animal that he stole and he could easily return it.

Again the point of the restitution that is required is not about righting a wrong, it is about leaving the situation better than before the sin occurred.

~

This should allow you to easily see that the intent of the **Law was never restriction**. The aim of the Law is the restoration of situations that have been affected by the sinful actions of others and its purpose is to set both the one committing the offense and the one whom the offense was committed against in a state that is **better than before the sin was committed**.

According to the Law, the man that had his possessions stolen, would receive back double of what he lost. This is clearly leaving the offended party in a better state, and the fact that this law exists would promote the sense of security in regards to ownership of property in Israel. On the other side, the offender in this case was given by the law the opportunity to make restitution in the event that his sinful heart led him astray and he acted in accordance with his sinful nature.

~

This is beautiful in many ways, due to the fact that the offender was not done away with, he was allowed to remain a part of the community as an accepted member and he himself would be in a better state than he was before having made full restitution or "Shalam-Shalom".

With this in mind, let's review the 1st verse of Psalm 119 together.

- **Psalm 119:1 (ESV)**

119 Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the LORD!

When we are thinking about the concepts of Tikkun Olam and Shalom, it is easy for us to see this applying to the person that the wrong was committed against **only**. The Law's aim is the preservation of life for both the man who was wronged and the man who committed the wrong. By giving the specific amount for the restitution that was to be made, the Law is providing the exact path for re-entry into right standing or "Shalom" with God and Man.

~

When you read in Psalm 119 about those who walk in the law of the Lord being blameless, you should not think of men who are flawless, but of men who have committed to making restitution as the Law prescribes, which brings them into a state of Shalom and allows them to "Repair the World", even through their own errors!

With that said, we think that it is shallow and carnal reasoning to see the Law as anything other than life-giving and beautiful in every scenario.

**5 “If a man grazes his livestock in a field or vineyard and lets them stray and they graze in another man’s field, he must make restitution from the best of his own field or vineyard**

~

The concept of Tikkun Olam is so interwoven throughout the Law that even if a man loses his crops due to the negligence of his neighbor, the neighbor must "shalam" or make "shalom" for the damaged vegetation.

The text highlights that the crops lost by the offended party are not specified in terms of quality, whether they were the best part of the field or not. Regardless of the quality of the lost crops, the offender is required to compensate with the best part of their own field. This implies that even if the farmer lost sickly crops, the compensation must come from the healthiest and most valuable crops of the offender's field.

~

For example, if you borrowed another man's tape measure on a jobsite, even though you have 5 sitting at home, and you happen to break it or lend it to someone else carelessly, you would be required to give the man your

