

Part 2 – False Matter, Bribes (gifts), Oppressing foreigners, Agriculture laws, Sabbath

Exodus 23

7 Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.

The word ‘keep’ here is #7368, a primitive root that means: *to widen* (in any direction), i.e. (intransitively) *recede* or (transitively) *remove* (literally or figuratively, of place or relation):

In other words: in no way, shape or form should we be participating in a *false matter*. God does not want the innocent or the righteous to be punished (murdered given here as an example) nor the wicked to be rewarded or justified. This happens, of course, all the time all, all over the world. And that’s one of the reasons our Heavenly Father has a ‘controversy’ with the nations of the world (Isa 34:8, Jer 25:31, Hosea 4:1, 12:2, Micah 6:2), including His chosen people who are now mostly in the Christian nations of the world. The Psalms tell us that...

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Ps 103:6-8

God’s ways (Laws) are designed to protect and reward the innocent and the righteous while punishing the wicked. He made His Ways known to Moses and we are studying part of them in this great book of Exodus. God warns us against being a part of wickedness and it’s our responsibility to strive hard to not participate in a ‘false matter’ in any way, shape or form. This is a law that, naturally, applies to the court of law, but it also applies to our personal lives. And one of the worst forms of ‘false matters’ is *gossip*. It’s a daily activity that’s hard to keep away from but once you learn how to rebuke someone for bringing gossip to you, they usually learn not to bring that filth around you anymore. This sort of thing must always be done with discernment from the Holy Spirit, of course, but learning to ‘nip’ problems at the ‘bud’ (cut them off before they get to be real problems) is the best course of action in life. This goes for our thoughts, our conversations (gossip), chastising your children or employees and even applies to *disciplining yourself*!

But this doesn’t mean this verse doesn’t apply judicially. Certainly, it does and when a judge or a jury condemn an innocent person *knowingly*, they will be held accountable for it by God Himself. Judicial murder is not any better than any other kind of murder. Actually, it’s worse because it’s done by someone who has authority over the people. It’s a gross abuse of the authority, power and trust given them. Prov 3:27 says: *withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it*. As Jesus said in Luke 12:48: *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*. When someone is placed as a judge or a jury, God expects them to judge rightly. He expects them to condemn the wicked and reward the righteous, not the

other way around. And, as David (inspired by the Holy Spirit) said in 2 Sam 2:3: *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God*. God Almighty (YHVH) does not show any approval for those who refuse to judge rightly, and we have example after example (1 Cor 10:11) from the Bible proving this fact. It doesn't matter if it's someone who He loves dearly, He will still punish sin. That is what it means when the Bible says that God is NOT a respecter of persons (Deut 1:17, Acts 10:34, Rom 2:11, 1 Pt 1:17, John 12:46-48).

A good example of this can be seen by the way He punished king David when he sinned in the account with Bath-Sheba (2 Sam 11-12). Only because David sincerely repented (as Psalms 51 reveals) did he not lose his life but, he still had a heck of a price to pay because, David was the king of the land. *He was the highest earthly authority*. So, no one but God Himself could punish David. David thus greatly abused his power. And God called Him out on it when saying David 'despised the commandment of the Lord' and 'did evil in his sight' (2 Sam 12:9). Thus, David's gross sin gave everyone in the land, *and the surrounding nations*, occasion to blaspheme God (2 Sam 12:14). That's because David represented God Himself (Deut 1:17). Anytime we're in a position of authority (power) we must recognize that we represent God (even if in a small way, such as being a parent). So, we see that truly, God does not let any sin go without being punished. Even when we repent, there's always chastisement which is given for our good (Heb 12) and the more authority we have the more chastisement we will get (as David learned).

But, as far as the judging matters not personal to him, David did do a pretty good job overall. As it's written of him in 1 Chron 18:14 that: *David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people*. And, we actually have another good example of good judgment from one of the few good kings of Judah that came after king David, whose was named Jehoshaphat. He made mistakes but he actually tried to do what was right, and we see one of the things he did was to establish righteous judges in the land. Below is the account documenting what he told the judges regarding the importance of them judging rightly and not perverting judgment (i.e., keeping a false matter far from them) ...

