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Exodus 22 verses 1 through 15. Let us be careful of the manner in which our hearts hear these words for there. The words of God, If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, He shall restore five. Oxen, for an ox and four sheep for a sheep.

If the thief is found breaking in and his structure 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. If he has nothing, Then he shall be sold for his theft.

If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, He shall restore double.

If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and let's loose 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 If fire breaks out and catches in thorns. So that stacked grain 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 man's house. If the thief is found, he shall pay double If the thief is not found, Then the master of the House shall be brought to the judges, to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbors, goods For any kind of trespass, whether it concerns an ox, a donkey, a sheep or clothing or any kind of lost thing, which another claims to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges and whomever the judges condemn Shall pay double to his neighbor.

If a man delivers to his neighbor, a donkey, an ox, a sheep or any animal to keep. And it dies is hurt or driven away. No one seeing it than an oath of Yahweh, shall be between them both that he has not put his hand into his neighbors goods and the owner of it shall accept that He shall not make it good, But if in fact it is stolen from him, You shall make restitution to the owner of it.

If it is torn to pieces by a beast and he shall bring it as evidence and he shall not make good. What 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 shall surely.

Make it good. If it's owner was with it, He shall not make it good. If it was hired it came for a hire, the hire of this reading of God's inspired and inerrant work. We rejoice to know he adds his blessing also to the preaching of it. Please be seated.

In the previous passage, the passage. We had last Lord's Day evening. We learned that when we handle our own property, We're to do. So in a way that respects, both the life and the property of our neighbor. But there are also situations in which We handle the property of others.

And the first of those situations is when the others have not agreed and that is called theft. It is, of course, something that belongs to our fallen nature that we have gotten from Adam. No one has to teach their children to grab or mess with things that are not their own.

I have to teach their children that grabbing and messing with things that are not their own is theft. It is against the law of God, who gives us all good things and who gives us the right ways by which we may obtain those things, as we heard not too long ago when we heard the eighth commandment preached.

But there is here. Therefore the first case of theft and God teaches Israel to punish theft in a way that requires repayment and increases for the one who would steal or the one who does steal is not increased. Only in theory increases the risk of stealing. And so doing God, reflects the goodness of His moral law in the way it works out in Israel's civil law on the laws of their society.

Now, again you see that Intent makes a difference when there is intent of handling the property of others. When We have not asked to borrow and they said yes, or they have not asked us to keep it. And we said, yes and we ticket that's stealing. So if you're found with somebody else's stuff and there wasn't an agreement and there wasn't just a case of accident or loss or some other sort of providence.

You have to restore, not just what you took, but because you intended to take it because their loss was something that you intended, you have to pay, at least double this again, reflects the same sort of thing, as we saw in God's application of the sixth commandment, You shall not murder.

That he drew a distinction between manslaughter accidental killing and premeditated intentional. Killing. And he also drew a distinction between criminal. Negligence for instance, when your ox scores someone to death and you would be stoned. But as you could not do in a case of premeditated murder, you could redeem your life.

So intent makes a difference Here also. And If you intended your neighbors lost it makes a difference. If you stole it from them, as found in your hand, you get two, you the multipliers too. You have to pay back double Now if there's not just intent but malice say you're not just borrowing without asking.

That's called stealing your neighbors donkey or sheep for milk or wool or whatever it is but you're borrowing to sell or borrowing to kill. And there's that additional malice, It's for profit or for consumption or destruction. Not just borrowing, kind of like, when one of my children say, can I borrow a tissue daddy?

And I say no, you may have it. Once you're done with it, I don't want it back borrowing with intent, stealing rather with intent to consume. In this case is malice and it increases the multiplier and the greater. The thing that is slaughtered or sold the greater the multiplier.

So if you steal an ox over, which you can turn a big profit or out of which, you can get a lot of meat, your multiplier is five, But if you steal a sheep out of which you can get less profit or less meat, your multiplier is only only.

It doesn't feel like only to the FIFA gets caught. Does it And so, theft must be repaid. We have stolen as it were from the glory of God. There is no one who's rights have been trampled on like the rights of the Living God for his rights are infinite and all sin is against him.

And so, when our rights are trampled upon, and we say, forgive us, or as we forgive our debtors, we must forgive them mustn't. We because we have a much greater debt, an infinite debt against thought, and we ask him to forgive us our debts. He remember, the parable of the Lord, Jesus, the man with the small, with the immense debt, to was forgiven by the king.

And then his neighbor had a small debt, and he abused the man. And so theft must be repaired. This is the great thing in Romans 1 through 3, We have robbed God of glory, and he has given his son to repay a debt, as great as the glory of God, Jesus shown to be equal to the glory of the Living.

