

Exodus 21-22

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 18

- Moses judged the people from morning till evening
 - Jethro advised Moses to select men of character to help him in these duties
- The reason a codified system of civil judgments was necessary

Chapter 19

Israel camps near Mt. Sinai
Israel accepts God's covenant terms

Chapter 20

God spoke the ten words (commandments) to the people
The people feared as they heard God's voice
They ask for Moses to speak as a mediator between them and God

Exodus 18:13, 21-22

¹³And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening.

²¹ Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth...

²² And let them judge the people at all times...

Book of the Covenant Introduction



A covenant is an agreement

(The Pentateuch, W. H. Griffith Thomas)

“The laws in [Chapters 21-23] are usually called ‘the book of the covenant’

They are a series of civil, social, and religious enactments which naturally follow the promulgation of the Decalogue”

Book of the Covenant
Chapter 20:22—23: 33

Chapter 20:22—20: 26 (**Prologue**)

Instructions on proper worship and avoiding idolatrous practices

Four Sections (New Bible Commentary)

Chapter 21:1—22:20

1) A long list of laws dealing with various aspects of life

Chapter 22:21—23:9

2) Moral imperatives which highlight the exemplary behavior God expects of his people, especially towards the underprivileged

Chapter 23:10—19

3) Instructions regarding the observance of the Sabbath and religious festivals

Chapter 23:20—33

4) God outlined how he would act on behalf of the Israelites, enabling them to take possession of the land of Canaan

Book of the covenant, intro

The ten commandments which God gave to Israel at that time comprised a distinct part of the Old Covenant

Now, in Exodus 21—23 God will reveal to Moses various **applications** of the Ten Commandments in the form of civil statutes and judgments

(Expositors) “These ‘laws’ or better, ‘**judgments**’, are given as precedents to guide civil magistrates in cases of **civil dispute**.”

While these ‘judgments’ deal mainly with temporal matters, they nevertheless are based on one or another express commandment in the Decalogue”

(Tanakh translation, Jewish Study Bible)

“Teaching the laws to an entire people is practically unparalleled in the ancient world”

Book of the Covenant, introduction—
judgments

Ch. 21:1 “Now these are the **judgments** you shall set before them:”

(Bible Readers Companion) “**Judgment**” (Heb. *Mispatim*) means—guiding decision

“These are illustrative laws, intended to **provide future generations of judges** with precedents that can serve a guides for their decisions”

(NSB) “Laws that appear in this section are **responses to specific cases** among the Israelites. Often the people would present difficult or critical disputes to Moses. When Moses had to render a decision on an issue that he was not sure about, he would ask the Lord.

The **decisions** that he gave became known as the **case law**....Such laws differed from the ten commandments”

Moses had been making judgments and seeking God’s will in civil disputes that were brought before him.....now many are formally declared

Chapter 21
The rights of persons

Begins **First Section** of the book of the covenant
[21:1—22:20]

¹“Now these *are* the **judgments** which you shall set before them:

(Tanakh translation, Jewish Study Bible)

“Apparently **only part** of the existing laws have been selected, perhaps to illustrate certain ideal principles of justice and religion”

(Bible Readers Companion)

“The ancient rabbis counted 613 specific laws in the Pentateuch. Here, within a section called the book of the Covenant (20:22—23:13) a number of these 613 rulings are listed.”

(New Bible Commentary) “The material which comprises this section represents **only some** of the statutes which formed part of ancient Israel’s law.

In all likelihood many of the laws included here have been selected because they corresponded closely with God’s actions in rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt”

The judgments that we have in their current form in these chapters could have originated from this event in the book of Joshua:



Joshua 24:25-26

²⁵So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

²⁶Then **Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God**. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that *was* by the sanctuary of the Lord.

v. 25 'ordinance' — *mishpat*=judgments

Verses 2—11: Laws addressing **servants/slaves**

Why is this topic addressed in the book of the covenant?

This seems to be addressing when Israel is in the land...although some cases may have already been dealt with

Many Israelites would become small farmers/herdsmen....depending upon the rains for their livelihood

The rains often failed in ancient Palestine and the ancient world [Gen. 12: 10; 41: 56]...forcing people to emigrate or sell themselves to rich landowners



God was concerned for his people so a need for laws concerning rights for servants is addressed

Most ancient law codes of other nations tucked slave laws **at the end**...God addresses it first

² If you **buy** a Hebrew **servant**, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.