5 And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city,

*6 And said to the judges, **Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.***

7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

8 Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

*9 And he charged them, saying, **Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.***

*10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, **ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.***

*11 And, behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites shall be officers before you. **Deal courageously**, and the LORD shall be with the good.*

2 Chron 19:5-11

Interestingly, king Jehoshaphat told the judges to be courageous. Why? *Because judges are often threatened if they cannot be bought off.* It takes courage to trust in God and do what's right when your life (and the life of your family) is threatened. But that's what we are supposed to do. From the judge, to the jury to the common citizen: God expects us to obey His Laws despite how we are treated for it. We must never forget that *we fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* (Eph 6:12). This is why we must *put on the whole armor of God* (Eph 6), so we can be spiritually equipped to handle the pressures that come from doing what is right according to God's Word. Satan does not like anyone to be loyal to the one true God Almighty (YHVH) or His Son, Jesus Christ. So, if you are studying the Word of God sincerely, He will be trying hard to get you to stop. You might (likely will) experience of troubles in your life when you study God's Word (Heb 10:32). This is normal. Satan is trying to find a way to get you distracted so you will lose focus on the spiritual war and focus on yourself instead. This is one of his tactics in the spiritual war and it often works really well. So be aware of it and on guard for it. *Don't let anything or anyone turn your focus away from studying God's Word and applying it to your heart, mind, words and actions. Nothing is more than serving God.* And while you certainly cannot neglect your duties in life (to your family, country, job, etc.), God must still be first and foremost. ***You cannot sell your loyalty to Him just to please someone else.*** Stay loyal to God and He'll reward you for it even though you might have to go through troubles before experiencing those blessings. God certainly has a right to test His servants, does He not? (Ps 11:4, Jer 17:9-10) And the blessings God gives are not always material. Actually, the best blessings from Him are *spiritual*.

13 Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

*15 She is more precious than rubies: and ***all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.****

16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Prov 3:13-16

Additionally, God's blessings are given *in direct relation to our faith in Him*. The more faith, the bigger the spiritual blessings. He will also give you physical blessings but only so far as you can handle them. Remember that money is often a very bad distraction and can *easily* corrupt the heart of a good person (1 Tim 6:6-12). So, having a lot of money should not be our objective in life. Serving God should be our objective in life (that's what is most important) and He will give you physical blessings, so much as what you can handle; but, He'll always give you what you need. The Proverbs gives some excellent advice on this...

Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Prov 23:4

This is some of the best advice ever. Laboring to be rich is the wisdom of the world and *this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish* (James 3:15). Trying to be rich is one of the greatest downfalls of mankind. In fact, it was a large part of what made Satan fall in first earth age! [learn more about this: <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/192?single>].

The Proverbs continues...

There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor; yet hath great riches.

Prov 13:7

True spiritual wealth is not determined by the wealth of this world. Not at all. Most of the time, those who are spiritually wealthy (2 Pt 1:4, Eph 3:16, Col 2:2) are not physically wealthy. It's not that they aren't 'well off'. God takes care of His own. But He does not usually see fit to give us great material riches (most of the time) **because they have a corrupting effect...**

*He that **trusteth** in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*

Prov 11:28

It's hard to stay humble and trust in God when you have A LOT of wealth. And by great wealth, we're talking about so much money that you don't think you have to even 'worry' about finances anymore. That's what most people want, isn't it? They want to be a millionaire (billionaire) *so they don't have to trust in God to care for them*. And they don't want to have to actually work for a living to provide for themselves or for their family. So, most people seek to make money *as easily as they can*. This is why Satan's system works so well (unfortunately). **Satan's system is rigged to draw us into sin when we partake of his monetary system of 'getting rich' quickly and it's therefore very tempting to many people.**

There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

Eccl 5:13

We have to be careful about *where we place our trust* and *what we allow our heart to long for*. Our heart should not be set on worldly things, and this includes money...

