

# Govern Ourselves? Part 3

## Exodus Chapter 23

What is important to God as He sets up Civil Laws?

So far we have seen God:

Has respect even for the lowest;  
He understands Loss (Compassionate);  
He expects His design to govern;  
He is Holy.

He values life; He values responsibility;  
He values Purity;  
He sides with those who are suffering;

### 38:23

Chapters 21, 22 and 23 are social legislation that will govern Israel.

#### Exd 23:1 1) Concerning Motivation v. 1 - 3

Proper Influence

"You shall not bear a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness.

- Do not bear or carry or circulate a false report
- And do not conspire to do the same.
- The scriptures require a witness of 2-3 for a bad report to be established. It is proper if a matter is disclosed that proof be demanded from the tale bearer. By doing so, false reports can be stopped. It isn't enough that we stay neutral but not allowing a matter to be circulated.
- **2 Corinthians 12:20** "For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps {there will be} strife, jealousy, angry tempers, disputes, slanders, **gossip**, arrogance, disturbances;"

#### Exd 23:2 "You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert {justice;}

- God is telling us that we should not be influenced by peer pressure
- How many times do our children say (or even we might have said), "But everyone is doing it."
- **1 Corinthians 15:33** "Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals.""

#### Exd 23:3 nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his dispute.

- Most of us realize that we so partiality to the rich or the famous. God also point out showing partiality to the poor in his dispute because of his circumstances. God wants justice. It is wrong to settle a dispute not on the facts but because of bribes from the rich or pity on the poor.

#### Exd 23:4 2) Concerning What is Right v. 4 - 9

Justice even to enemies and strangers

"If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him.

#### Exd 23:5 "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying {helpless} under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release {it} with him.

- God really know us. We'll see our enemy's animal loose or in trouble and we will say, "Finally, he is getting what he deserves." But God says to go get his animal or free his animal from trouble and return it to your enemy.
- Who know what reconciliation might occur when showing kindness to your enemy.
- **Matthew 5:43-44** "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

#### Exd 23:6 "You shall not pervert the justice {due} to your needy {brother} in his dispute.

#### Exd 23:7 "Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty.

- We are not to accompany a false charge. We need to not remain silent we should correct the false charge.
- Do Not kill the innocent or righteous. This is allowing a false charge that carries a death penalty to go full term. Again, God declares him guilty who allows the innocent/righteous to be condemned falsely. God will not allow that one to go unpunished.
- "DO NOT KILL THE INNOCENT" forces us to think of the unborn innocent who are killed.

For a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the

- This is so true. "a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause"

Exd 23:9 "You shall not oppress a stranger, since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you {also} were strangers in the land of Egypt.

- This speaks of prejudice. The foreigner and stranger should never be oppressed.
- Why? Because we know what it is like. We are strangers and aliens in this world.
- **John 17:16** Jesus spoke of His disciples "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."
- **Hebrews 11:13-16** "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of [them], and embraced [them], and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that [country] from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Exd 23:10 **3) Concerning Rest** v. 10 - 12

God Refreshes

"You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield,

Exd 23:11 but {on} the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard {and} your olive grove.

- God desired that the **land** would rest the 7<sup>th</sup> year.

Exd 23:12 "Six days you are to do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease {from labor} so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave, as well as your stranger, may refresh themselves.

- God desired that **Man** would rest the 7<sup>th</sup> day.

Exd 23:13 **4) Concerning Perception** v. 13 - 19

God is Vigilant (ever alert)

"Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let {them} be heard from your mouth.

- KJV reads "in all that I have said to you, be circumspect"
- Circumspect means to look around, to be watchful, careful, being well considered.
- God doesn't want His people giving any credibility to any "so called" deity. We need to be careful when speaking concerning other gods.

Exd 23:14 "Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me.

- God will give more details in Leviticus, but here He gives an overview of what He expects.
- 3 Feasts shall be celebrated each year. Collectively called "Shalosh Regalim"

Exd 23:15 "You shall observe the **Feast of Unleavened Bread**; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.

- **Feast of Unleavened Bread / Passover** - the appointed time in the first month (Abib) for seven days from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>. (Exodus 13) This corresponds to our May/April.
- Because they need to remember (be aware) that God brought them out from Egypt (Sin/Leaven)

Exd 23:16 "Also {you shall observe} the **Feast of the Harvest** {of} the first fruits of your labors {from} what you sow in the field; also the **Feast of the Ingathering** at the end of the year when you gather in {the fruit of} your labors from the field.

- **Feast of the Harvest** - is in other places referred to "First Fruits" or "Festival of Weeks" Christians call this "Pentecost" Jews call this "Shavuot". This happens 50 days after Passover in late may early June.
- This feast is a feast looking to God's provision. Provision of grain or bread but more specifically the giving of the Torah. The Word of God.

John 4:4 “that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread  
everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.”

- John 3:35 “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”
- John 6:51 “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”
- Luke 22:19 “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”
- **The Feast of Ingathering** - is also called “Feast of Tabernacles” or “Feast of Booths” Jews call this “Sukkot. This occurs late September to late October
- This is a seven day festival where Jews would leave their houses and dwell in tents the reading of the Torah, prayers and waving of 4 spices:
  - The *lulav* is a closed frond of the date palm tree.



- The *hadass* (bough of a myrtle tree), (pictured in the foreground of the next picture)



- The *aravah* (branch of a willow tree), (pictured in the background of the previous picture)
- The *etrog* (yellow citron)



males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning.