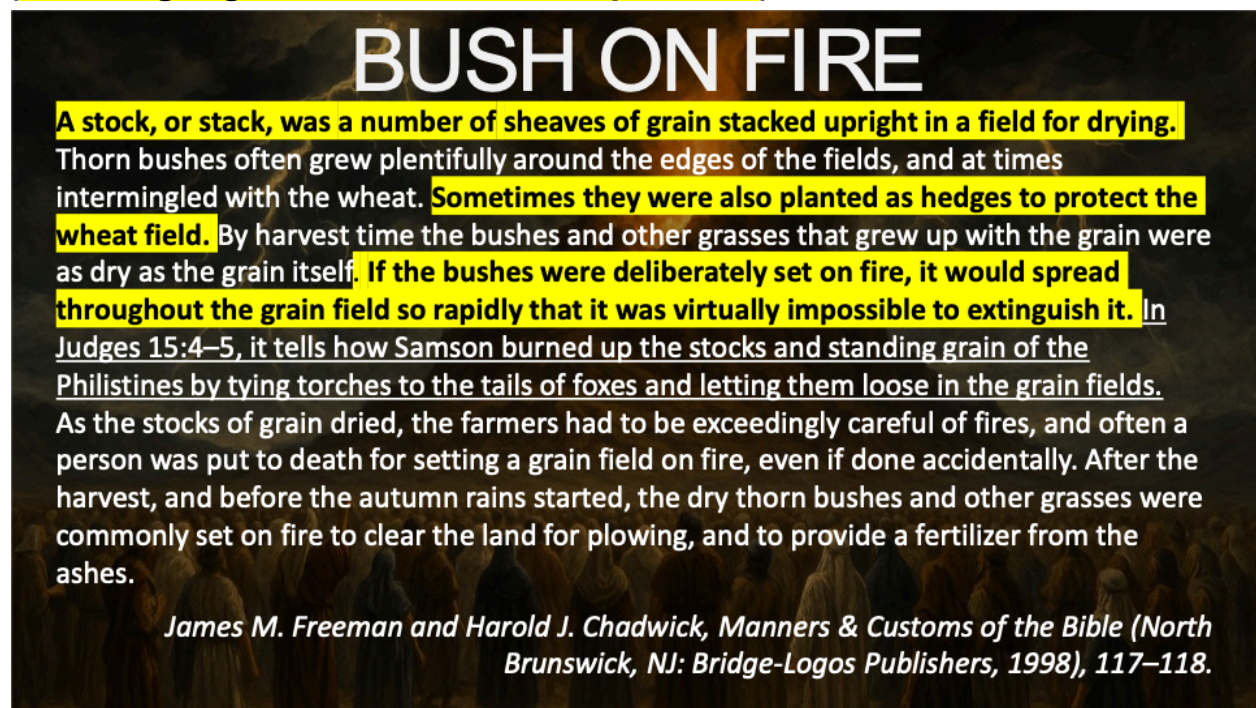
35' Milwaukee magnetic wide blade, even you borrowed a 6' Stanley power-lock. Or for you ladies, if you borrowed a T-fal cooking pan from someone else and you broke it, you would be required to give them your Calphalon.

Even in the most minute details, God's aim and the aim of the Law is to repair the broken state of the world by making every situation better through your involvement. With that in mind, we cannot see why faithless theologians and shallow Christians alike would rather do away with the Law, when the Law's aim is to make the world a better place.

~

**6 “If a fire breaks out and spreads into thornbushes so that it burns shocks of grain or standing corn or the whole field, the one who started the fire must make restitution.**

**(Read highlighted and underlined portions)**



## BUSH ON FIRE

**A stock, or stack, was a number of sheaves of grain stacked upright in a field for drying.** Thorn bushes often grew plentifully around the edges of the fields, and at times intermingled with the wheat. **Sometimes they were also planted as hedges to protect the wheat field.** By harvest time the bushes and other grasses that grew up with the grain were as dry as the grain itself. **If the bushes were deliberately set on fire, it would spread throughout the grain field so rapidly that it was virtually impossible to extinguish it.** In Judges 15:4–5, it tells how Samson burned up the stocks and standing grain of the Philistines by tying torches to the tails of foxes and letting them loose in the grain fields. As the stocks of grain dried, the farmers had to be exceedingly careful of fires, and often a person was put to death for setting a grain field on fire, even if done accidentally. After the harvest, and before the autumn rains started, the dry thorn bushes and other grasses were commonly set on fire to clear the land for plowing, and to provide a fertilizer from the ashes.

*James M. Freeman and Harold J. Chadwick, Manners & Customs of the Bible (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1998), 117–118.*

Because we are all city slickers living in a concrete jungle, we have included this reference so that you can better understand what is at stake in the event that a fire got out of control in Ancient Israel.

~

What you should notice is that if a fire had gotten out of control, apparently it was such a dramatic event that the other nations surrounding Israel instituted laws that required the death penalty for the negligent party. By now, you already understand that the purpose of the Law is the preservation of life, so it should not be a mystery to you to see that the Torah prohibited such an extreme measure and only required restitution in the event that the fire caused damage.

**7 “If a man gives his neighbor silver or goods for safekeeping and they are stolen from the neighbor’s house, the thief, if he is caught, must pay back double. 8 But if the thief is not found, the owner of the house must appear before the judges to determine whether he has laid his hands on the other man’s property.**

~

To understand why the scenario might happen in the first place, imagine that you owned a large arsenal of firearms or maybe a large amount of precious metals like gold or silver but you do not own a proper safe and you asked your friend to keep the items for you in his safe so that your property could be secure... Then your friend tells you that the home was broken into and the safe was stolen.

