

Friday, August 12, 2022 ◻ Read Exodus 22:1–15

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the man in v1 do with what he has stolen? How much does he have to pay back for a little thing (sheep)? How much for a big one (ox)? What situation does v2 address? What happens to the man that kills a thief while defending himself and his house? But what changes this (v3a)? What if the thief cannot pay back (v3b)? What does the thief have to pay back if he still has the animal (v4)? What has the man in v5 done? When he pays back, what quality does she have to give? What has happened in v6? Who has to do what, in that case? What was stolen in v7? Who pays how much if the thief is found? If they cannot find the thief, what happens (v8)? Who decides cases of lost things (v9)? What will the penalty be? What has happened in v10? What must the rightful owner accept if it is not stolen (v11)? What must the thief do if it is stolen (v12)? What if a beast has torn it to pieces (v13)? But what if, instead of asking for it to be kept, it was the recipient who had asked to borrow it (v14)? But what if the owner is with it when it happens (v15a)? Or if it was rented rather than borrowed (v15b)?

What procedures and penalties did the Lord give Israel for addressing theft? Exodus 22:1–15 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these fifteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **before God, men must be respectful and responsible with others' property.**

Repaying theft, v1. 4. The first case in the passage is the worst. An extra degree of malice is involved in slaughtering or selling the animal (v1). The bigger the theft, the bigger the restitution (fivefold for the ox, compared to fourfold for the sheep). Even in the case where the man gets back the particular animal that was his, the thief must still restore double (v4).

The risk of theft, v2–3. Nighttime might be the best time to steal, but you risk your life (v2). Lethal force is permissible for self-defense in such a dangerous situation. (Though, as in v3a, it is expected that during the day, when others may be called to help, lethal force will be avoided—we ought to care about the lives of even bad men). The poorer a man was, the greater the risk it was for him to steal, because he himself would be sold, if he couldn't pay the 2x, 4x, or 5x that would be required. We should try harder not to do wrong than not to suffer wrong.

Responsibility for destruction, v5–6. If he's letting his animal graze his own field, it's likely in the worst/leftover area of what is his. But, he'd better be careful to keep it restrained, because anything it takes from a neighbor will cost him his best. And if a man kindled a fire, he had better be careful, because he will have to pay in full for anything the fire destroys. Notice that rather than accumulating regulations for animal or fire containment, men were just held responsible for outcomes.

Responsibility for things entrusted for safekeeping, v7–13. When a man asked his neighbor to keep something, he assumed the risk that it would be stolen, damaged, lost, etc. A thief would still have to restore double. And if the neighbor had consumed it or was trying to keep it, the various forms of restitution would apply. Judges would attempt to arbitrate cases (v8–9), but sometimes, there just isn't evidence (v10), so Yahweh Himself would have to be appealed to (v11), and the owner would just have to accept that. We should recognize civil authority as employed by God, but then also know that God Himself enforces His authority.

Responsibility for things borrowed/hired, v14–15. When borrowing, the risk becomes that of the borrower. Whatever happens to the item in his possession, he has to restore. However, if the owner is there, it becomes his responsibility. Renting, however, included the risk of loss, so that the risk becomes the owner's not the renter's

Taken all together, these laws make clear that we should be as careful with others' property as with our own.

What is a situation in which you might be more respectful with others' property?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for being heartless toward others and not caring about their property as much as we do our own. And, forgive us for forgetting—or, worse, not caring—that we are always before Your face. Thank You for giving us those things that we need, and for giving us civil government and civil laws that restrain theft. Grant that our government and laws would indeed do that, and that we would love You and neighbor, we ask in Christ's Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP5 "Listen to My Words, O LORD" or TPH174 "The Ten Commandments

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Exodus 22 versus 1 through 15. These are God's words If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it ourselves it These will restore five oxen for an ox and 4G for Jeep, if the thief is found breaking in and he instructor that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed.

If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution. He has nothing. Then he sold for his that if the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ops or a donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

If a man causes a field or a vineyard to be grazed, and let's lose his animal. And it feeds in another man's field. He shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. The fire breaks out and catches in thorns. So that stacked green standing grain or the field is consumed.

He who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution, If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the mountains house, If the thief is found, he shall, if they double If the thief is not found than the master of the House, shall be brought to the judges, to see whether he has put his hand to his neighbor's goods For any kind of trespass.