- God doesn't want sloppy sacrifice.
  - Sacrifice w/ sin or with procrastination or laziness left over til morning.

Exd 23:19 "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. "You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

- He wants the first fruits OUR BEST
- You Shall Not Boil a Young Goat in the Milk of it's Mother
  - The Jews have taken this verse to show God's desire for a kosher diet. (no such thing as a cheese burger)
  - This was actually a fertility ritual in Caanan. (*according to excavations at Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit)*)They would chop up a young goat, boil it in it's mothers milk and pour it over the land for an increase.
- God did not want other deities to be recognized at all.

an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.

Exd 23:21 "Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him.

Exd 23:22 "But if you truly obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

- This is a very unique angel. Angel (Hebrew) *malak* = messenger.
  - God announces His coming or being sent.
  - He will guard Israel along the way
  - He will bring Israel to the prepared place
  - God's name is in Him (*Mich-el; Gabri-el; but this kind of judgment and obedience is not commanded*)
  - *Yahweh* is in Jesus. *Yah-shua* is Hebrew for Jesus (*God is Salvation*)

#### CONDITIONAL PROMISE

- We are to be on our guard, obey and not be rebellious.
- If we obey HIS voice and do all GOD says:
  - God will be an enemy to Israel's enemy. (the person/demon who is out to destroy you)
  - God will be an adversary to Israel's adversary. (the person/demon who hassles you)

Exd 23:23 "For My angel will go before you and bring you in to {the land of} the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will completely destroy them.

A Land

- "I will completely destroy them" - How can a loving God speak like this about his own creation.
- Genesis 15:16 God tells Abram that Israel will be in captivity for 400 years and then released. He says, "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." **God's timing is not measured by the planets orbit, but measured by morality.** When the iniquity of the Amorite, and other Canaanites were full then Israel will be released to enter the Promised Land. Before hand their iniquity would not be full. Possibly not as evidently wicked that Israel would not be able to execute God's judgment and assimilate into their practices.
- 7 Reasons for Canaanite Genocide
  - **Deuteronomy 7:2-4** So that the Canaanites will not turn Israel away from Him
  - **Deuteronomy 8:19-20** To demonstrate to Israel God's judgment for disobedience
  - **Genesis 49:10** The Messianic promise comes through a nation set aside for that purpose. Israel must remain holy (separate) to the Lord
  - **Deuteronomy 1:6-8** God had made land promises to Israel not to Canaanites who claim possession for themselves.
  - **Genesis 15:16** To fulfill prophetic timetable (after 400 years)
  - **Exodus 6:6-7; 7:17; Joshua 2:10-11** To teach Israel and the nations that Yahweh alone is God.
  - **Daniel 10** illustrates that God is teaching in the spiritual realm as well. He is demonstrating to all heaven and all hell, angels and demons that He is God and all things are subject to Him.

Exd 23:24 "You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their {sacred} pillars in pieces.

Exd 23:25 "But you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst.

A Blessing

Exd 23:26 "There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.

- God will watch over His servants with a wonderful blessing - **Provision, Health, Life, Fulfillment**
- **1 Samuel 12:24** "Fear the LORD and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you."

of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you  
your enemies turn {their} backs to you.

Exd 23:28 "I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you.

- God will go before them and their enemies will greatly fear their arrival.
- **TERROR** Joshua 2:9-11 "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. "When we heard {it,} our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath."
- **HORNETS** Joshua 24:12 recounting history Joshua says "I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, {but} not by your sword or your bow"
- God wants our reputation to be known and that the reputation be for the Lord's glory, Paul wrote in **Philippians 4:5** "Let your gentle {spirit} be known to all men. The Lord is near." The Old Testament terror went before them to show God as a Judge of Righteousness. The New Testament His love goes before us to show His Grace.

Exd 23:29 "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.

Exd 23:30 "I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.

- God promises our enemies will be driven out, but not all at once.
- God promises an increase but not all at once.
- **WHY?**
  - 1) so the land will not become desolate.
  - 2) so fruit will grow. (stress helps grow fruit - pruning fruit or branches)
  - 3) so we can take possession. (to much at one time causes gluttony or drunkenness)
- **Little by Little** - This truly is God's compassionate wisdom. Of course we want God to do it all at one time. But there are unforeseen circumstances that are not desirable if everything were done at one time. (i.e.: celebrities who become Christians and immediately become spokesmen. Generally do not fair very well - Bob Dylan, B.J. Thomas)
- **Judges 3:1-2** "Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to test Israel by them ({that is,} all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan; only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly)."

Exd 23:31 "I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River {Euphrates;} for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you.

- This is a very large piece of real estate. Israel never really possesses it.
- This is cooperation between God and His people. God delivers and the believer possesses. There is an effort on our part, but with out God's part there will be no way to possess the promise.

Exd 23:32 "You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods.

- There is no negotiation between the Christian and flesh, sin or the carnal mind.
- A very sad commentary is that Israel did make a covenant with the Gibeonites. (Joshua 9)  
- But God Honored Israel's covenant with the Gibeonites. They were blessed by God. They were protected by God, They were revenged by God against Saul and eventually went into captivity and was numbered with Israel who returned from exile.

Exd 23:33 "They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against Me; for {if} you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."



*Your complimentary  
use period has ended.  
Thank you for using  
PDF Complete.*

*Click Here to upgrade to  
Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features*

**995 by The Lockman Foundation  
Permission." ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))**