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

*5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and **covetousness**, which is idolatry:*

Col 3:1-5

We should seek those things which are above where Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God. Those are spiritual blessings and characteristics the Holy Spirit and the Word of God help us to put on. If we ‘set’ our affections on things above, we won’t be tempted by the earthly things. And did you catch what verse 5 said? *Covetousness is idolatry*. That means: **coveting money is idolatry**. Making money your objective in life *is worshiping yourself instead of God Almighty* and money is your idol through which you worship yourself. In other words, if money is what makes you ‘happy’ in life (instead of a personal relationship with our Heavenly Father) then money is your idol. And if that’s what you truly want then your pleasures will be short lived. You’ll get some earthly pleasures but you will have problems your entire life and *no peace of mind*. Then, when you die, you will be confined to ‘prison’ (what some call ‘hell’) until the end of the Millennium in which (if you do not truly repent and show by your *works* that you are no longer rebellious) you will be put to death spiritually, meaning *you don’t exist anymore in any form or fashion* (Lk 16:19-31, Rev 20). Is that what you really want? Is money really that important in life? It’s shallow and the pleasures thereof are very temporary. Worshiping money is not worth it in the long run...

7 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die:

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Prov 30:7-9

The author of Proverbs had it right: we shouldn’t desire poverty nor to be filthy rich. And, it’s important to understand that, while it’s not a sin to have ‘riches’ from *legal* means of obtaining them (obeying God’s Word does bring material blessings), *it is a sin to lust after money*. And it’s a dang fine line. The Bible repeatedly warns against coveting riches **regardless of whether or not they are gotten legally or illegally**. For good reason does Paul warn...

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. [how many ‘Christians’ do you know who would be content with this?!]

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

*10 For **the love of money is the root of all evil**: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

*11 But thou, O man of God, **flee these things**; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

1 Tim 6:6-12

The things we are to follow after is not money. *We should not be seeking money.* Our heart should not be set on making money. This concept cannot be overstated. Coveting money causes all too many to be corrupted. That's why Paul says that *the love of money is the root of all evil and they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.* **Even the blessings of God can be a snare to us IF we begin to desire money instead of a true relationship with God.** If He blesses your finances, *make dang sure you keep your heart right with Him or He will take those financial blessings away.* He chastises us because He loves us (Heb 12).

To sum it up: Riches can harm us; they should not be our objective (goal) in life. Being focused on (consumed by) 'getting ahead' in life *is having a carnal (worldly) mind*, and is not pleasing to God (Rom 8:7). This is why Jesus said you cannot be loyal to Him *and* to 'mammon' (wealth, riches) in Mth 6:24. And judging rightly in a court of law, or in our personal life, can be greatly skewed by lusting (coveting) after money. If we want to truly obey God and 'keep far from us a false matter' then we must be very careful not to allow our heart to lust for money (or anything else such as pride, attention, acceptance, recognition, etc.). We can't fool God. He sees into our hearts and tests us to see what our true intentions and desires are.

4 The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

5 The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.
Ps 11:4-5

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Jer 17:9-10

Now, one more note must be made here simply because so many Churches try to put people on a guilt trip about tithing. As stated above, having money from legitimate means (honestly working for it and God blessing your efforts) is not a sin unless money becomes your idol. But, so long as God is first and foremost in your life, we are to enjoy His blessings. But some Churches try hard to get people to part with their money because the Pastors are greedy for gain. They preach for hire instead of teaching the truth. Don't ever let anyone put you on a guilt trip for having money. The commonly used Scripture for this is found in Mth 19, Mk 10 and Luke 18 where Jesus told a rich man to: *go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me* (Mk 10:21). This verse is twisted to pressure people into tithing more and more and many crooked 'Pastors' ('Preachers') try to deceive people into thinking they need to live poorly while the Church leaders get to live very

wealthily. Don't let anyone fool you. This account in Mth 19, Mk 10 and Luke 18 is not regarding *all* people. If you read the entire account, it is obvious that Jesus told this man to sell everything and follow Him because his problem was with covetousness, specifically with money. Notice how, after the man asked Jesus *what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?* (Mark 10:17) Jesus listed all of the Ten Commandments *except* the Tenth Commandment, which prohibits covetousness [study it here: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/108]. When the man said *all these have I observed from my youth* (Mark 10:20), Jesus replied, *One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me* (Mk 10:21). After the rich man heard this, *he went away grieved: for he had great possessions* (Mk 10:22). Jesus only asked this man to dump his riches because they were a snare to Him and truly were prohibiting him from following Jesus.

