

**Friday, August 5, 2022 ◻ Read Exodus 21:28–36**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What situation does v28 address? What happens to the ox? What mayn't they do with it? What happens to the owner? But if the owner knew that the ox was like this, what happens to him (v29)? What is the only way that he gets out of the death penalty (v30)? Who imposes the amount (v31)? In what case is the amount fixed instead (v32)? What situation does v33 address? What must the pit-digger do (v34)? What does he get out of it? What situation does v35 address? What do they do with the live ox? With the dead one? But what if the owner of the live ox knew that his ox was like this (v36)?*

**What does proper dominion over beasts and land require?** Exodus 21:28–36 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we must take care that no harm be done by those in our power to oversee, whether animal or inanimate property.**

The justice of the various case laws seems plain. v28 follows Gen 9:5 in demanding a reckoning for man's blood from beasts as much as from men. There must be no benefit gained by man from the death of the ox; its death must serve only the purpose of reflecting the dignity of human life being in the image of God. So, its flesh may not be eaten.

There are a few more principles that can be gleaned here.

**Criminal negligence is culpable not murder,** v30. Numbers 35:31 is going to prohibit allowing a murderer to redeem his life. So, while the man his held responsible for his negligence (v29), the law makes enough of a distinction to distinguish it from murder.

**God's society values women as much as men,** v31–32. As we will see later in the law, the work of men and women was valued differently. This corresponds to their general productivity. However, the lives of men and women here are valued equally. The father has the same right of demand for a daughter as he does for a son (v30). The life of a female servant is valued the same as that of a male servant (v32).

The equal value of male and female life in Israel was revolutionary in the Ancient Near East, just as the Christian valuing of female babies as much as male babies was revolutionary in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century Rome. But this valuing comes from the same reality that demands the destruction of beasts that have killed people: man, both male and female, is made in the image of God (cf. Gen 1:27).

Additionally, the 30 shekels itself was 50% more than a slave was worth in the Mesopotamian code of Hammurabi and twice as much as in the Mesopotamian laws of Eshnunna.

**Negligence is culpable in the destruction of property, not just life,** v33–36. A pit required a cover that would prevent an animal falling in. An aggressive ox had to be prevented from access to people or other animals. In the case of accident, the cost of the loss would be shared equally. In the case of negligence, the owner would bear the entire loss himself.

**What are some ways in which we must think of the safety of others in managing our property?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for making us in Your own image, and for giving us dominion over Your creation. Grant unto us to exercise that responsibility in a way that properly acknowledges the dignity and glory of Your image. Thank You for valuing us and giving Christ for us. In His Name, we pray for help, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP184 "Adoration and Submission" or TPH164 "God Himself Is with Us"**

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Exodus 21 verses 28 through 36. These are God's words If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned and it's flesh shall not be eaten But the owner of the aux shall be acquitted. But If the aux tended to thrust with its horn in times past and there has been made none to his owner and he is 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 If there is imposed on him may some of money Then he shall pay to redeem his life whatever is imposed on him. Whether it has goured a son or gourd a daughter According to this judgment to shall be done to him.

If the ox scores, a male or female servant he shall give to their master, 30 shekels of silver. And the ox I'll be stoned and if a man opens a pit or if a man digs a bit and does not cover it and then ox or a donkey falls in it the owner of the pit shall make it good.

So give money to their owner. But the dead animal shall be his and fun man's ox hurts and others. So that it dies Then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it and the dead ox. There's also divide or if it was known that the ox tended to thrust in time passed, and it's owner has not kept it confined.

He shall surely pay ox for ox and the dead animal shall be his own. So far the reading of God's inspired and and Aaron twerk. Well, in the previous passage, we saw laws for dealing with murder and they were applying, of course, the sixth commandment. Thou shalt not murder or thou shalt, not kill.

But that particular word for kill meaning murder and we saw that in the previous passage here and Exodus 21 as well, but it's also applying a part of the moral law. That was commanded with the prescribed penalty in Genesis chapter 9. Which is that? He who sheds man's blood by?

Man, his blood shall be shed because man is made in the image of God. Well, the previous verse to that, in Genesis chapter 9 said that God would require of

man. The blood of man if he says it and of beast. And so it is part of keeping the moral law that an animal as part of an application of the moral law, rather in, in civil law in statute, law, our case law for Israel.

That an animal that kills a person must be put to death. The fact that animals do not premeditate so it's not murder, does not spare them from the penalty because the animal is not made in the image of God. There's a great difference in the and the narrative of Genesis chapter 1 where animals and even plant life etc, are created according to their kind each according to their kind.

But a man, this according to their kind language is not used because man is made in the image of God. And according to his likeness, it's a great difference between man and the rest of the creation, the rest of the creatures. And so this is honored in God's moral law.

Here, we see the difference between and ox, that kills a man and an ox, that kills an animal, the ox kills the animal, the oxet, kills the other ox, It can remain alive and it can be sold, can be used. But the the ox that kills, a man must be killed and the man who owned it cannot benefit from it.

It's flesh. Cannot be eaten. It is it is being executed for taking the life of a man. God demands, a reckoning for men's blood. Another principle we see here is that criminal negligence is culpable but not to the level of murder in verse 29. We see that the owner might be put to death for the manslaughter if he knew that his ox was this aggressive type of the oxen shown that's aggressiveness before he would be put to death But he could be redeemed from that penalty.

If there is imposed on him a sum of money, Then he shall pay to redeem his life. Whatever is imposed on him. Now in the case of murder, this actually wasn't allowed numbers. 35 31 said that a murderer could not pay any sum of money to redeem his life.