God for he is from all eternity. Before his incarnation, the Living God, He has repaid it. And all smaller, thefts. Therefore must be repaired. But there isn't just a, the repayment of theft, but the risk of theft We've already seen that. You risk having to pay money, but the true risk of theft, of course is hell.

It's a sin against God. That's why it's a mercy for the culture or the society to make committing crimes risky because this society cannot punish sin. They can't see all sin and sin is in the heart and sin as it is against God. Deserves a punishment that could never be executed.

This is why when we discipline our children we ask them what they did, what mommy said or whatever. And we we get to whatever commandment it is has been broken. And we say so it's a sin against God. What does disobedience or dishonoring or stealing or lying? What does it deserve?

And if they named the discipline there about to get we say no it deserves hell. And the only way that you can get not what, what you just did deserves, but heaven, and happiness forever is because Jesus has taken what sins deserve. And it's Jesus, who took those sins has told us to tell you about him and about your sin and about what he has done for your sin.

And it's he who has told us to give you. This discipline that we're about to give Daddy is not angry. Daddy is looking to Jesus to save your soul because you did this because you're my child and you will sink lower than the grave. On a count of having been my child, if you do not come to faith in Jesus Christ.

So since he alone can save you and he has given us this to do with you. That is why we do this. This is not what you deserve. This is hoping that you never get what you deserve. And so, it's a merciful society that inflicts such penalties, that makes it risky to make commit crimes because the committing of the crime is an externalization of a sinful heart.

Even if the society doesn't punish theft at all or even rewards it a large scale, as May be the case in the society, in which we live. This is the case stealing is still risky because at risks offending the living God. And so in the goodness of his laws for Israel, he made it risky.

First of all, you risk your life. You can steal when it's hard during the day. When everybody is awake and there's people around or you can steal at night when it's easy, but then you risk your life because God doesn't expect the man who you broke into at night to try to spare your life, His family's asleep.

Everyone's vulnerable, his neighbors, aren't readily available to for him to cry out, to help him. He has to protect It turns into for all intents and purposes. A self-defense situation, It says, if the man is breaking in and stealing in the middle of the night and you strike them and he dies, there is no penalty for his death, but notice that God does not establish a categorical castle doctrine for property.

There's a biblical principle If, in defense of life, you take life, It is not murder but even when a man is stealing your things, you are expected by God to try to stop him in a way that does not take his life. Do you see that in verse 3?

If the sun has risen on him? There shall be guilt for his bloodshed. We ought to value. Even the life of the wicked, for the sake of the image of God. Well, it's not just risking having to pay a bunch if, if you are caught or found out, it's not just risking your life, It can even be risking your livelihood and your freedom and most societies.

Well, actually that isn't true. The wealthy have always stolen just because they could and they had power, but the poor are tempted to steal because they have need. We prayed together, didn't we? When we were praying through that, part of the prayer. Give us the stay, our daily bread this morning and we quoted from the scripture.

Don't make me poor so that I won't be tempted to steal and don't make me rich so that I won't be tempted to forget you but the poor one who has more tempted to steal by his circumstances, he has to take into account, doesn't he the greater risk for him?

Because if he can't pay the double or if he was trying to sell and make a profit and gets away with it for a time and then is found out if he doesn't, if he can't pay the four times or the five times, What happens to him, He loses his freedom.

He is sold for his debt because he is unable to pay second half of verse 3.

If he has nothing, Then he shall be sold for his theft. So in the case of theft, there must be repayment and it is punitive and God makes it gives them laws to make it risky. But then there's not just repayment and risk. In the case of theft there's the more general principle of responsibility with others property the responsibility with others property.

Oh, we didn't handle the thefts in verse 5 and verse 6. Both of them are criminal negligence type thefts, so they only get a multiplier of one. It's not theft it's negligence, but they're expected to be responsible. If your animal ends up grazing in your neighbor's stuff, then you've got a problem because your animal isn't going to be as picky as your neighbor, your animals.

Happy to raise any old part of the field. That's just there. Eats it. That's it. But he ate any old part of what your neighbors got. What's your neighbor going to pick from your field when it comes time for restitution the best, right? So there's responsibility even though it's a one-time multiplier.

And again, it's the principle of caring about your neighbor's property as much as you do your own. And then fire, Notice that there aren't a bunch of regulations about, is it a burn day? Or is it not a burn day? Or how are you supposed to contain the fire?

You know, you don't have you know all the fire regulations and the fire inspections. But if you care about your own stock, You don't want to be Man. We can't use any words anymore. Unintelligent enough or uncaredful enough to burn, on a windy day because that thing gets going and it takes out a few neighbors fields and suddenly you're on the hook for more than you could ever repay, right?

So you again, the punishing of outcomes expects certain amount of responsibility and care of your own. And this responsibility extends, not just to making sure that your animal or your fire doesn't steal from them. But when actual property, changes hands Now the one initiating the transfer generally assumes the risk.