The point is clearly not to allow riches to be a snare for us. And if this is a problem for you, it would be better to sell all the 'extra' stuff you have and give the money to the poor so you can get a handle on your problem. But that does not mean all Christians (those who follow Jesus Christ) need to do this. Whatever our sins are, we must strive hard to kick them out of our heart. Sometimes we might need to change our habits to help us overcome the problems. If you have a problem with overeating, you might have to rid your house of junk food. If you have a habit of watching porn, you might have to do away with the internet, tv or any devices that can be used to view porn on. Or if you have a problem with alcohol or drugs, you might need to go to a rehab center to get clean and then move away from you old 'friends' so you won't be tempted to go back into that lifestyle (this is often needed to overcome drugs and alcohol addiction, by the way). But we should learn, *with time*, how to overcome our problems and learn how to move on with life, knowing that we are ultimately accountable to God. So, that which was necessary when we are young Christians (spiritually young) will likely change as you grow and mature in the Word of God and learn to overcome your problems. And certainly, the way we handle getting rid of sin does not apply to everyone else all the time. Jesus warned that having a lot of riches make it hard to enter into the Kingdom of God (Mk 10:23) but that does not make having money a sin and it does not need you need to give it all away. So, don't let anyone (especially Pastors) fool you into parting with your money to 'support' them. God does not send out beggars. Make sure you 'support' only a Church that feeds you spiritually and teaches the Word of God in entirely and accurately. If you cannot find a Church like that then pray to God how you can 'tithe' to Him. It maybe He shows you a family that needs a little help or something like that. Use discernment and follow God's unction because not all those who say they need help, truly need it in the way they ask for it. **[Isn't It Ok to Help? <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/292>].**

Exodus 23

8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

The word 'gift' here is #7810 and it means: a *donation* (venal or redemptive). It's translated in the KJV as - bribe (-ry), gift, present, reward. It comes from #7809, a primitive root that means: *to donate*, i.e. *bribe*. So, this verse is talking about taking bribes in any form for fashion

(incentives, enticements, kickbacks, etc.) and the reason is made explicitly clear: it blinds and perverts us. The verse says it perverts our words but the root of the problem is that it perverts *the way we think* because *what we desire has changed*. And it's our choice. God does not do it to us...

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James 1:13-15

Because God gave us free will, we have the right to choose if we want to sin or not. That means, we have the right to choose what we want to be enticed by or if we want to refuse it. This is a fundamental right God gives all of us. We get to choose *what we think about* and *what we want*. If we allow ourselves to be enticed by sin (if we allow ourselves to lust), then we will sin. And if we don't stop this course, it will lead us to spiritual death. That's what our Heavenly Father is trying to avoid by giving us knowledge of what choosing the wrong path leads to, as well as how to change. He even died for our sins so we could repent and change our ways (thoughts and desires). And then He will even send His Holy Spirit to help us understand *how* to change and clean our heart; and He gives us the strength to do it when we simply believe in Him. Our Heavenly Father truly has done everything possible to help us choose life without taking away our free will – the freedom to choose life or death (Deut 30). But sadly, there's still those who have 'pleasure in unrighteousness' (2 Thess 2:12). What they will know and understand for sure (by the end of the Millennium) is where the path of sin leads and that is to spiritual death (we will not exist in any form anymore, Rev 20).

