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דבורה מונארכי

23:17  
(18 in Hebrew)



לא-תהיה קדשה,  
מבנות ישראל,  
ולא-יהיה קדש,  
מבני ישראל.

There is not a whore among the daughters of Israel, nor is there a whoremonger among the sons of

Israel (YET)

5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021 YALLERSON

**Deuteronomy 23:15-25**  
**Holy Conduct Before the Lord, Part II**  
**September 5, 2021**

<sup>15</sup> "You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. <sup>16</sup> He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him.

<sup>17</sup> "There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel. <sup>18</sup> You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God.

<sup>19</sup> "You shall not charge interest to your brother—interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest. <sup>20</sup> To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.

<sup>21</sup> "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. <sup>22</sup> But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. <sup>23</sup> That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.

<sup>24</sup> "When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. <sup>25</sup> When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

There is a lot of similarity in what is said here and what Paul writes in his first letter to the Corinthians. Much of that is found in 1 Corinthians 6. Moses writes about holy conduct before the Lord, and Paul writes about the same, even mirroring particular points that Moses makes at times.

The idea of holiness is that of being set apart. In the case of holiness to the Lord, it speaks of being set apart to Him in life, conduct, and action. The more we move towards Him, the less our life will be affected by the flesh. And it is the flesh that wages war against the spirit.

This is a struggle all of us have had and will continue to have to some extent. But the grace of God is there to cover over our failings if we are in Christ. Thank God for Jesus Christ. It is He who came to do God's will in order to bring us into a better hope than the law could ever provide. It is a marvelous and blessed thing God has done for us through Him.

**Text Verse:** "Previously saying, 'Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them' (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then He said, 'Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.' He takes away the first that He may establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 10:8-10

While typing up this sermon, I noticed a decidedly chiasmic structure to the verses we will look at today. Rather than specifics, for the most part it deals with generalities, but it's pretty evident when you see it laid out –

Deuteronomy 23:15-25 – Holiness, purity, and justice  
Miscellaneous Laws for Israel (28 June 2021)

- a. rights within the land (15, 16)
- b. prohibitions concerning vows (17, 18)
  - c. you shall not charge interest to your brother (19)
    - x. to a foreigner you may charge interest (20)
  - c. to your brother you shall not charge interest (20)
- b. mandates concerning vows (21-23)
- a. rights within the land (24, 25)

The first section, verses 15 and 16, deals with the rights of a slave who had escaped from his master. At first, it might not make much sense, but in looking at the details, it all comes into focus. As far as slavery, I'm sure I've mentioned my ancestor Thomas Garrett before.

He is who my grandfather, Thomas Garrett was named after. He devoted his life's energy to freeing the slaves in America. As this passage deals with not returning an escaped slave, and as I need an introduction that will fit with the theme, I'll tell you just a little about him once again.

From a Wikipedia page on him, we'll read just a short passage –

“Garrett was also a friend and benefactor to the noted Underground Railroad Conductor Harriet Tubman, who passed through his station many times. In addition to lodging and meals, Garrett frequently provided her with money and shoes to continue her missions conducting runaways from slavery to freedom. Garrett also provided Tubman with the money and the means for her parents to escape from the South. (Both were free people at the time Tubman rescued them, but Tubman's father faced arrest for secreting runaway slaves in his cabin.)”

“The number of runaways Garrett assisted has sometimes been exaggerated. He said he “only helped 2,700” before the Civil War put an end to slavery.”

“In 1848, however, he and fellow Quaker John Hunn were sued in federal court for helping the Emeline and Samuel Hawkins family of seven slaves owned by two owners escape, although their lawyer colleague John Wales had managed to free them from imprisonment the previous year when a magistrate granted a writ of habeas corpus. However, the two slaveowners sued Hunn and Garrett. U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney presided at the trial in the

New Castle Court House, and James A. Bayard, Jr. acted as prosecutor. Garrett and Hunn were found guilty of violating the Fugitive Slave Act by helping a family of slaves escape. As the 'architect' of the escape, Garrett received a \$4,500 fine, later reduced to \$1,500. According to Kathleen Lonsdale, referencing the American Friends Service Committee, 'The fine was so heavy that it left him financially ruined, yet Thomas Garrett stood up in Court and said Judge thou has left me not a dollar, but I wish to say to thee and to all in this courtroom that if anyone knows a fugitive who wants a shelter and a friend, send him to Thomas Garrett and he will befriend him.' A lien was put on his house until the fine was paid, and although Hunn ended up losing his house in a sheriff's sale, with the aid of friends Garrett continued in his iron and hardware business and helping runaway slaves to freedom. By 1855, traffic through Garrett's station had increased, and Sydney Howard Gay noted that in 1855 to 1856 nearly 50 fugitives whom Garrett had helped arrived in New York."