'servant'

(Theological Wordbook of the OT) "this status involved **rights** and often positions of **trust**. A fellow Israelite could not be held against his will, but his period of bondage was limited to six years"

(JFB) "it must not be imagined that Hebrew servitude bore any resemblance to the ancient slavery of the Greeks or Romans...

The Hebrew language has no word for a slave who was absolutely in the power or at the mercy of an owner"

'buy a servant' (Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

"This refers to the purchase of a debt-slave. When a man could not repay a debt, he might sell himself or one or more of his family members, even small children, into the service of the creditor."

²If you buy a **Hebrew servant**, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.

'Hebrew servant'

(Word) “as a designation of a ‘native’ slave, an Israelite slave, and also as indicating an **underprivileged social group, disadvantaged persons** who might easily fall into the oppression of slavery”

(JFB) “**Servant**, properly signifies *laborer*....Every Israelite was free-born; but servitude was permitted under certain restrictions: for a Hebrew might be reduced to the condition of a servant through poverty, debt, or crime”

‘serve six years....seventh he shall go free’

(Bible Readers Companion) “no one could be sold into perpetual slavery: a seven year term was fixed....The seven year term was an apprenticeship. During it the slave learned from his master, and was given capital for a fresh start” [Deut. 15: 12—18]



Deuteronomy 15:11-15

¹¹For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.'

¹²"If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

¹³And when you send him away free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed;

¹⁴you shall supply him liberally from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress. *From what* the Lord has blessed you with, you shall give to him.

¹⁵You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today.

“servant’

(Theological wordbook of the OT)

“They had rights. God was clearly concerned for their well-being and physical as well as spiritual needs “ [Ex. 20: 10; Lev. 25: 6]

Statutes concerning the treatment of servants:

³ If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he *comes in* married, then his wife shall go out with him.

After the six years of service—if he began single as a servant, he left single....if he began servitude married, he left married

⁴ If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

(JFB) “should he have married a **female slave** –not a Hebrew maid...whose term of six years did not end with that of her husband...she and the children, after the husband's liberation, remained **the master's property**”

(Keil and Delitzch) “This may appear oppressive, but it was an equitable consequence of the possession of property in slaves at all”

(Keil and Delitzch) “to modify the harshness of the separation of husband and wife, the option was given to the servant to remain in his master’s service...this would likely be the case as a general rule”



- ⁵ But if the servant plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’
- ⁶ then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.

(Expositors) “I love my master...wife and children, has legal rather than romantic overtones. The judges changed the slave’s status from temporary to permanent by a ceremony at the doorpost of the master’s house.”

“pierce his ear”

(Tanakh translation, Jewish Study Bible)

“This may symbolize the servant’s obligation to have his ear permanently open to hear his master’s orders or permanent attachment to the master’s house”

⁷“And if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do.

(Tanakh translation, Jewish Study Bible) “According to Deut. 15: 12-18, female slaves sold into slavery go free, like males, after six years.

The present law deals with a special case, that of a father selling his minor daughter for the **purpose of marriage**... into the purchaser’s (well to do) family. Since the sale is for marriage, it is not terminated after six years, but the purchaser must meet certain conditions”

⁸If she does not please her master, who has betrothed her to himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt deceitfully with her.

(NSB) “In ancient times, a family might be reduced to such a desperate state that they would sell a daughter into bondage. The law in this section served to protect the purchased **bride**.

If she were not acceptable to her new master, he would let her be redeemed, that is, her freedom might be purchased by another. In no case was she to be sold to a foreign people.”

⁹And if he has betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters.

(BKC) “If she married her master’s son she was to be given family status”

(JFB) “Women amongst the Hebrews, as in the East generally, were disposed of in marriage without their personal wishes or feelings being at all taken into account. In like manner, fathers conducted matrimonial arrangements for their sons”

¹⁰If he takes another *wife*, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, and her marriage rights.

¹¹And if he does not do these three for her, then she shall go out free, without *paying* money.

