

22. Exodus 22:7-31

(7/20/16)

Exodus 22:7-8 (NKJV)

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. ⁸ If 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.

If you were watching your neighbor's goods while he was on vacation and they were stolen—if the thief was caught, he had to pay double.

But if no thief was found, it was up to the judges (the elders of the city) to decide whether you were the one who stole your neighbor's goods (how they determined this we're not told).

Exodus 22:9 (NKJV)

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.*
(Comment)

In a healthy society neighbors should be close friends who look out for each other and should be able to trust one another.

When a society begins to break down just the opposite is true. (Elaborate)

Exodus 22:10-11 (NKJV)

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.

The oath he had to make was something to the effect, “*I swear by Almighty God that I did not steal my neighbor’s goods and if I am lying may God curse me and judge me...*”

And so if a person was willing to take such an oath then he was presumed innocent of stealing or hurting or driving his neighbor’s animal away while watching it (because of jealousy toward what his neighbor owned).

This principle is the foundation of our idea that “*a man is innocent until proven guilty.*”

In this case, the man’s oath was taken as true unless proof to the contrary could be found.

Exodus 22:12-13 (NKJV)

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.

So if you’re watching one of your neighbor’s sheep and a wolf gets a hold of it and tears it apart—then you were required to bring the carcass to your neighbor as proof that you didn’t steal it.

At very least you needed to bring an ear or a foot or some piece of the animal to your neighbor as proof it was killed by another animal and you didn’t sell it behind his back and say an animal killed it.

Exodus 22:14-15 (NKJV)

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.

So if you borrowed an animal from your neighbor to help you with some work on your property and it was injured or died—the person who borrowed his neighbor's animal had to make restitution to his neighbor.

But if you rented the animal from your neighbor and he came with it to do the work and the animal got hurt or died—the person who rented the animal didn't have to pay restitution to his neighbor because he paid money to hire the animal and the owner came with to supervise or do the work.

Just like in our day if you borrowed your neighbor's rider mower and you hit a big rock and broke it—you'd be responsible to repair or replace it.

But if you hired your neighbor's lawn service to come and cut your grass and your neighbor hit the rock while on his rider mower—you wouldn't have to pay to repair or replace his mower.

It would be his responsibility since you were paying for his service and any equipment he needed to do the work you had hired him to do for you.

Exodus 22:16 (NKJV)

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.

So this seems to be the origin of the 'shotgun wedding'—or as God seems to be saying, "*If you try it you buy it.*"

Exodus 22:17 (NKJV)

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

So if her father says *“I don’t want this creep marrying my daughter, no way, ain’t gonna happen!”*

Then the guy who had sex with her and stole her virginity still had to pay her father the ‘bride-price’ (dowry) since she was now ‘damaged goods’ and he (her father) might have a hard time marrying her to another man since she was no longer a virgin.

Exodus 22:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ "You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

This is pretty straight forward in the eyes of God—if a woman practiced witchcraft and she was found out God said she was to die.

People say today, *“O but I’m a white witch”*—not back then you weren’t.

Back then it didn’t matter if you were a white witch, black witch, sandwich—you were a dead witch!

Let me say this—there is no distinction between white magic and black magic—it’s all coming from the same source—the devil.

There’s a lot of people that are Star Wars enthusiasts and fancy themselves as the good guys because, like the Jedi’s and Luke Skywalker, they only tap into the good or light side of the Force.

Those movies were George Lucas's attempt to convert people to the religion of the Force (the principles of Hinduism) and the belief that the 'god-force' fills the universe and flows through everything making us one (pantheism).

But that's ridiculous because a force (like electricity) is amoral—there is no 'good' side or 'dark' side—it's all coming from the same place—the power of the devil and his demons.

So whether you're Luke Skywalker using the light side of the Force or Darth Vader using the dark side—it's all the same force coming from the same source.

Exodus 22:19 (NKJV)

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

So God pronounced bestiality an act punishable by death.

I mean "*good Lord in heaven!*" how sick is it to have sex with an animal?

Sex between a husband and a wife was designed by God to be a beautiful thing—yes, it was for pleasure and for procreation—but also to represent the oneness that God wanted to enter into with a person once they entered into the marriage covenant with Him (they are converted).

1 Corinthians 6:15-20 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot [*or an animal*] is one body with her [*or 'it'*]? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. ¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Exodus 22:20 (NKJV)

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

When it came to the worship of any other gods—our God was very *intolerant* and imposed the death penalty upon anyone that would worship and sacrifice to any other god but Him.

Why was God so adamant about this to the point of making it a capital offense?

It was because only He is the One True and Living God—the only way to heaven.