We see that in verse 10, If a man delivers to his neighbor and a donkey and ox sheep, or any animal to keep and it dies, or is hurt, or is driven away, no one seeing it. Then an oath of Yahwe shall be between them both that he has not put into it, put his hand into his neighbor's goods and the owner of it shall accept that and shall not make it good.

In other words, these are things that are providences that could not have been prevented and just because it happened to be in his safekeeping. At the time, doesn't make it his fault. And in this case, it was his neighbor who asked him to keep it. And so, the one who asked him to keep it for him, bears, the responsibility, the, the one in whose possession, it was.

When the loss occurs is not held accountable. Now, if it turns out that it was stolen from him, he shall make restitution to the owner of it. You're expected to put up a fight. You're expected to take precautions with something that has given to you for safekeeping. If the guy didn't care about his stuff that much, he could have just left it in his own, in his own property and gone on his trip or whatever.

And, you know, someone break in and steal it. No, he gave it to you because he was taking precautions and you're expected to treat it like you would your own while you have it, okay? But if you borrow something from your neighbor, If you are the one who initiated, you asked to use it and the neighbor isn't with you in the in this particular case and something happens to it.

Then You have to make it good. Now, the owner was with you, he has the responsibility and You don't have to restore it. Now in the case where You asked to borrow it in your neighbor said, well I don't feel like lending it to you but I'll rent it to you.

Well, he just took on the risk because he established terms of higher rental. If it was hired verse 15, it came for its higher. The responsibility for a borrowed thing is generally the borrowers is responsibility for the entrusting entrusted. Thing is generally the one who entrusted it to them, He bears the loss.

Although the other is responsible to take common sense precautions. Now you say well what are those and what how do we know exactly what kind of transaction was it and people have different perceptions of things especially after something is lost or torn or whatever they suddenly remember it differently.

I asked you to keep or keep it for me or no. You asked me to keep it for you or no, you asked to borrow it. Well, when we get to areas where there are more disputes, we have the provision of judges for difficult cases. This too is a provision of God Verse 9, The cause of both parties shall come before the judges and whomever the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

Now, that's gonna shorten the case load at the county courthouse because the one who's in the wrong Should a expect that he's going to be found out and B. If he does get found out, he's gonna have to pay twice as much as if he had just messed up to begin with and paid it back.

Okay? So there's the provision of judges and there's provision of a justice system that discourages abuse of the justice system. Remember, I always say this every week, discourages abuse does not the same as prevents abuse and the Israelites never did this. Well, We are just observing, the wisdom and goodness of God and the law that he gave them, judges are appointed by God for more difficult cases.

And sometimes it's an impossible case, You can't actually know but there is a judge who does isn't there. And so God himself is the final judge the oath of Yahweh in verse 11. He knows what happened to it. And if a man does not fear a values, a sheep or an ax, you remember the prophet in the school of the Prophets or the Elisha a last master for, it was borrowed, right?

Not entrusted to be kept but borrowed so he would have to pay it back and God grants to him, to make the accent Ax had float. But we trust that God is the one who always ceases and that He will repay and the one who does not fear to take an oath of Yahweh, in order to save himself, the price of an ax is in much greater trouble.

Than if he had just paid the price of the axis, isn't he? And it's even implied here. That not only does he put himself in danger of perishing for his sin. Put that God will repay with provenance. We often do so inclusion. We see personal responsibility extends to how we handle others property, but it is a merciful society that demands repayment for theft in a punitive way and makes it risky to steal because the risk is much greater than anything that society can take the risk, is that we will deny the living.

God that he observes us, that he is just and that there is literally hell to pay for every sin against him. Let's pray. Thank you. Lord for the goodness of your law. For reminding us that you are the giver of every good. And every perfect gift that you work, all things according to the Council of your will and that you have appointed to us whether by labor, or by charity, or by inheritance, or other good ways.

The right means by which we may look to you to provide for us. We pray that your spirit would make us to trust you and to be content and to have good hope and that at the last, we would be unwilling to do anything. That violates your law or denies that you are good.

We do pray O Lord that you would grant to us to not only use our own things in a responsible way but to respect the property of others. Particularly if we are entrusted with something, or if we borrow something Grant to us, Lord to treat others property as our own, and to be responsible with it.

Lord, we pray for our churches that in the church courts. There would be justice and we pray O Lord in the society that the judges of the nation would be just and righteous but we thank you. Oh God, that even if every man is a liar. Still, you are true and we pray that you would make us all to trust and fear your judgment and your justice above all.

Help us by your spirit. Take this mind of Christ that you have opened for us in all of the Scriptures and conform, our own thoughts to it for. We ask it even in his name, Amen.