

MISHPATIM - EXODUS

- *Judgments* -

Dan Stolebarger - Holy Ground Explorations
Chapters 21-24

INTRODUCTION



PARASHAT MISHPATIM - 'Judgments'

INTRO

TORAH = “Direction” or “teaching.” It does not mean “law” as is commonly taught by Christian teachers.

The Torah “which is oral,” referring to the legal and interpretative traditions handed down by word of mouth until these were codified in the Mishnah and Gemara (i.e., the Talmud).

This week’s Torah reading begins with Moses in the midst of the “thick darkness” receiving additional instructions regarding various civil laws for the Israelite people. The sages count 53 distinct commandments listed in this portion of the Torah, making it one of the most “legalistic” sections of the Bible. Civil laws, liability laws, criminal laws, agricultural laws, financial laws, family purity laws, Sabbath laws, and holiday laws are all given in this portion.

Discuss the following statement: “You cannot have the Cross without the Torah, and you cannot have the Torah without the Cross... God is One.”

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.

Remember that the Israelites had recently put blood on the door posts to keep their firstborn alive (Passover). The doorposts can be seen as a sign of personal limits, thus the "bond slave" was fastened to the household by blood.

Coeur d'Alene - The heart of the awl

SLAVERY - There are two ways in which a Jew can become a bondsman: He can sell himself as an escape from extreme poverty (Leviticus 25:39), or he may be a thief who is sold by the court to raise funds to pay his victims.

Capital punishment for premeditated murder is the only law that appears in all five books of the Torah. D. Prager

12 "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. **13** However, 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. (in the case of involuntary homicide, a designated "City of Refuge" was provided.)

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. (This implies that if it was intentional murder, he will have no escape. Since man was created in God's image, the last place a murderer could, or should, find refuge is in the house of the Creator. D. Prager)

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.

There is no pardon, nor mitigation, for intentional murder. The concept which emerges from a study of this topic suggests that life itself is the possession of God, and that you and I lease it for a few years. To take a person's life is in some sense, a blasphemy. To take your own life is probably the ultimate blasphemy.

Cities of Refuge

Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30 40



²³ But if *any* harm follows, then you shall give life for life, ²⁴ **eye for eye**, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

The idea of “eye for an eye” means to pay for physical damages, *including* pain, healing, shame, and disability.

Never was there a Jewish court that ever blinded or otherwise inflicted a physical injury in revenge or retribution.

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.

Commonsense

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.

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

While a stranger was a foreigner, and they were not to intermarry, yet they were to show hospitality and protect from abuse. In remembrance of when they were strangers in a strange land.

The Torah implies that anyone who dares cause a widow or orphan to suffer should expect, severe retaliation from the Father of orphans and the Judge of widows (Rashi)

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.** 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.

COMPASSION

23

"You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. ² **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*. ³ You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute.

Mob mentality

Everybody is doing it

Our Culture Norms

4 "If you meet **your enemy's** ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. 5 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.

Hmmmm - nuf' said

¹⁰ "Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, ¹¹ **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. ¹² **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.

Leviticus 24 & 25, **The Sabbath of the land.** They did not keep this law for 490 years and because they did, God sent them to be slaves. God prophesied that they would be taken captive by Babylon (Leviticus 26:34-43; Jeremiah 38:14-22; 2 Chronicles 36:21) and it was specifically prophesied by Jeremiah that it would be 70 years that they would be enslaved (2 Chronicles 36:17-21).

¹³ "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.

¹⁴ "Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: ¹⁵ 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 (same as Nissan), for in it you came out of Egypt; none shall appear before Me empty); ¹⁶ and the **Feast of Harvest (Pentecost)**, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the **Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles)** at the end of the year, when you have gathered in *the fruit of* your labors from the field.

¹⁷ "Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord God.

¹⁸ "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until morning. ¹⁹ The first of the **firstfruits** of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

JOYFUL Celebrations

YESHUA fulfills ALL the Feasts!

God does not want your leftovers

²⁰ **"Behold, I send an Angel before you** to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ²¹ Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; **for My name is in Him.** ²² 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. ²³ 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. ²⁴ 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.

The Angel ... As Messianic Believers we hold that this Angel was none other than Yeshua the Mashiach in his pre-incarnate state.

1 Corinthians 10:4 - and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

²⁷ **"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.** ²⁸ And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. ²⁹ 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. **³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you,** until you have increased, and you inherit the land. ³¹ 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. ³² You shall make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. ³³ 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."

If the country were to become empty of its inhabitants too quickly, it would become desolate and filled with wildlife.

Now He said to Moses, "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. ² And Moses alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him."

³ So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the Lord has said we will do." ⁴ And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient."

Nadab and Abihu are in the inner circle with Moses and Aaron, they seem to have a privileged position. However, later (in Leviticus 10:1-2) they are destroyed by fire for having offered strange fire before the Lord. Office and position are no guarantee of salvation.

9 Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, 10 and they saw the God of Israel. And *there was* under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in *its* clarity.

And they saw the God of Israel: It is difficult to say exactly what they saw. What they saw **under His feet** suggests that at the most they saw the *footstool* of God. Most likely they saw some aspect of a heavenly vision of God, after the pattern of Isaiah (Isaiah 6) or Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1).

i. "In this verse it is equally stressed that the elders did not dare to raise their eyes above His footstool." (Cole)

ii. The blue of the **sapphire** may suggest that the elders saw the sea of glass before the throne of God (Revelation 4:6). "Ezekiel 1:26 sees God as seated on a sapphire throne, over a crystal 'firmament' (verse 22), and the thought is taken up again in the book of Revelation." (Cole)

iii. **A paved work of sapphire stone:** "To show that God had now changed their condition, their *bricks*, made in their bondage, to *sapphire*."

¹² Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them." ¹³ So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua (interesting that it was not Aaron), and Moses went up to the mountain of God. ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur *are* with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them." ¹⁵ Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.

¹⁶ Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. ¹⁸ So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

In a direct revelation sense, for the people of Israel, this was the high point of 1500 years of subsequent history. In fact, within 40 days of their fellowship with God, the nation builds a golden calf to worship!!