

Day 100 - MONDAY: February 13th

Exodus 23

Exodus 23:1-33 NKJV

"You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice. You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute. "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it. "You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous. "Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt. "Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove. Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female servant and the stranger may be refreshed. "And in all that I have said to you, be circumspect and make no mention of the name of other gods, nor let it be heard from your mouth. "Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); and the Feast of Harvest, the firstfruits

of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field. "Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD. "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning. The first of the firstfruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk. "Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off. You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars. "So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. "I will send My fear before you, I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land. And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River. For I will deliver the

inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against Me. For if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."

Daily Deep Dive:

We will once again start with the UCG reading plan, then we will go through scriptures together: "God revealed to Israel laws that prohibit slander, backbiting and lying. All these are based on the Ninth Commandment, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." God Himself is not a respecter of persons and commands that we treat all people equally. He looks on the attitude of our heart, which is manifested in how we live each day. Obedience to God is much more than just following a list of dos and don'ts. The law tells us to perform acts of service for others. Even though we may have a problem with our fellow man, if we fail to help him when there is a need, we have broken God's law.

God also revealed laws that regulate mankind's relationship with the environment. One of these laws, the land Sabbath, is recorded in this chapter. The purpose of this law was to allow the land to regenerate the nutrients in the soil. When followed, this would allow for a much healthier crop to be harvested in the future. Today, man disregards this law and dumps all kinds of chemical fertilizers and pesticides on the soil. There indeed is a way that seems right to a man, but the result is the way that leads to all kinds of unforeseen problems--including, ultimately, death (Proverbs 14:12; Proverbs 16:25).

Interestingly, there was another purpose to the land Sabbath law - to allow the poor to glean whatever produce grew on its own in the year when the land wasn't planted or harvested (and there would certainly be produce for them in the vineyards and orchards). Thus, even this law

promoted loving treatment of one's neighbor, particularly those who were less well-off. Moreover, it was also an act of faith-as the Israelites had to trust God to meet their needs during the year they neither planted nor harvested crops.” [END]

Verse 1 – We aren't to spread around false things we hear. The question I asked myself, “How often have I spread around something false, that I didn't know was false (or only partially true)?” We must be very slow and careful about sharing any information. Gossip and slander are major problems that also happens within God's church. We don't want to be apart of that and must really work against that.

Verse 2 – Warns us not to go along with the crowd. Sometimes we can get swept up in bad behavior because of peer pressure. If something is wrong, it's wrong and we need to be willing to stand against the crowd against wrong doing.

Verse 3 – We know how much God loves and looks out for those who are the needy and struggling, but right is right. We aren't to show partiality to anyone, even someone we feel bad for and can see are the needy of the world. Fair and right must always prevail without regard to wealth, status, fame, race, gender, age, etc...

Verse 4 – There are going to be people that at times we have an issue with, or they have an issue with us, but we are to do what's right, even if it's someone that we are struggling with.

Verse 5 – For the animal's sake and that of any person, we should help in a situation where we see a need.

Verse 6 – In our world, the poor are taken advantage of and exploited. The rich shouldn't have teams of fancy lawyers against a poor person. In the nation God led, justice and fairness were to be right and never tilted.

Verse 8 – Bribes can tilt us and others in a way where justice and fairness are not balanced. God tells us clearly to never take a bribe.

Verse 11 – I want to point out again the beauty of God’s design. Notice the instruction is not for you or your servants to gather food, put it in a container and bring it to the poor. God expects those who are able to work, glean and provides a system whereby someone with nothing has a way to eat and live. That is “if” they work. If they are lazy and don’t, they will starve.

Verse 12 – I want to again point out the beauty. Christianity by and large has rejected the Sabbath and many will call it a burden and say how oppressive it is. The Sabbath was created as a blessing. I’m sure the servants and animals appreciated having a day where they weren’t required to work.

Verse 13 – They were not to even casually speak and talk about false gods. JFB commentary states: “that is, in common conversation, for a familiar use of them would tend to lessen horror of idolatry.”

Verse 14 – The NKJV translates this verse as “Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year.” The Hebrew word for “times” comes from a root meaning “foot” (216 of 247 occurrences it’s translated “feet”). Here it refers to taking “a step”. It’s not that “times” is not accurate, but it’s more about three “steps” along God’s plan (or our journey) we are to come to these Feast seasons.

Verses 15 & 16 – God now outlines those 3 “steps” or seasons of His plan.

Verse 17 – This word for “times” is not the same word as verse 14. This word here in verse 17 comes from a root meaning “to tap” (like we are keeping time by tapping our foot to the beat). We anticipate these times as if we were tapping our foot to keep rhythm.

Verse 18 – These seems to apply to Passover (compare Exodus 34:25). We understand the symbolism that unleavened bread represents the sinless life of Jesus Christ our Passover. No part of the lamb was to remain until morning (compare Exodus 12:10).

Verse 19 – This states “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk”. Over the years it became custom of the Jews to eating any animal flesh and milk together, so according to this rule they would not eat any meat with cheese on the table, and in fact would wait some period of time after the meal before cheese could be eaten in case some meat was still in their teeth. They wouldn't use a knife or table cloth that had already touched one or the other. However, this seems to miss the reason God gave the command. JFB, Adam Clarke and John Gill all point out a similar reason, which I'll paste here from Jamieson-Faucet-Brown commentary: “A prohibition against imitating the superstitious rites of the idolaters in Egypt, who, at the end of their harvest, seethed a kid in its mother's milk and sprinkled the broth as a magical charm on their gardens and fields, to render them more productive the following season.”

Verses 20 -23: The “Messenger” (translated Angel) throughout these verses would seem to only be able to apply to Word, the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ).

Verse 24 – God doesn't want us to have anything to do with false worship and He clearly indicates in verse 33 the risk of not completely and utterly removing false worship influences.

Verses 25 & 26 – Look at these wonderful promises that God would have done for Israel had they completely followed Him and removed all false worship from their nation.

Verses 27 -30: Notice how God would fight for them and make it easy for them to take over the land.

What about us? Do we strive to completely obey God? Where do we compromise or slack off? What blessings are we missing in our lives because of not fully obeying God?

Verse 32 & 33 – God didn't want them making any type of agreement or covenant with the people and their practices that God wanted removed.

Sadly, Israel didn't completely remove these people and problems arose time and time again.