He was adamant that the slaves he helped would not be returned to their master. Whether you agree with his position or not, he was a man of principle and he did what was right in regard to this great issue that plagued his time in history.

As for the slave who escaped from his master that Moses refers to, and concerning several other interesting issues laid down in our passage today, they will be looked at in detail as we continue.

Great things are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **Various Laws (verses 15-25)**

**<sup>15</sup> "You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you.**

The pronouns are all in the singular, "you Israel." It is a national mandate that the escaped slave is not to be returned to a master outside of Israel.

The words here need to be taken in the fuller context which is inclusive of the next verse. This is referring to a non-Hebrew slave that has escaped into a town of Israel. The words lo tasgir, or "no you shall give back," speak of being shut up, as if in confinement. A paraphrase might be, "you shall not re-confine slave to his master."

He has escaped, obtaining his freedom, and he should be allowed to continue in that state. In modern Hebrew, the words lo tasgir mean "to not rat out." In the end, to rat out a slave would result in the same thing happening, and so the meaning hasn't changed that much, at least in this regard.

The unusual thought of not returning a slave being included here is rather perplexing. This is so much the case, that some scholars tie it to the idea of warfare that was mentioned in the previous verses (9-14) of the last sermon.

However, those verses – though dealing with an army – were not really speaking of warfare, but of purity and holiness. The same idea will be seen in verses 17 and onward, and so it is unlikely that this is simply referring to a slave who escaped during war. Instead, Moses must be conveying the idea of purity, holiness, and/or what is just here as well.

What seems to be the case is that the thought of him being a slave is secondary to the larger principle being set forth. In other words, it says this in Leviticus 19 –

“And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. <sup>34</sup> The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.” Leviticus 19:33, 34

The same principle is being stated here in Deuteronomy. Israel was a slave-nation to Egypt. Each person was an individual slave as well. But they had been brought out from that. However, there is the truth that being brought from slavery in Egypt they had been brought into the bondage of the law. Paul explains this to us –

“Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? <sup>22</sup> For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. <sup>23</sup> But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, <sup>24</sup> which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar— <sup>25</sup> for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children— <sup>26</sup> but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. <sup>27</sup> For it is written: ‘Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband.’” Galatians 4:21-27

Israel was brought out of slavery to Egypt and brought into the bondage of the law. The escaped slave was to not be returned to his master out of the same principle by which the Lord freed Israel.

The idea now being set forth is that everyone is a slave to someone or something. One must choose who he will be a slave to. This principle continues on for those in Christ. As Paul says –

“Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. <sup>21</sup> Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. <sup>22</sup> For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave. <sup>23</sup> You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. <sup>24</sup> Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called.” 1 Corinthians 7:20-24

For the escaped slave now being referred to, Moses next says...

**<sup>16</sup> He may dwell with you in your midst,**

The words continue in the singular, demonstrating that this is the slave of an alien, not one who was enslaved in Israel. He is allowed to dwell within the midst of Israel. No restrictions are placed upon him in this regard, as is seen in the next words...

**<sup>16 (con’t)</sup> in the place which he chooses**

These words further express his freedom. He is given complete freedom as to where he will reside. He is not restricted from any tribe of Israel, nor is he mandated to reside in a particular tribe of Israel. He is to be considered accepted in whatever tribe he settles in, which is...

**<sup>16 (con’t)</sup> within one of your gates,**

Not only is he not restricted to, or from, any tribal inheritance, he is also not restricted from the security of living within a city in any given tribal inheritance. He is to be accepted into the gates of whatever city he chooses.

One must remember that this is a matter of law. Moses has penned it, and therefore, the people must comply in the same manner as any other law. This cannot be denied without violating the very law and covenant that has established them as a people.

To ensure the precept was fully fleshed out, and to avoid any ambiguity at all, he next says...

**<sup>16 (con’t)</sup> where it seems best to him;**

ba’tov lo – “in the good to him.” The decision is at his pleasure alone, and no person was to interfere with it. In essence, he has all the rights of a member of the nation to determine his own place and circumstance. Anything else would be considered a hindering influence upon him, and Moses forbids that, saying...