(BKC) “If the master married someone else he was required to provide his servant with three essentials: food, clothing, and shelter

(marital rights probably means living quarters, not sexual privilege)”

¹²“He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.

God had given capital punishment in Noah’s day



Genesis 9:6

⁶ “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

(New Bible Commentary)

“In the case of murder the death penalty was invoked, not out of indifference for human life, but rather because each human life is of tremendous value”

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“The death penalty for those who committed intentional homicide seems uniformly allowed in the ancient Near East.

But the death penalty was not usually mandatory; it simply Represented the fullest extent of the law.”

¹³However, if he **did not lie in wait**, but God delivered *him* into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee.

If the death was **not** intentional, a place of asylum (later called cities of refuge) was provided

Often in the ancient middle east, blood vengeance was enacted by a victim's kin even if the killing was accidental [Deut. 19:6 'kinsman avenger']



(Tanakh) "This verse limits it to deliberate murder and allows the accidental killer to seek refuge from the victim's kin...until a court can determine whether he acted intentionally"

v. 13 "**God delivered him into his hand**"

(Companion) "Hebrew idiom, by which God is said to do what He allows to be done"

(NIV) "But if he does not do it intentionally, but God allows it to happen, he is to flee to a place I will designate"

¹⁴“But if a man acts with premeditation against his neighbor, to kill him by treachery, you shall take him from My altar, that he may die.

(Expositors) “But no sanctuary—even at the altar itself, was to be given to the deliberate murderer”

¹⁵“And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

¹⁶“He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death.

¹⁷“And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

(Expositors) “Parental authority is so highly valued in biblical law that striking and cursing parents was a criminal and capital offense.

Verses fifteen and seventeen are illustrations of the fifth commandment”

Statutes regarding physical injury v.18-27

¹⁸“If men contend with each other, and one strikes the other with a stone or with *his* fist, and he does not die but is confined to *his* bed,

¹⁹if he rises again and walks about outside with his staff, then he who struck *him* shall be acquitted. He shall only pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall provide *for him* to be thoroughly healed.

(BKC) “In a physical quarrel the injured party, whether or not the injury was premeditated, was to be given compensation for his loss of work time...and for medical expenses”

²⁰“And if a man beats his male or female servant with a rod, so that he dies under his hand, he shall surely be punished.

²¹Notwithstanding, if he remains alive a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he *is* his property.

(BKC) “Slaves were not to be treated cruelly by their masters, though they were considered property.

If a master beat his slave and the slave died, the master was to be punished (but probably not by death)

If the slave soon recovered, no punishment was to be exacted (for apparently the homicide was not intended)”

²²“If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows,
he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman’s husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges *determine*.”

(BKC) “If a pregnant woman delivered her child prematurely as result of a blow, but both were otherwise uninjured, the guilty party was to pay compensation determined by the woman’s husband and the court”

But if a man cause the death of a pregnant woman he had to pay for it with his own life



²³But if *any* harm follows, then you shall give life for life,

This judgment was designed to protect pregnant women

²⁴eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,
²⁵burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

(LASB) “The ‘eye for eye’ rule was instituted **as a guide** for judges, not as a rule for personal relationships or to justify revenge.

This rule made the punishment fit the crime, but not go beyond it



(NSB) “Many ancient cultures allowed punishments greatly out of proportion to the offense. In Israel, a judgment corresponded to the nature of the injury. The idea is **no more** than *eye for eye*, etc”

Christ used the eye for eye principle to teach **not** to retaliate

Matthew 5:38-39

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, ‘*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*’[£]

³⁹But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

²⁶ “If a man strikes the eye of his male or female servant, and destroys it, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye.

²⁷ And if he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

(NSB) “In this instance, the verb **strike** means to cause injury. A master who inflicted harm on his slaves could be compelled to set them free”

²⁸“If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* acquitted.

(Keil and Delitzch)

“The life of man is also protected against injury from cattle, because as the stoning already shows, it was laden with guilt of murder, and therefore had become unclean.

²⁹But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.

(BKC) “If the animal had a habit of violently attacking people and the owner did nothing to prevent it and someone was killed, the owner (as well as the bull) was to be put to death.”

³⁰If there is imposed on him a sum of money, then he shall pay to redeem his life, whatever is imposed on him.