In this case, the wisdom and majesty of the Law cannot be understated. This law would leave you better off than you were before even though your valuables are gone. Furthermore, this law would be a protection of your friendship as it would prevent retaliatory measures that could be taken if you suspected your friend of making up the story so that he could take your possessions.

~

To take this thought even further, this law would also protect you from theft through a third party, meaning that if the friend that you gave your goods to for safekeeping staged the theft with another one of his friends so that they could both benefit from the theft your goods, you would be protected. Again, it's hard to see this as restrictive or punitive... Unless you are the one plotting to take your neighbor's goods...

**9 In all cases of illegal possession of an ox, a donkey, a sheep, a garment, or any other lost property about which somebody says, 'This is mine,' both parties are to bring their cases before the judges. The one whom the judges declare guilty must pay back double to his neighbor.**

~

It is not hard to see that the principle of both parties being present before judges has influenced the way that we conduct legal trials in a court of law today. Consider that the Torah of God gave this stipulation 3600 years ago, and it wasn't until 1787 A.D. when this right was introduced into our own country.

- **Proverbs 18:17 (NIV)**

17 The first to present his case seems right,  
till another comes forward and questions him.

The Torah ensured that both parties were represented before judges who would make legal decisions based the preservation of rights and the betterment of the world for both parties involved.

At this point in the teaching you should have an understanding that whoever commits a crime must make restitution that improves the life of both parties.

Not only is stealing clearing damaging to the one who lost property, a false witness about theft could also be damaging even if it was found out to be false. This is relevant in our culture in regards to the #metoo and hyper P.C movement. Many people in the limelight have been accused of some sort misconduct, and immediately shunned by society to only later be acquitted, yet continuing to suffer as if guilty. The perfect law accounts for every crime, including being falsely accused or character assassination.

Look at Deuteronomy 19:16-19:



- **Deuteronomy 19:16–19 (NIV 84)**

16 If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse a man of a crime, 17 the two men involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the LORD before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time. 18 The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against his brother, 19 then do to him as he intended to do to his brother. You must purge the evil from among you.

As you can see, this clearly is connected to Exodus 22:9 because the one who falsely accused his brother now has to pay him what he was trying to gain in the first place.

Once again, the Law was aimed as preserving the life of all people, even if they were guilty or accused of wrongdoing.

~

**10 “If a man gives a donkey, an ox, a sheep or any other animal to his neighbor for safekeeping and it dies or is injured or is taken away while no-one is looking, 11 the issue between them will be settled by the taking of an oath before the LORD that the neighbor did not lay hands on the other person’s property. The owner is to accept this, and no restitution is required. 12 But if the animal was stolen from the neighbor, he must make restitution to the owner. 13 If it was torn to pieces by a wild animal, he shall bring in the remains as evidence and he will not be required to pay for the torn animal.**

This event is like what we just read in verse 7, but slightly different. In this event the owner is widely assumed by many Rabbis to be **paying** another man to guard his possessions. You should be able to see this in verse 12 where if it was determined that the possessions were stolen from the man who should have been guarding them, the man who was entrusted the possessions has to make restitution where in verse 7-8 he is not liable.

~

As an example, imagine that someone is going out of town and they pay you to store their motorcycle because you have a garage with security systems installed and they don't. In the event that the motorcycle is stolen, you would be responsible to make restitution because you were paid to keep it.

Pay close attention to verse 10, as it introduces a scenario filled with ambiguity regarding whether the item was actually stolen or not. The situation is resolved by an investigation that involves taking oaths before the Lord, then entrusting the judgment to God who would determine what actually happened. If the man could prove that the items were destroyed by an event that was outside of his control then the evidence would be sufficient to release the man from his liability.

~

The principles of government entities like the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) can be traced back to the teachings of the Torah, established 3600 years ago. The concept of insuring your bank deposits for safekeeping is deeply rooted in these eternal laws, demonstrating their enduring relevance and practicality.