<sup>16</sup> (con't) **you shall not oppress him.**

lo tonenu – “no you shall suppress him.” The word is yanah. Most translations say “oppress.” That would mean, “you shall not keep him in subservience.” And that very well may be the meaning. He was a slave, and you shall not place him back into that state.

However, the previous clauses speak of his freedoms in choice:

- 1) He may dwell with you in your midst;
- 2) in the place he chooses;
- 3) within one of your gates;
- 4) where it seems best to him.

Because of this, I would suggest that this is referring to suppression rather than oppression. They are not to suppress him or stop him from making the choice that suits him best.

Regardless of this, one can see Israel as a type of life in Christ. Outside of Israel, the person is in bondage. A person that comes to Christ (as we saw in 1 Corinthians) is the Lord’s freedman.

However, and having that in mind, a person who comes to Israel from slavery is then made a slave to the law. Likewise, a person that comes to Christ, even if the Lord’s freedman, becomes a slave to righteousness, as Paul says, “And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness” (Romans 6:18). As already said, one must choose who or what he will be a slave to.

The verse here speaks of eternal salvation as clearly as it can be stated. A person who comes to Christ is to never be sent back his previous master, the devil. As a slave to Christ, he is so forever. He is forever free from the bondage he has been brought out from.

That an escaped slave who comes to Israel becomes a slave to the law is seen in the very next words because they are words that apply to all in Israel, and they are binding upon them...

<sup>17</sup> **“There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel,**

Here it refers to the qedeshah, or harlot. The word speaks of a female devotee. The word is closely tied to the word qodesh, meaning “holy,” “sacred,” “set apart,” and so on. The reason is that such a person is set apart to prostitution, quite often in relation to temple prostitution.

No daughter of Israel was to be forced or allowed to be set apart in this manner. It is contrary to purity and holiness, and thus it is forbidden.

The law is holy and righteous, and it says that no person may participate in such unrighteousness. Just as a slave who has joined to Israel is not to engage in such an act of unrighteousness, no person who comes to Christ is to seek after the flesh. Thus, the thought of a Christian being a slave to righteousness is the same as what is seen here.

This does not mean that a person in Israel cannot actually do what Moses forbids here. There are examples later in Scripture of them doing just this. And it does not mean that a Christian cannot do what is forbidden in the epistle. We all know Christians who have followed after the flesh. But the precepts are given. Moses next continues with...

**17 (con't) or a perverted one of the sons of Israel.**

Here it speaks of the qadesh. It is the masculine of the word just used in the previous clause. It signifies a male who is in the same position. He is set apart to prostitution, and thus a sodomite. As it is closely tied to that which is sacred, it is translated at times as a temple prostitute or cult prostitute.

Just as these were forbidden in Israel, the same is true with what is written in the New Testament epistles.

**18 You shall not bring the wages of a harlot**

Here it speaks of the ethnan zonah, or wages of a harlot. The word ethnan is new, coming from tanah, signifying “to hire,” but with reference to hiring a prostitute. Thus, the ethnan is the wages spent when hiring her out. Along with that...

**18 (con't) or the price of a dog**

u-mekhir kelev – “and price dog.” This is not speaking of an actual dog. Rather, it follows on with the thought of the previous clause. That spoke of the wages of a harlot. Here, a new word, mekhir, or price, is joined to that of a dog, meaning the male prostitute of the previous verse. Moses is using parallelism –

ritual harlot (qedeshah) / wages of a harlot  
perverted one (qadesh) / price of a dog

The idea is then the doglike manner in which the perverted one presents himself. This term is later used in Revelation 22:15 –

“But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” Revelation 22:15



Having said this, because such a person is equated to a dog, it is certain that no price of an actual dog was to be included in this prohibition of being brought...

**18 (con't) to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering,**

The idea here is that of the necessity to pay ones neder, or vow as was already explained in Numbers –

“Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Israel, saying, “This is the thing which the LORD has commanded: <sup>2</sup> If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.” Numbers 30:1, 2

All of Numbers 30 details the subject of vows. Once the vow is made and confirmed, it became an absolute obligation to pay it. However, one could not then use the excuse that the necessity of paying a vow to the Lord would excuse obtaining the means of paying the vow through such sexual perversion. The reason is...

**18 (con't) for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God.**

The sale of a woman's or a man's body is, in itself, abominable to Yehovah. As Yehovah is Israel's God, it cannot be considered acceptable to pay a vow to Him with money that was obtained in a manner which is contrary to His moral nature.

The general tenor of this thought is found in Romans –

“You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? <sup>24</sup> For ‘the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,’ as it is written.”