And so you see God making distinctions for Israel. This is where we get our distinction between a kind of second degree or third degree. I don't know which it is murder, where there's criminal, like, negligence that leads to death. That is not the same as a premeditated and intentional murder of planning or hostility.

The Lord permits the one whose criminal negligence has led to the death of another because it was negligence to pay. Instead, a great sum of money and redeem his life, rather than being executed. So God demands a reckoning for man's life even from beasts criminal, criminal negligence is culpable.

That means, it's guilty and it should be punished, but it is not the same as the premeditated killing of murder. And then in the third place, one of the things we see here is that women are valued as much as as men are, which again in ancient Near Eastern Law is extraordinary.

But it goes back to Genesis 9:6 and Genesis chapter 1, where women are made not in the image of the man. They are taken from the man but they are made in the image of God. And so they are valued the same as a man, their work is not necessarily valued the same.

We'll see that later. At least their service and other society. Their work as a wiper or a mother is valued more. We've already started to see that a little bit with the special law for the for the pregnant woman, who is accidentally harmed and gives birth early and so forth.

The bearing of image bearers as esteemed. Very highly by God. But because man and woman are made in the image of God, women are valued their life. Their personal worth is valued as as much as a man's. And so when it says if it if it has killed a man or woman, the ox shall be stoned.

Verse 29, whether as gore day, sun or gourd, a daughter. According this to this judgment it shall be done to him verse 31 If the aux cores a male or female servant he shall give to his master etc. In verse 32. And so, you know that the 30 seconds of silver is attached to the the fact that that the person is made in the image of God.

This, by the way is higher than any other a compensation in. In the ancient Near East. There are other law codes where you compensate for a servant and you only compensating for the labor in that case and you don't compensate as much for women. But even for the men, some of the laws, you know, required 15 shekel, some of the raw is required.

20 shekels. And of course, the whatever is imposed on him of verse 30, maybe even be higher than that. You see here that this is not just treating people as resources, people as objects the way, a communist state would do in the way all murderers. Do So, even for the mail servants, it's 50% more than anybody else and a hundred percent more than than some others.

And those are the ones that we know of, but the female servants are given the same valuation because it is according to their worth as a person, a penalty. For negligence Again note that this is for negligence not just murder. If it's premeditated murder, the penalty is death and they cannot be redeemed.

So this is the third principle. We see here that God society values. Women as much as it does. Men values daughters as much as it does sons. So God demands, a reckoning for man's blood from beasts. Criminal negligence is culpable but not the same as murder. God's society values.

Women as much as it does men and negligent criminal negligence is culpable not just in the destruction of life but also in the destruction of property. And that's you can see that in verses 33 through 36, the guy with a pit who is supposed to cover it and cover it in such a way that can support the weight of an animal that can't read a sign.

There is a pit here, right? The donkey can't read a sign. The ox can't read a sign. So they had to put boards over it or something. Something that could sustain an animal walking across it and not falling into it. This was a lot more necessary in their culture.

It's not like um you know when I was in first grade trying to dig to China a little by little and recess until the teacher discovered, the depth of the pit that we had created and was alarmed and for bad the continuation of it and the school had to fill it in, probably using a backhoe, not even a shovel.

I don't know what they did, but the pit was gone. No, they had to use pits for storing things. That needed to be kept cool. They used it for keeping all sorts of food stuffs. And so on, There were many different things that they needed Pitts for. So that was a big part of their society but you could be criminally negligent in endangering, someone else's property of being damaged.

And so also you see that if with the ox that was known to gore, if the owner didn't do enough to confine it and restrain it so that it was it was able to gore another animal, Then he would lose his animal. Because or if it gord another ox he would lose.

He would lose his ox and he would get the dead one. That's not the same as manslaughter. Man is protected by God in a way that oxen aren't So. You know, his family would have a great perhaps sad feast because they had the dead ox and now you have to eat it.

I can't plow for you anymore, But it, but one who had lost his ox, would get the live one and so forth. So God wants us to be careful and thoughtful. Not only of

others' lives but also of others property. What that means is that touching. You're using someone else's thing without asking to stealing but also that if someone lets you borrow something and you don't take good care of it, that's also stealing, right?

Because you are expected to have a regard for other people's other people's property. So Those principles and in these nine verses of case law, God demands a reckoning for men's blood from beasts. As much as from men, criminal negligence is culpable. But when someone dies of criminal negligence, it doesn't rise to the level of murder.

God society values women as much as men and We are expected to be thoughtful and careful of others property. Not just their lives. Negligence is culpable in the destruction of property. Not just life.

Let's pray Father. We thank you for giving us not only

How to know you and how to belong to you and the way you want your church to operate. But for for also giving us an example of what it looks like, when

When a people in a society have laws and rules that come from the knowledge of you. We pray. Lord, first and foremost that you'd make each of us to know you as you yourself, present yourself in the scriptures and that you would make us to love you. And the value and we do pray for the pouring out of your spirit, that many would be snatched from the flames of hell, that many would be delivered from the power of the devil.

That many would be brought into the knowledge of you so that the society is desires as a whole would be to live according to your law, or moral law as fleshed out and, and civil law. That that reflects it. Help us o. God, we are so needy. So you ask for these things that seems so far away from where we are right now.

Yellow card. You are merciful your powerful and you have shown us those things. Most in Christ who even now rules in heaven and so we pray that he would be submitted to on earth even in his own name. Amen.