

The Book of the Covenant

Exodus Chapters 20:22 - 24:18

This section of Exodus is known as "the book of the covenant" and is the oldest record we have of Jewish law. It consists of "judgments," (case-laws) and "statutes" (straight-forward commands).

Here, legal, moral and religious laws are inseparable, showing God's concern for life as a whole. There is one law for all, despite a man's status, with regulations protecting the weak and the helpless. The laws God gave Moses to "set before" (21:1) the Israelites can be summarized as follows:

Exodus 20:22-26 =	General instructions about worship
Exodus 21:1-23:13 =	Civil laws
Exodus 21:1-11 =	The rights of slaves
Exodus 21:12-32 =	Manslaughter
Exodus 21:33-22:15 =	Theft
Exodus 22:16-31 =	Obligations
Exodus 23:1-13 =	Justice and rights
Exodus 23:14-19 =	Laws for the three main feasts - Unleavened Bread, First Fruits and Harvest
Exodus 23:20-33 =	God's Provision for His obedient people

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). He wants His children to be Holy (*set apart*). In this section of Scripture God has presented a guide for holy living and in closing declared to the Israelites that He will protect them as they travel to the place He has prepared for them: "the promised land" (23:20). God however warns His people not to make a covenant, or become intertwined (2 Corinthians 6:14) with the Canaanites because their lifestyles and ways would cause God's children to sin against Him (23:32-33).

Read: Exodus 23: 20-33 – Take some time to dissect and discuss this passage of scripture.

- What exactly is God telling/promising His people in this section? Are His promises conditional?
- What do verses 20-22 say about God's Word and those who impart it truthfully? Look up: Acts 17:11, 1 John 5:3
- What does this passage say will be the experience of those who are enemies of God's people?
- What does the provision of verses 29-30 say to you about the way God works? Does this ever frustrate you?
- Compare verses 32-33 with 2 Corinthians 6:14. Name just a few of the consequences of such behavior.

Exodus Chapter 24 – "The Covenant is Ratified"

This covenant (*conditional promise with God*) is formally sealed by a special sacrifice and by the covenant meal eaten by Moses, Aaron, Aaron's two sons, and seventy elders in the presence of God. The blood sprinkled on the people and on the altar unites the two parties to the agreement; each is swearing to keep their part of the covenant.

Read Exodus 24:1-18

- v.1- Nadab and Abihu: Two of Aaron's sons who later died after disobeying the Lord's command (Leviticus.10:1-2).
- v.10 - Here Moses gropes for words to describe the indescribable communion with God (Corroboration = Revelation 4:6).
- v.11 – It is not true that "no one may see God and live". It is true that no one may see *the face of God and live*. Most likely they saw a heavenly vision of God, drenched in light after the pattern of Isaiah 6 or Ezekiel 1.
Look up: Exodus 33:20-23, 1 John 4:12
- “Breaking bread” (*or eating*) with someone is the essence of fellowship. Just as Jesus did with that last evening meal before His death in John 13, and again as He did on the shore after He defeated death in John 21.
- v.14 - Hur and Aaron held up Moses' hands in prayer during the battle with the Amalekites (17:12).
- v.18 – The number "40" occurs at almost every new stage in Israel's history: at the flood (Gen 7:12); years until the Israelites reached Canaan (Ex 16:35); the time of the spies in Canaan (Nu 13:25); King David's reign (2 Sam 5:4); Elijah's journey to Horev (1 Kings 9:8); Jesus' time in the wilderness (Mark :13); and the time between Jesus' resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:3).