~

**14 “If a man borrows an animal from his neighbor and it is injured or dies while the owner is not present, he must make restitution. 15 But if the owner is with the animal, the borrower will not have to pay. If the animal was hired, the money paid for the hire covers the loss.**

This law presents 3 scenarios:

1. A man borrows something from his neighbor and it is damaged or lost while the owner is not present... In this event restitution is required...
2. A man borrows something from his neighbor and it is damaged or lost while the owner is present... Restitution is not required.
3. A man pays to use something that belongs to his neighbor and it is damaged or lost, restitution is not required... The price of rental is enough to pay for the loss.

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The idea being conveyed is that if the item is borrowed and the owner is not present to oversee the usage of the item, then the man who borrowed is liable. If the owner is present then he could oversee and manage the usage of his property and the owner is liable not the borrower. In the event that a price was negotiated for the use of the item then the borrower would be protected from an exaggerated estimate of the damages that could be used to benefit the owner at a risk of harm to the borrower.

Unlike modern insurance policies that are a third party entity that often aims to minimize payouts to the owner while maximizing their own profits, the Torah ensures fairness and promotes peace by protecting the interests of both parties involved. This approach leaves everyone in a better position than they were before the loss.

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**16 “If a man seduces a virgin who is not pledged to be married and sleeps with her, he must pay the bride-price, and she shall be his wife. 17 If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must still pay the bride-price for virgins.**

This law placed immense importance on a virgin's purity and honor, serving as a deterrent to premarital sex by ensuring that the man would be held accountable and required to marry the woman. In many ancient societies, women were often regarded as property without rights. However, the Torah sought to protect women, recognizing them as lifelong covenantal partners in a man's calling.

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In the event that a woman's purity was violated, the Torah's aim is to repair the situation to a state that was better than before. The man is obligated to be her priest, protector, and provider. If the father refused, then the bride price still had to be paid and can be seen as a protective measure against any physical retaliation from the father. In both cases the Torah aimed at restoring life to a situation that would potentially be life altering.

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The next series of laws will still be aimed at life as it relates to the welfare and life of the community as a whole. There are specific behaviors that will

be outlined as cancerous and in need of immediate excision from the community to preserve the life of the people.

### **18 “Do not allow a sorceress to live.**

We do not have time to go into a lengthy scripture string on this topic, but in your own time you should review the Demonology teaching in our Ministry Training 2 class because you will see that this has little to do with cultic practices like using a Ouija Board but rather the practice of sorcery actively serving other gods or demons by being their agent on earth. In your own time you can look at Psalm 96:5 in the LXX where you will find that the gods of the nations are not just lifeless idols made of wood and stone, they are actually demons.

This command is rooted in the 1st and 2nd commandment which forbids God's people from having other gods, and was given from Adonai as a husband to protect his bride from adulterous practices with foreign deities. With that in mind, even though this command seems to be aimed at the death of perpetrators, it's aim is actually the **life of the community** and preserving their holiness and fidelity by not allowing any **enticing** influences in their midst.

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### **19 “Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death.**

### **20 “Whoever sacrifices to any god other than the LORD must be destroyed.**

These verses seem straightforward enough, however, they raise significant discussion among believers. This is particularly true when believers are not well versed in the nuances of difference between personal forgiveness and the responsibility of the state to purge evil from the community to preserve the innocent within the community.

The hypothetical question often arises that asks, "Why do we not do this today?" The answer is two-fold: Firstly we are not the state government

and our government is not a theocracy founded upon God's word.  
Secondly, the Torah is the constitution of Israel and we live in pagan lands.

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Whatever your thoughts are on the subject it is important to remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is the Word of God manifest in human form. A careful examination of the book of Revelation will reveal that He does put people to death that fall into these categories upon His return.

To be clear, we are not encouraging you to pick up weaponry and head out to enforce the Torah, but it is vital to understand that there is no contradiction between the personage of Jesus Christ and the application of the Law on a societal level.

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**21 “Do not ill-treat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt.**

**22 “Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. 23 If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. 24 My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless.**

This verse introduces two very important concepts that are necessary for you to understand. The first is that God will not tolerate the kind of wickedness that takes for granted the kindness that God has shown his people in rescuing them from oppression and then oppressing others in the same manner and the second concept is that God is the highest authority to which someone can appeal to.