Whether it concerns an ox, a donkey sheep or clothing or any kind of lost thing, which another claims to be is The case of both parties shall come before the judges and whomever the judges condemn shall be paid double to. His neighbor is a man delivers to his neighbor, a donkey, an ox, a sheep or any animal to keep and it dies as hurt, or driven away.

No one seeing it then. And oath of Yahweh shall be between them both that he has not put his hand into his neighbor's goods and the owner of it shall keep

shall accept that. And he shall not make it good, but if in fact it is stolen from him, This will make restitution to the owner of it.

If it is 20 pieces by a beast, then he shall bring it as evidence and ye shall not make good was torn.

And if a man borrows anything from his neighbor and it becomes injured or dies, The owner of it not being with it. He's so sorely. Make it good. If it's owner was with it, He shall not make it good. If it was hired, it came for its eyes.

So far the reading of God's inspired and aren't worked.

So this is a bunch of different situations where one man has been involved in the loss or damage of another man's property. In the first instance. You see that? Repairing the theft is required with a penalty for the fact that it was theft. We see that in verse 4, if the theft is found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall restore.

Double the idea perhaps being and trying to get away with keeping it or perhaps just taking the ox or the donkey for whatever plowing or use they could get out of it for the time that they add it or the wool of the sheep. But ultimately harm is not done The ox donkey or sheep that the man is invested in is restored to him and so he does not just restore it to him but he restores it with another one either of his own or that he has to buy in order to give it to him.

So that there is penalty for the crime, against the neighbor, not just the restoring of the goods. If in fact, the ox or the sheep have been slaughtered or sold, then the original owner, cannot get back as investment in it. And the penalty is much higher because the guy did not only steal to benefit.

He stole to destroy and now he has enduringly harmed his neighbor. So it's four times as much for the sheep and five times as much for the oxen, the greater the theft and destruction. The greater the penalizing multiplier. So you are risking money when you steal. Now, if you still at night, you're also risking your life because you have put the person in a place where as they defend themselves, which they have a right to do, They are less able to try to guard your life.

And now, as we read the law, even last obligated and so theft is made risky Now. However, that even when someone is stealing for you, you are to have a regard for their life that if the Sun has risen upon you and you are more able to be precise with how you stop the man or drive him off or are more able to call upon neighbors who are awake and around.

Then there is guilt for the bloodshed. You're not to defend property with lethal force the way you are to defend life with lethal force. Of course, if the men proceeds to attack you than in self-defense, that would not be murder, but for the defense of your property, it would be murder.

There is again here. A valuing of life over any other thing because only man is made in the image of God. And God's creating he made all of the other creatures, according to their kinds, even plants and birds and animals and so forth. But man, he made according to his own image, and in his own likeness, man is sacred in a way.

The property there's not. And so there is the principle that theft must be repaid. There's the principle that theft is risky. Risky. Both of your property and of your life. And then there is responsibility responsibility, of course in destruction. The in verse 5, it applies both. If you let the animal out in your own field and he strays, or if you left the animal out and your neighbors feel.

Now, this relies upon the, the fact that neighbors are more selective than animals. So if you let your animal out in your neighbor's field, Then the animal will not take the very best that your neighbor has. But your neighbor will take the very best that you have. And so there is again.

Not here. A regulation for how well an animal must be tethered within certain distance of your neighbor's field, etc. Etc. There's penalizing for outcomes and there's an assumption that you will take the initiative to be as responsible as necessary. Not to let your animal be a little beastly thief and take things from your neighbor.

Same thing with a fire. If you kindle a fire there is not a regulation here for how deep, the fire pit must be and what you can use in it and how soon you have to put it out when you're done and all those things just if it catches your own stuff on fire, you lose your own stuff.

So you have to responsible for that, and if it catches your neighbors, field on fire, you have to replace everything that it costs your neighbor, which actually saves your neighbor. And in some cases, the burden of harvesting it because if he has standing grain he didn't harvested it yet, Then you have to pay him the grain that he lost and he didn't have to harvest it.

So there's responsibility for ourselves, this reminds us that we are not just to be thinking of ourselves. We're always to be thinking about those around us and how we are impacting them and what we are costing them. It's just part of loving your neighbor as yourself. Well, that's the law of God.

If you fail to love your neighbor as yourself, even in your heart, you are guilty and deserve hell. However, neighbors and judges cannot inflict the penalty of hell large. Surely will and our committing crimes. Exposes us before God, is needing the righteousness and sacrifice of Jesus. But what judges and neighbors can be penalize, are crimes committed that come from the sin?