All other religions and gods are of the devil and will lead to eternal separation from the True God and heaven.

Therefore, all who worship false gods are worshipping demons (1Cor.10:20) and are instruments in the devil's hands to mislead people down the road to hell forever—much worse than a murderer who can only hurt the physical body and do no more.

Now, many see a contradiction in this in how God forbid Israel from allowing the worship of any other god or gods—but then He established America as a place of religious freedom and tolerance for all religions—the problem is that this nation wasn't founded for that purpose.

You see many believe our founding fathers wanted a nation that welcomed all religious beliefs—however the writings of our founding fathers refute that.

Patrick Henry, who said, "*Give me liberty or give me death,*" said a lot of other things like—
"*It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists but by Christians, not on religions (plural) but on the gospel of Jesus Christ.*"

Noah Webster, one of our founding fathers, said—

“The religion which has introduced civil liberty is the religion of Christ and His apostles...to this we owe our free constitution of government.”

John Jay, our first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and one of the three men most responsible for giving us the Constitution said,

*“Providence has given to people (this nation) the choice of their rulers and it is the duty as well as the privilege and interest of our **Christian** nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.”*

Later on John Quincy Adams our sixth president and son of John and Abigail said,

“The highest glory of the American Revolution was this, it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity.”

Our government is unique in the world and people recognize this.

Do you know that in the last 200 yrs. France has gone through 7 complete changes in its form of government? Italy is on its 48th—we are still on our first.

That is so unique and amazing that a group of political science professors from the University of Houston set about to figure out just what it was that made us so unique and strong.

So they set out to discover who or what influenced our founding fathers, what they believed in, and who they quoted from the most in an effort to find out what it was that made this country so special.

It took 10 yrs. of digging through the quotes of the founding fathers but in the end, after 10 yrs. of study they came to this conclusion:

Of all the quotes by the founding fathers, 34% came directly out of the Bible verbatim, and another 60% were based on the Scriptures—so 94% of everything our founding fathers said came right out of the Bible or was based on the Bible.

Now that's interesting because today we're being told that our founding fathers wanted separation of Church and State and they even put it into the Constitution.

But did you know that the phrase, "*Separation of Church and State*" is not found anywhere in the Constitution?

Many people believe that the 1st Amendment guarantees the separation of Church and State.

The 1st Amendment doesn't say that nor was it ever intended to separate Christianity from our government.

The 1st Amendment simply says, "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.*"

What our founding fathers wanted to prevent was our government, in America, doing what their old government in Great Britain did by establishing a State Church.

They wanted Christian principles in our government but they didn't want any one church or denomination favored above any other Christian church or denomination by the government.

And that was something our founding fathers made so clear that the Supreme Court for many years afterward upheld the intent of the founding fathers in its rulings.

In 1796 in one case they ruled on, they then made this statement—

*"By our form of government the **Christian** religion is the established religion and all sects and denominations of Christians are placed upon the same equal footing."*

Now this has been twisted today in our multicultural madness to mean that when our founding fathers talked about freedom of religion—it meant that they wanted a country where every religion under heaven could come and take refuge under the shadow and protection of America’s wings.

The Muslims, the Buddhists, the Hindus etc.—because that’s what they wanted, a country where all the religions of the world could come and worship side by side as one big happy family.

That’s not what they wanted—they made it clear that they were Christians and that they believed in the Bible as the Word of God, and that they had come here to establish a Christian nation.

Freedom of religion in their minds meant freedom to worship God in any *Christian denomination* of your choosing. (The 1st Amendment revisions make this clear)

Now does that mean that they would have forbidden Jews or Muslims or Buddhists to practice their religion here? No!

Nor am I advocating that we should prohibit others from worshipping their gods and force them to worship Jesus Christ.

I am just trying to tell you what our founding fathers believed and what principles they built this country on because that’s what made this country great.

And it wasn’t Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam—it was *Christianity*!

Exodus 22:21 (NKJV)

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

Some have used this as a justification for an open border policy in our country that allows anyone to come without any illegal alien deportation laws—because they say this is what God wanted.

I believe that God, back then and still today, wants us to welcome into our country legal immigrants and to treat them the way we treat any other U.S. citizen.

Furthermore, I do not believe in oppressing or mistreating anyone—whether they are a U.S. citizen or an illegal alien—that is something God wouldn't want.

But God is still a God of laws—and as a nation founded on His Word so are we.

And as a nation of laws those laws must be obeyed—and it is not oppressive or a crime against God to make sure our borders are secure so that not just anyone at any time can enter into our country without consequences.

Try not having rules about who can come into your house whenever they want—an 'open door' policy and see what happens.