So, while this verse is directed at the judicial branch (court of law) (no judge or jury should take bribes), the truth is that it applies to everyone no matter what position in life they have. We shouldn't allow ourselves to be coerced into sinning no matter what. The book of Deuteronomy echo's this command not to 'take gifts'...

19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

20 That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Deut 16:19-20

But these are not the only places that warn against such a thing. Consider the following...

A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

Prov 17:23

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.
Eccl 7:7

Bribes (gifts) are one of the easiest ways our heart is corrupted and God's word warns us *this is what destroys our heart!* It defiles our very soul. Further, God warns Israel about the evils of bribery in the book of Amos...

*12 For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, **they take a bribe**, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.*

13 Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken.

15 Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

Amos 5:12-15

Taking bribes is to love that which is evil and hate the good. It's truly wickedness; yet, that's what we all partake in every time we allow our heart to be defiled by sin, such as lust and/or pride (2 John 2:16). When we sin, we give in to the desire to have a 'pleasure' that is unjust. It could be a sexual pleasure that is illegitimate (adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, pedophilia, etc.), or financially getting gain that is unjust (coveting money) or believing the lie that we can do whatever we want and not have any bad things happen to us (the same old lie Eve fell for, Gen 3). Breaking God's laws will bring cursings, whether or not we understand where they come from or not. So, *taking heed to bribes does not get us ahead in the long run. Our soul suffers greatly for it.* The Psalm 37 has some excellent advice about this...

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.

10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.

11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation.

15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.

18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever.

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

Ps 37:7-20

Again, we're warned not to partake of evil doings (such as bribery) just because others appear to 'get away with it'. Verse 7 warns: *fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass*. They will get their due punishment in due time. God will see to that and He'll also see you get rewarded for doing what's right. Bribes blind us to the truth and this is why so many people have a hard time seeing their own sins. We're basically bribed into sinning by our own lusts and pride (2 John 2:16) and thus, we're blinded to our own sins. This is why the Word of God (Jesus Christ) is so important...

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Heb 4:12

We need His Light (Ps 36:9, 118:27, 119:105, Prov 6:23, 1 John 1:5, John 1:1-4, 14, 3:19-21, 12:4-6) to reveal our sins so we can cast them off and stop reaping rewards of sin (i.e. the cursings of God). Isa 42:7 says one of Jesus' duties is *to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house*. Indeed, He does this on a daily basis for those who sincerely study His Word, take it into their thought process and allow it to change them for the better (James 2:17-26). So, our Heavenly Father doesn't want anyone to accept bribes (not judicially or in our everyday life) because it is spiritually corrupting and brings forth wicked fruit (Matt 7:16-20). *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Rom 6:23)

Exodus 23

9 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

This is a reminder not to oppress foreigners. While God already gave this command in the last chapter (Ex 22:21), He is repeating it here to make it clear that foreigners are not to be oppressed judicially either. The same laws that apply to Israel were to be applied to foreigners also. There were few exceptions. Such as usury and slavery. A stranger could be charged usury (Deut 23:20) and could be enslaved via warfare (Deut 21:10) albeit they were still to be treated fairly (Deut 24:14) and allowed to run away from their master and could not be returned if they didn't want to go back (Deut 23:15). But this law tells us also that, when a foreigner was visiting, they were to be treated justly. Naturally, foreigners would visit Israel for business and also for pleasure but many also wanted to worship the true God, YHWH. And they were allowed to do worship YHWH (so long as they were circumcised - Ex 12:44) albeit they were not allowed to be as close to the Temple of God as Israel was. But that all changed after Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world (Mth 13:44) - for when the veil was rent after Jesus died (Mth 27:51, Lk 23:45) the way for *all*

people, of both genders, and all races, to be able to communicate with God was opened (praise God). Chapters 8-10 of the great book of Hebrews makes this very clear. Peter also found this out in Acts chapter 10 when God told him to go teach the Gospel to the gentiles and then God gave the gentiles the Holy Spirit. In fact, much of the entire book of Acts explains how God sent Paul (and others like Peter and Phillip) to teach the Gospel to the gentiles and how they readily they received it. [If you would like to study the book of Acts in depth, check out this link: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Acts].