That is in the heart and this is required for the honoring of God in the society, for the orderly operation of the society. And it is also loving towards the members of society, giving them these penalties that not only accomplish the first two purposes, but help us realize that we are not loving our neighbors as ourselves.

We're not being as thoughtful for others will be as we are for our own. So there's responsibility for destruction Now, but in verse 7 and going through verse 15, it deals with issues of what happens when something is lost or destroyed and someone else's hands, then him to him, it belongs his than his to him.

It belongs. And the answer is a little bit tricky because it depends upon whose idea, it was for the things to change. Hands. If you asked someone to keep something for you and they don't keep it well or it is stolen from them. You're the one who asked them.

Anyway, you can't put on them, the risk of losing their own property and so this would make you think twice about which person. You asked to keep your stuff for you. But if you ask to borrow something with someone else's and it was destroyed in in your care, then you would need to so that you had not destroyed it.

For any kind of trespass. Whether ox donkey sheep clothing, or lost thing? You need to come to the judges. 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. So if the owner was there, he is responsible.

Just like if it wasn't being borrowed, but if the owner wasn't there and you had borrowed, it doesn't matter how it was lost, doesn't matter who took it, You borrowed his thing and you took on yourself the risk, okay? So, there is that distinction, and because we're getting into finer areas of who asked for it to be

capture, who borrowed it and what actually happened to it, etc.

Now, judges are involved. God makes accommodation for our sin and not only for our deception, but even our differences in perception. One of the things you will find out very quickly. If you haven't discovered it already is at different people. See different situations or remember different situations. Very differently.

And so it's important in areas where there may be more doubt or more question of what happened and how we got to where we are is important to have judges, who can listen to both sides, facilitate communication, try to discover what actually happened and to whom evidence can be presented.

And so there's the establishing of arbitration by judges here as well. So a number of things here that honor God in the attempt to order society in a way that runs on the principle of loving God and keeping his law. Loving your neighbor as yourself and provide producers and orderly society, which is also honoring to God as he has God of order and a prosperous society, which honors God because he is a generous.

God, but also ultimately a society that remembers that sin in the heart deserves hell. And so all of these penalties help us recognize that the actions that we take that are punished or punishable are even. But they come from sin in the heart that is punishable not by the society, but by the living and holy and glorious God, so many help us to care about one another's property as much as we care about our own and may he restore unto our nation just laws and wise ways of doing things.

He has given us over to minds that do not function and provided the comedians with a limitless source of material as they can easily mock what we are doing. As a society for the restraining and punishing of crime and even what we call, right? So let's ask God to help us in those ways.

Let's pray Our Father in heaven. We bless your name for your own goodness, your own sinlessness, your perfection? You're holiness. We thank you, Lord for the love in which you purposed to redeem sinners and created us in order that you might be glorified and adopting us as children and Jesus Christ.

We thank you for the forbearance and patients in which you have born with sinful man for so long, who deserves the fire of hell and we praise you for giving us in your word. Not only your moral law, but the Civil laws that you gave Israel. So that we might see what it looked like in one instance, to rest civil laws and societal laws upon the foundation of your moral law.

We pray, O, God, that you would make each of us to love you with all our heart soul, mind and strength than to love our neighbor as ourselves. And especially to love our brothers and sisters in the church as you have loved us so that with them, we would even rather be wronged than to wrong and rather suffer loss.

Then to harm the church, We pray. Lord, that you would restore unto our churches, the love for you and a love for your law and we pray that you would restore untorn society. The saturation of the those who are yours by faith and Christ who have the life of Christ at work in them and who love your law for his sake.

So that there would be enough of a revival of the spread of the gospel among us, that the mind of the society and the laws of the society would. Once again, come to be shaped more and more according to your word and that you would be glorified both by what you do in the church.

And but what by what you do by means of the church in the nation, in which we left and now Lord return to the rest of the day. We ask the principles from your word, even here would govern how we think. And how we act that you would get grant to us to from the heart desire, others, good better than ours and desire others.

Praise more than ours that you would make us loving and serving. And kind not only with others but especially with one another in our own family. Plus this day, we pray and grant that the events of it would be not only joyous to us, but especially honoring to you and that they would be useful to our souls, that we might come to the conclusion of the day, more conformed to the image of Christ.

And we begin it for. We ask it in his name. Amen.