Romans 2:21-24

This could also be lumped into the thought of Romans 3:8, “Let us do evil that good may come.” As Paul says of those who would say such a thing, “Their condemnation is just.” As such, it is not acceptable to sell oneself (commit evil) in order to bring forth a vowed offering (do what is proper).

**19 “You shall not charge interest to your brother—**

Here the verb nashak is used. It signifies “to bite.” As such, it speaks of interest or usury. In other words, by adding on to the original cost for repayment, it is as if one is biting another. Thus, the words lo tashik akhikha could be paraphrased as, “You shall not bite to your brother.” With that, Moses next explains it using the noun form of the same word...

**19 (con’t) interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest.**

The idea of lending without interest has already been stated in Exodus 22 and Leviticus 25. In both instances, it speaks of lending to the poor and not charging interest. For this reason, some scholars see this as only pertaining to the poor.

However, Moses does not qualify it as such. Rather, he says “your brother” without any other qualifications. And more, for strong emphasis, the Hebrew repeats the noun neshek, or interest, three times, and then follows up with the verb form: neshek keseph neshek okel neshek kal davar asher yishak – “interest silver, interest food, interest anything which is lent on interest (lit: which bites).

The words, if considered in relation to Christ, show the enormity of what He did for us. Not only does He not charge interest on such things, He offers them without any cost at all –

“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money (keseph, silver), Come, buy and eat (food). Yes, come, buy wine and milk (anything) Without money and without price.” Isaiah 55:1

Israel is given a standard, because it is a shadowy anticipation of the greater provision found in Christ towards His people, because they are His people. On the other hand...

**20 To a foreigner you may charge interest,**

The word translated as “foreigner” is nokri. It signifies a stranger or something out of place. It is something that does not belong because the nature of the thing is foreign.

As traders came into or through the land – by ship, by camel, or whatever – they would naturally be willing to lend at interest. As such, it would make no sense to forbid the same towards them. The prohibition is, therefore, only one that pertains to a brother, meaning a fellow Israelite. As Moses again repeats...

<sup>20</sup> (con't) **but to your brother you shall not charge interest,**

Moses turns around the words already said. “No shall you charge interest to your brother” / “and to your brother no you shall charge interest.” In this, there can be no manipulation of the law. It is clear and unambiguous. And there is a reason for this...

<sup>20</sup> (con't) **that the LORD your God may bless you**

l'maan yebarekha Yehovah elohekha – “To end purpose may bless you Yehovah your God.” There is an end purpose in not charging interest which is to receive the blessing of the Lord. The implication is that in charging interest, such a blessing would be withheld. For the obedient, the blessing is one which will be...

<sup>20</sup> (con't) **in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.**

Moses uses the word mishloakh, an outstretching. A more literal reading is “in all which you stretch forth your hand upon the land.” One can think of everything prospering and each time the hand reaches out, it brings back abundance.

Thought through logically, it is essentially a promise that in not asking for extra from one's brother, the Lord will – in turn – provide more than would have been obtained by asking for extra.

This is the third time that Moses has made a contrast between the nokri, or foreigner, and akhikha or “your brother.” The first was in Deuteronomy 15 concerning the release of debts in the seventh year –

“Of a foreigner you may require it; but you shall give up your claim to what is owed by your brother” Deuteronomy 15:3

The second was in Deuteronomy 17 in relation to setting a king over themselves –

“you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.” Deuteronomy 17:15

This third is in relation to interest –

“To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest.” Deuteronomy 23:20

It is of note that Israel violated all three of these. The first is recorded as being violated in Jeremiah 34 –

“Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,’ says the LORD—‘to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.’” Jeremiah 34:17

The second is recorded as being violated in John 19 –

“But they cried out, ‘Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar!’”  
John 19:15

The third is recorded as being violated in Ezekiel 22 –

“In you they take bribes to shed blood; you take usury and increase; you have made profit from your neighbors by extortion, and have forgotten Me,” says the Lord GOD.”  
Ezekiel 22:12

The precepts, clearly laid out by Moses and yet violated by Israel, show the stark contrast to the greatness of Christ who perfectly fulfilled and exceeded these (and all) precepts of the law.

<sup>21</sup> **“When you make a vow to the LORD your God,**

The words more precisely read, “When vowing a vow to Yehovah your God.” This is a voluntary act and the guidelines for it are laid out in (as noted earlier) Numbers 30. When a vow is made and confirmed, it becomes binding. It must be paid. But more, Moses says...