Exodus 22:22-24 (NKJV)

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.

All throughout the Bible God is for the 'underdog'—for the stranger, the widow, the orphan, the disadvantaged and the disabled etc.

He promises blessings upon those who help and are kind to these people—but also wrath and judgment upon those that mistreat or take advantage of them as well.

God is a merciful God and wanted society to be merciful and kind to those that were disadvantaged.

“Well if God is so merciful and loving why does He allow all the suffering we see in societies—doesn’t that prove He isn’t a good and loving God?”

This is not the world a good and loving God created for us to live in—it is a world corrupted by sin—by man’s rebellion against God.

Someday God will recreate this world and then we will all live in a perfect society with God on the throne—a world free of sickness, sorrow, evil, injustice and death.

Until that time, since this is the world *we* have chosen to live in, a world where right now we have the disadvantaged, the disabled, the poor, the sickly—God expects us and commands us to treat them kindly because to not do so invites His judgment upon us as a person and as a people.

Exodus 22:25 (NKJV)

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.**

So God forbids the rich (or anyone for that matter) to profit off of the poor—if they needed some financial assistance God told His people that if they loaned the poor the money they needed they were not allowed to drive them deeper into poverty by charging them interest.

This is not a prohibition against banks or lending institutions—even Jesus acknowledged this in the Parable of the Talents (a ‘talent’ was a measure of money not abilities):

Matthew 25:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

So God forbid His people from taking advantage of the poor by charging them interest when giving them a loan—but He didn't command that we had to loan money to just anyone who was short on cash. (Explain)

Exodus 22:26-27 (NKJV)

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.

As one commentator put it—

“The fact that one's garment could be used as collateral (under regulated circumstances) shows that these were loans, with repayment expected and secured with collateral. They were not gifts, but loans.”

However, while God allowed the taking of collateral to secure a loan—He commanded mercy as with taking someone's outer garment as collateral. (Comment)

Exodus 22:28 (NKJV)

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

Once again, respect for authority is one of the foundational principles of a civil society—and it starts with respect (reverence) for God.

Reviling (blaspheming, cursing) God was a capital offense (Lev.24:10-16).

But also God forbid His people from speaking evil of their rulers—even as Paul inadvertently did when he spoke in a condemning way to the High Priest in Acts 23:1-5.

God has established human government (Rom. 13), and even if we don't respect the officer, we must respect the office.

Jude 1:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

There is a difference between challenging those who have corrupted their authority by doing evil—and then simply speaking evil of leaders because you don't like their policies or how they're handling things.

Many of God's prophets in the O.T. challenged and condemned the corrupt kings of Israel and Judah—but it was justified because they had turned against God and led the people into idolatry and other wicked practices.

Exodus 22:29-30 (NKJV)

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.

So the first-fruits of everything that was born or grown belonged to God. (Comment)

Exodus 34:19-20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ All that open the womb *are* Mine, and every male firstborn among your livestock, *whether* ox or sheep. ²⁰ But the firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem *him*, then you shall break his neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.

So the firstborn males of all clean animals were to be offered to God—and the firstborn males of all unclean animals were to be redeemed with money, or with a clean animal or killed.

The firstborn boy in each family was to be redeemed with a half-shekel of silver and not offered to God as a sacrifice—for two reasons:

God never commanded nor allowed His people to practice human sacrifice; and secondly because the firstborn male (and all human beings) were ‘unclean’ due to Adam’s sin.

It’s not until a sinner is redeemed that he or she is now worthy of being a living sacrifice to our Lord.

Exodus 22:31 (NKJV)

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.

The idea of holiness was *separation*—in Israel’s case (as in ours) separation from the world and the world’s practices which are often defiled and defiling.

Animals often fed off of dead carcasses—God’s people were not to act like animals feeding off of dead things that were not killed in the proper way (kosher) and possibly carrying disease.

This was for health reasons—but also to demonstrate that God’s people were different (holy) from the world at large.

God’s people were to eat only clean animals that had been properly killed and bled.

Now while it’s true that in the New Covenant God has removed dietary laws from physical food—He still has some very strict standards for the ‘foods’ we use to feed the inner man (our minds and souls).

God’s people in N.T. times are not to ‘feed’ on the dead, defiled and disease ridden philosophies and teachings of the world.

James 3:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ This wisdom [of the world] does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic.

Psalms 12:6 (NKJV)

⁶ The words of the LORD *are* pure words...

Jeremiah 15:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart...

2 Timothy 4:2-4 (NKJV)

² Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine [**‘healthy, wholesome teaching (‘spiritual food’) from God’s Word**], but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.