The Law promotes judicial authority within the societal structure of Israel and yet, if widows and orphans are being oppressed in their midst, they have the ability to appeal to God and he will personally take action because **he himself hates oppression.**

- **Psalm 68:5-6 (NIV)**



5 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,  
is God in his holy dwelling.

6 God sets the lonely in families,  
he leads forth the prisoners with singing;  
but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

~

In the Law, to promote the preservation of life, stipulations are given regarding the appointment of judges that can oversee difficult situations and make decisions based on the intent of the Torah and the betterment of society. Although this is beautiful, the Torah does not present these judges as having the ultimate authority. It is God himself who has the supreme authority and God makes this facet of his character part of his name and title.

As the righteous judge over the entire earth, he presides as a father of the fatherless and a defender of the weak. This is important to consider in the light of topics like capital punishment or discipline required for a certain action. Like any father would, God is very serious about protecting his family and he will not tolerate the oppression of one brother over another.

**25 “If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a money-lender; charge him no interest.**

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We need to move forward, so we will keep our comments here brief, but if you view the people of God as you do the world, then this principle will be lost on you. If you view the people of God **as your family**, then this makes sense...

As family we are not to be benefitted in any way by our brother's loss nor are we to be advantaged by someone else in the family being needy.

This is very much the same as the command before it, God will not tolerate family members setting themselves over their brothers or benefitted by someone else in humble circumstances.

- **Psalm 18:35 (NIVUK84)**

35 You give me your shield of victory,  
and your right hand sustains me;  
you stoop down to make me great.

~

God himself bridges the gap between his greatness and the lowly position of others and he **brings them to his position**. The Torah emphasizes the importance of Tikkun Olam, or repairing the world. Benefiting from your brother's need would only worsen the situation and increase their hardship. Instead, we should strive to alleviate their need and contribute to their well-being.

**26 If you take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, return it to him by sunset, 27 because his cloak is the only covering he has for his body. What else will he sleep in? When he cries out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.**

This is 2nd time that it is mentioned that the oppressed cry out to God. Take a look at what 1 Samuel 2:25 says:

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- **1 Samuel 2:25 (NIV)**

25 If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?"

This may seem like a truly insignificant detail to the western reader, but notice God's closeness and connectiveness to Man who is created in his image. He does not want his creation to have to suffer harm as a result of the negligence of others, specifically at night when he would need his garment to keep him warm.

You should also be able to see this as a Kal Vey Chomer, if this is true for a garment that a man clothes himself with, how much more would it be true for a dwelling that his family sleeps in?

As a side note, this is a great interpretive key to reading the law. The cloak in reality is a small possession but if the law takes the time to be specific about a small item then the same law would definitely apply to something much larger or more valuable.

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**28 “Do not blaspheme God or curse the ruler of your people. 29 “Do not hold back offerings from your granaries or your vats. “You must give me the firstborn of your sons. 30 Do the same with your cattle and your sheep. Let them stay with their mothers for seven days, but give them to me on the eighth day. 31 “You are to be my holy people. So do not eat the meat of an animal torn by wild beasts; throw it to the dogs.**

Now that we have come to the end of our chapter, we wanted to take some time to give you a practical scripture sting on the practical nature of *Tikkun Olam* and your responsibility as those who have been grafted into the blessing of Israel and their role in repairing the world through righteous actions.

- **Genesis 12:1–3 (NIVUK84)**

12 The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. 2 “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

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Abraham was selected from among the nations to represent God and exemplify actions rooted in faith to heal the world. This entire process reflects Adonai's intention to save lives from every nation as they embrace the faith of Abraham, ultimately leading to a world that is significantly improved from its original state.

- **Exodus 19:5 (NIVUK84)**

5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,

The election of Israel was for the purpose of becoming a priestly nation that would dwell closely with Adonai and magnify his image among the nations. The Laws given to Israel aim at the preservation of life and building a better world. **When Israel is chief among all nations even lambs will lie down with wolves in harmony**

- **Isaiah 12:4 (NIVUK84)**

4 In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;

**make known** among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

~

The Torah of God serves as the constitution of Israel. As the nations witness the closeness of Adonai to His people and Israel shares His ways with the world, the result will be the preservation of life and the establishment of God's Kingdom on Earth. In this future world, there will be no more tears, mourning, or death.