(Expositors) “For his criminal neglect, a man could ‘redeem his life’ if the slain one’s family allowed him to substitute ‘a payment’. That sum is not to indemnify the victim’s family but to ransom the man’s life”

³¹Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to this judgment it shall be done to him.

(Expositors) “Notice that Gen, 9: 5-6 requires that the life of a beast that killed a man as well as a manslayer be taken, because man is made in the image of God. It made no difference what the age, social status or gender....are all created in the image of God”

Genesis 9:5-6

⁵Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning*; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man’s brother I will require the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

³²If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

(BKC) “If a slave was killed by a bull, the animal’s owner had to remunerate the slave owner by paying 30 shekels of silver (Mat. 26: 14-15) apparently the price of a slave”

Laws on property damage

³³“And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls in it,
³⁴the owner of the pit shall make *it* good; he shall give money to their owner, but the dead *animal* shall be his.

(BKC) “In the event of animal loss due to someone’s negligence (not covering a pit—perhaps to collect rainwater—to prevent an animal falling in), the guilty party was required to render full compensation.

This regulation was important because animals were important property of the Israelites.”

³⁵“If one man’s ox hurts another’s, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it; and the dead ox they shall also divide.

³⁶Or if it was known that the ox tended to thrust in time past, and its owner has not kept it confined, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall be his own.

(BKC) “If a bull killed someone else’s bull, the loss was to be shared equally between the owners by selling the live bull and splitting the money. However, if a man knowingly neglected to pen his goring bull, he must then pay for the dead bull.”

Chapter 22

v.1-4 statutes dealing with **thieves**

➤ These verses expand upon the 8th commandment

¹“If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.

Stealing an ox carried heavy penalties (like stealing a horse in the western frontier)

(Expositors) “The reason for the fivefold penalty in the case of stealing an ox is probably because one man stole the means of another’s livelihood”

(BKC) “Heavy compensation effectively deterred animal theft”

²If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, *there shall be* no guilt for his bloodshed.

(BKC) “If a thief burglarized in the night and was killed by the owner of the house, then the defendant was not guilty of murder” (Justifiable homicide)

(Paraphrase) "If a thief is captured..."

³ If the sun has risen on him, *there shall be* guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

(BKC) "If the burglar was killed in the daytime the house owner was guilty of homicide. The Mosaic code sought to protect human life, even that of criminals.

The thief was either to compensate for the crime with his own material wealth or to be sold into slavery"

(Expositors) "...would be a different situation since there would be witnesses, and the scope of the intruders intentions (whether just to steal or also to kill could be assessed"

⁴ If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

Notice almost every verse in this section contains 'if' before the specific case

➤ The principle: Proper restitution was to be made for loss of another's property

⁵“If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard.

⁶“If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

(BKC) “If the grazing rights of a farmer were violated by another man’s livestock or if a fire destroyed another’s crops, the offender had to make restitution from his own fields.

Thorn bushes often burned easily and thus helped spread fires quickly”

⁷“If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man’s house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double.

⁸If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges *to see* whether he has put his hand into his neighbor’s goods.

⁹“For any kind of trespass, *whether it concerns* an ox, a donkey, a sheep, or clothing, *or* for any kind of lost thing which *another* claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

(BKC) “In the ancient Near East there were no banks, so personal property was sometimes given to a neighbor for protection (who was now responsible for them)

If personal valuables were lost and no thief was found, the one who kept the goods had to prove before the judges that he did not steal them or he had to make restitution by paying double”

¹⁰ If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt, or driven away, no one seeing *it*,

¹¹ *then* an oath of the Lord shall be between them both, that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods; and the owner of it shall accept *that*, and he shall not make *it good*.

¹² But if, in fact, it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it.

¹³ If it is torn to pieces *by a beast*, *then* he shall bring it as evidence, *and* he shall not make good what was torn.

(BKC) "If an animal in safekeeping was injured or lost, the one taking care of it had to give evidence that he was not negligent or he had to pay for the loss"

(NSB) "In some cases of suspected mismanagement, an oath of the Lord would be an acceptable testimony of innocence.