It's also important to point out that, while foreigners were not to be mistreated in Israel, they also were not to be given preferential treatment as the 'Christian' nations of the world have been doing for decades now. We allow illegal immigrants to flood our borders and then give them free food, housing and additional spending money. This is national suicide and goes totally contrary to God's Word (Laws). In other words, those Christians supporting this are not obeying God's Word. It is not God's will that we allow illegals to flood our nations because it is unorganized, unsafe and harms our country. It's also a slap in the face to all people who immigrate legally. It destroys the culture and the safety for the entire nation. We shouldn't be supporting illegal immigration. While our immigration process definitely needs reformed (the process could be much smoother and quicker if we would use technology to it's fullest) that does not justify allowing people into our country illegally. It seems our politicians are hell bent on changing the culture of the population in an attempt to get the kind of people who will vote for them as a majority. This will not work out well for them in the end...

*27 The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
28 The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.
29 The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.
30 The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.
31 The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.
32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness.*
Prov 10:27-32

Exodus 23

*10 And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:
11 But the seventh year thou shalt **let it rest and lie still**; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.*

These two verses give us very wise laws concerning agriculture. They tell us that the land (no matter where you live) needs to rest one year out of every seven. When America did not abide to this law they ended up receiving the destructive 'rewards' of their sin via the dust bowl days. Years after that, 'experts' finally caught up with God's wisdom (only a little bit) and decided that maybe it is good to rest the land (ya think?). How true are the scriptures that declare *the*

foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Cor 1:25). What many farmers do today, is to rest a part of their land every seven years. They call this crop rotation and it works well because the land still gets time to rest and that's the critical point. When these laws were given to Israel, they were going to be inheriting a rather small area of land compared to the 'new' promise land promise in 2 Sam 7:10 and Isaiah 18 [to study this chapter, click here - https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Isaiah/410]. But Europe and America (the 'new' promise lands) have such a vast amount of land with different atmosphere, crop rotation works well because it still feeds the people *and* allows the land to rest every seven years. However, we don't totally abide by this law for people are not allowed to eat from the fallow ground. In fact, people are not even allowed to eat from farmers *surplus* of normal harvest. Tons of food goes to waste due to stupid (destructive) governmental laws as well as too high of standards in grocery stores. There truly is no need for people to go hungry and we don't need to give poor families handouts to fill their needs. We just need to obey our Heavenly Father's Word! But instead, the globalists (headed by Satan's children) are working to get total control of our food supply so they can have total control the people. Truly, we are in a spiritual war (Eph 6) and it often manifests itself in the physical realm. Satan and his followers try to take both our physical food *and* (worse yet) our spiritual food away from us. That should be a red flag to anyone but sadly, many people are so confused and blinded by to truth they don't see what's happening. Many actually believe in the falsehoods of 'climate change' and 'overpopulation' (etc.).

The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.
Prov 29:7

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.
9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.
Gal 6:7-10

Exodus 23

12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger; may be refreshed.

This statute reiterates the Fourth Commandment [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/91] and tells us a basic truth that 'science' has finally 'recognized': our physical (flesh) bodies are healthier if we rest them once a week. While Israel had a specific day that the entire nation was to rest on, the point for us to remember is that we all need one in seven days to rest our flesh body. This commandment was given thousands of years ago. For anyone to claim they know *exactly* what day of the week we should 'observe' the sabbath on is quite a stretch of the truth and truly, it misses the point. The point is, our body needs a day of rest each week. And if you don't abide by this, your flesh will suffer just as if you don't abide by the food laws your flesh

will suffer to. To try and say your salvation is at risk if you don't worship on a certain day of the week is making an idol out of the day. Again, it's missing the entire point of what the Sabbath is about. Truly, just think about it: if you are a Pastor, the 'Sabbath day' is *not* going to be your day of rest, right? Nope, Pastors have to 'work' on the Sabbath, as do many people in the medical community as well as police officers and so forth. Some occupations make it impossible for us to rest on the same day as the rest of the population. But, so long as we do give our body rest (as well as good food and water) then we will receive a blessing from obeying this command. As Jesus so adequately said in the book of Mark...