- **Psalms 33:1–8 (NIVUK84)**

1 Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.

2 Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.

3 Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and **shout for joy.**

4 **For the word of the LORD is right and true;** he is faithful in all he does.

5 The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him.

Even the songs of Israel focus on displaying the nature of Adonai in their actions so that the earth would be filled with His unfailing love. One of the many aims of the Torah is that "all the people of the world revere Adonai". This, in and of itself, preserves life and builds the world to come.

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- **Matthew 5:14–16 (NIVUK84)**

14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Notice that the teachings of Jesus focus on your righteous actions that result in men praising Adonai. Jesus is the Messiah AND he functioned within traditional biblical Judaism. His aim in statements like these verses are that men's lives would be preserved by observing your relationship with Adonai. This is the beginning of participating in Tikkun Olam. The aim of Jesus and the aim of the Torah was never about simply righting a wrong but rather about building the world to come through righteous actions today.

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- **John 17:15–23 (NIVUK84)**

15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. 20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have



sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Neither the Torah nor Jesus ever sought to remove faithful men from sinful circumstances; but rather, **the aim of both is to display righteousness in adverse circumstances that brings heaven to earth and multiplies the lives being saved.** The Word (the Torah) is truth and it sanctifies you for Adonai's use by teaching you his thoughts and ways. When we are one with the Father as his character is presented in the Tanakh and we are one with the Son as his deeds are displayed in the gospels, then we are displaying lifesaving principles and building a better world one righteous action at a time.

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- **Revelation 21:1–5 (NIVUK84)**

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

5 He who was seated on the throne said, “**I am making everything new!**” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

The aim of the biblical faith was never escape from this world. Instead, the aim was to create a people who would reflect Adonai's character through their every action in the same way a righteous wife reflects her husband. The bride of Christ and Messiah, in this kind of unity, bring the heavens to the earth and create an entirely better world called the Tikkun Ha Olam...

or the world repaired and improved. The good news is that we do not have to wait until the end of days to begin this process. As we engage with the Torah, we can reflect the substance of Christ today and unify with Him in our actions.

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- **Ephesians 4:20–28 (NIVUK84)**

20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. 21 Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created **to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.** 25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour, for we are all members of one body. 26 “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

You can see from this familiar passage in Ephesians that the aim of the Newer Testament is completely congruent with the Law because it is, in fact, the same aim. The ministry of Jesus and the practice of Christianity are not limited to the righting of wrongs. Instead, they aim at a higher plane of existence that reflects God in true righteousness and holiness. In this light, thieves are not just told to refrain from stealing, they are told to do something useful with their hands **and share** with those in need. This is not the balancing of an equation; it is the betterment of all concerned. The 66 books of the Bible are aimed at Tikkun Olam. Arising Church, how do we begin repairing the world?

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- We start with your life being repaired and bettered to reflect the nature of Adonai through the power of Messiah
- We then build families that are repaired and bettered so that they reflect the nature of Adonai through the power of Messiah

- Then we enter into the nations of the world and teach them to obey everything that has been commanded immersing them into the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

This will preserve lives, this will better your situation, and this will repair the world and bring heaven to earth. The Law outlines what it looks like for a nation to be given this mission and you are grafted into that very mission.

- **Numbers 18:29 (NIVUK84)**

29 You must present as the LORD's portion the best and holiest part of everything given to you.'

As we just learned from the One Association conference, there is no line between sacred and secular. Living by the righteous standard that God set in his eternal law helps us give God glory in every part of our life.

Like Zachaeus...

- **Luke 19:5–10 (NIVUK84)**

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner'."

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Zachaeus wasn't paying for his sins...but instead he was entering into the mission of repairing the world and making it better.

If you call yourself a believer, then you must do more than agree that the Law is life, you must see life in every Law and be able to display it in the life God gave you so that you can bring that life to the world.