In other cases, restitution was demanded, unless it might be proven that the loss was due to circumstances beyond one's reasonable control"

v. 14-15 statutes regarding borrowing

¹⁴ “And if a man borrows *anything* from his neighbor, and it becomes injured or dies, the owner of it not *being* with it, he shall surely make *it* good.

¹⁵ If its owner *was* with it, he shall not make *it* good; if it *was* hired, it came for its hire.

(Paraphrase) 14 “If a man borrows an animal (or anything else) from a neighbor, and it is injured or killed, and the owner is not there at the time, then the man who borrowed it must pay for it.”

15 “But if the owner is there, he need not pay; and if it was rented, then he need not pay, because this possibility was included in the rental fee.”

v. 16-17 Statues covering sexual seduction

16 “If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride-price for her *to be* his wife.

17 If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money according to the bride-price of virgins.

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“Here the term ‘entices’/seduces implies that the woman, though perhaps duped, has given her consent.

(BKC) “These statutes elaborated the 7th commandment. Un-married and unbetrothed daughters in Israel were considered part of their father’s property; consequently the loss of a daughter’s virginity diminished her value and therefore compensation was due to the father.”

(Expositors) “The penalty here is that the seducer must pay the bride price and agree to marry her. Should this offer of marriage be rejected by the girl’s father, the man must still pay the bride price.

.... this payment and offer did not clear the guilt of the sin committed here, for cleansing was needed by repentance.”

v. 18-20 Statutes regarding idolatrous customs

18 “You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

19 “Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death.

20 “He who sacrifices to *any* god, except to the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

v. 18 (JFB) “a practitioner in magic and incantations; ...who pretended by skill in occult science to reveal future events.
...If unchecked, would rapidly increase in Israel, and their influence would prove seductive...”

v. 19 (BKC) “bestiality which figured prominently in Canaanite Baal worship”

v. 20 (Barnes) “...the sense of which, on its ethical side, is comprised in the first and second commandments”

Second Section of the book of the Covenant [22:21—23:9]

➤ Moral imperatives/ behavior God expects of his people

v. 21-27 Statutes regarding the care of the needy

²¹ “You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

(Expositors) “These verses treat various forms of oppression against the poor, the widow, the orphan and the alien.

Since these people have few or no natural protectors in the society, they were to be shielded in their vulnerable estate”

²² “You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child.

²³ If you afflict them in any way, *and* they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry;

²⁴ and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

v. 22—23

God’s concern for widows—he hears their cry

(BKC) “Various laws for the protection of the underprivileged were included because God cares for them.

25 “If you lend money to *any of My people who are* poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest.

(Expositors) “This law is not dealing with ‘usury’ in our modern sense of the word...but interest of any kind.

The main problem was that charging interest of one’s brother was a way of avoiding responsibility to the poor and to one’s fellow man”

26 If you ever take your neighbor’s garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down.

27 For that *is* his only covering, it *is* his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I *am* gracious.

(BKC) “If a loan was made to a poor person, some valuable possession of his, usually a cloak, was normally given to the creditor as a pledge of repayment. His cloak, however, had to be returned to him by sunset to give him comfort at night”

v. 28-31 Statutes regarding reverence

28 “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

(BKC) “In the previous verses the needs of people low on the social scale were discussed. This section (v.28-31) deals with rules concerning those higher on the social scale. Neither the name of God, the supreme ruler, nor the name of a human leader was to be cursed”

29 “You shall not delay *to offer* the first of your ripe produce and your juices. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me.

30 Likewise you shall do with your oxen *and* your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me.

(NSB) “Promptness was commanded both in offering the first fruits of the field and in the presentation of one’s sons to the Lord.

The sons were to be redeemed on the eighth day. This verse reminded the Israelites that all they had was a gift from God”

³¹ “And you shall be holy men to Me: you shall not eat meat torn *by beasts* in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

(BKC) “Animals killed by carnivorous beasts were not to be eaten by Israel because the blood had not been drained and through it they would contact, though indirectly, with the unclean animal.

(Expositors) “[Holy men] were to be separate in inward principle and outward practice”

➤ Even in the way they killed, dressed and ate animals

Lessons

God's judgments are illustrations of how righteous decisions were made according to principles revealed in his law

They were the groundwork of administrative procedures to govern the new nation of Israel

God's laws, statutes and judgments together lay a foundation for a righteous society