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

Mark 2:27-28

In other words, God gave us this commandment so it would help us, our families, those who work for us and our animals (they used animals for farming and transportation in those days) be healthy. **God didn't give us this commandment to appease Him.** It is simply given so we could enjoy good health. However, that doesn't mean there's not a spiritual aspect to this law. Indeed, there is and Paul explains it in the great book of Hebrews [to study this chapter in the book of Hebrews, click here: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Hebrews/14]...

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

*3 For **we which have believed do enter into rest**, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

*10 **For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.***

*11 **Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.***

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Heb 4:1-12

Interestingly, Paul tells us we must ‘labor’ to enter into the ‘rest’ that God has for us (vs 11). He is speaking about the *spiritual* rest God promises to give us (Isa 30:15, Jer 6:16, 30:10, Mth 11:28-30). The spiritual rest is peace of mind, which cannot be bought, no matter how rich you are. Isa 26:3-4 tells us that He will keep us in *perfect peace, when we keep our mind on Him and trust in Him*, for He is everlasting strength. Further, Ps 37:39-40 say: *the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, **because they trust in him***. But only when we cease from our own works can we find this peace and salvation. What works are we to cease from?

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

*19 Now **the works of the flesh are manifest**, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Gal 5:16-25

We are to cease from our ‘works of the flesh’, which is why Jesus told us to deny (crucify) our carnal mind (Rom 8:7) each and every day. Gal 5:24 above explains it bluntly when it says: *they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*. Col 3:1-2 further adds to this thought when it tells us: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*. So, truly, ‘resting’ in God is about cutting off our sinful thoughts and desires and re-directing our mind to His Word (truth). Paul gives us more excellent advice on how to do this...

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Phil 4:6-8

The word ‘careful’ is #3309 and it means to be ‘anxious’. In other words, we should not worry or be afraid because they both *are a form of doubt*, which kicks out peace of mind...

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
2 Tim 1:7

It's tough to digest God's Word when worries, fear, anxieties and other stresses of the world get in the way (Mth 13:20-21). While friends and family can truly a blessing, *they cannot give us peace of mind*; only a relationship with God (through Jesus Christ) can give us peace in our soul (spiritual rest). Therefore, we **must** learn to give our worries to Him (and repent of all sins on a daily basis). We cannot find peace of mind unless we truly trust Him. And in order to trust in Him we must continue to strive to get closer to our Father. Yes, we do that through prayer and reading (with understanding) His Word. But we must also learn to discipline our mind and heart to kick out fears, worries, lusts, pride and all other negative and useless thoughts (daydreams and fantasies included, Ps 10:4, Ps 94:11) because they should not be in our heart or mind (2 John 2:16). We then must *discipline our mind* (i.e. redirect our mind) to think on truth (reality, which is God's Word). This takes work. It's hard to do every single day. That's why, in Heb 4 says we must ‘labor’ to enter into God's rest. It takes work (daily) to stop the evil thoughts (and worry, fears and doubts are evil thoughts just as much as pride and lust are) and to redirect your mind to truth, which is reality (God's Word teaches us what to think about and how to act). Once you discipline your mind to re-direct your thoughts and desires to (focus on) reality and truth (God's Word) and *think about it*, you'll learn how to let it guide your thoughts and actions. This is harder the less familiar we are with His Word, so taking time each day to study His Word allows His Spirit to provide our daily Spiritual bread Jesus spoke of in the Lord's prayer (Lk 11:3). Keep digging in our Father's Word and keep the prayer line open to Him always. And remember Luke 8:15 which says *that on the **good ground** are they, which in an **honest** and good heart, having **heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.***

It's hard to be patient but remember that *in your patience possess ye your souls* (Luke 21:19).

2 *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.*
3 *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*
Prov 16:2-3

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...
Jer 6:16

AMEN.