<sup>21 (con’t)</sup> **you shall not delay to pay it;**

There are, as in any debts or vows, reasons why such things should be paid in a timely manner. There is the possibility that the vower might not be able to pay later.

If he was the victim of an accident, theft, other obligations arising, and so on... suddenly, the priorities may change. But one’s primary responsibility is to personal integrity before and towards the Lord.

It could be that the person will forget the vow was made. It may be that regret creeps in. It may be that the person dies before paying it. But, again, one’s primary responsibility is to personal integrity before and towards the Lord.

The impetus of the law is that any vowed vow should be treated as a priority in one's life. Solomon, certainly thinking of this law now laid down by Moses, says –

“When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— <sup>5</sup> Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.”

Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5

As a vow is voluntary, the obligation rests in a very firm manner upon the one who made it to also perform it without fail. Should he fail in this, it shows a deep lack of integrity before the Lord. Thus...

**<sup>21 (con't)</sup> for the LORD your God will surely require it of you,**

The Hebrew is emphatic – “requiring, He will require it of you.” The vow has been uttered, and it must be performed. To delay brings in the possibility, and likely state, of nonperformance. In this, Moses then says...

**<sup>21 (con't)</sup> and it would be sin to you.**

The idea of sin is that which brings a curse. This is what the Lord rebuked Israel for in the making of a vow –

“But cursed be the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished— For I am a great King,” Says the LORD of hosts, “And My name is to be feared among the nations.” Malachi 1:14

To make a vow and then to sacrifice that which is blemished is to not fulfill the vow. The reason is because nothing blemished was to be offered to the Lord in a vow (Leviticus 22:17-23). In all vows, performance was expected, and it was expected in accord with the law.

**<sup>22</sup> But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you.**

Paul says, in Romans 4:15 that “the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.” As there is no law mandating a vow, there can be no transgression in not vowing. However, there is a law concerning vows. As such, in vowing and not performing, sin is imputed.

In this, one can see how the law works against a person every step of the way. It is a form of bondage even if it is good and holy. The problem is not in the law, but in man who does not perform the requirements of the law – whatever they may be. As such...

**<sup>23</sup> That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform,**

When the vow is made, and when the lips have uttered forth their words of obligation, then tishmor v'asita – “you shall keep, and you shall do.” It is a matter of law and therefore to fail to perform is to sin. And to sin is to thus incur guilt...

**<sup>23</sup> (con't) for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth.**

The person, in making a vow, places himself under law. This was, like Israel's commitment to the Lord concerning the Mosaic Law, a voluntary act. Until they agreed to the law, it was not binding on them. But upon their agreement to it, they were no longer free from it.

A vow is no different. It is not a point of law until it is spoken with the mouth. But once it is spoken, it becomes a point of law, the stipulations of which must be fulfilled accordingly. And this is what Christ did.

First, He voluntarily placed Himself under the law. God was under no obligation to enter into the stream of humanity and fulfill the Mosaic code. But He did so –

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. <sup>8</sup> I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.’”

Psalm 40:6-8

The author of Hebrews, as seen in our text verse today, uses these words to show that Christ voluntarily placed Himself into this position in order to fulfill the law, take it away, and thereby establish the New Covenant.

But while under the law, the Lord made His own voluntary vows. That is prophesied in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm –

“I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.

<sup>23</sup> You who fear the LORD, praise Him!

All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! <sup>24</sup> For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. <sup>25</sup> My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. <sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever!”

Psalm 22:22-26

The Lord made vows and promised to pay them, making Himself the surety for their accomplishment. The author of Hebrews explains their fulfillment in Hebrews 2 –

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, <sup>12</sup> saying: ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’ <sup>13</sup> And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’ And again: Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.” Hebrews 2:10-13

Thus, where Israel is shown to have failed in their performance of the code, Christ both kept and performed that which He spoke with His mouth.

**<sup>24</sup> “When you come into your neighbor’s vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure,**

The final two verses of the chapter convey the same thought. In the first one, it deals with the vineyard. Anyone in Israel was allowed to walk upon the cultivated land at will, even onto someone’s property. It is the Lord’s land, and He – through Moses – indicates as much.

While there, the person is allowed to eat anavim k’naphshekha saveekha – “grapes according to your soul your satisfaction.” In other words, there is no prohibition on eating as much as one desires, even to filling, while in another’s field. However...

**<sup>24</sup> (con’t) but you shall not put any in your container.**

The idea here concerns that what you can eat and nothing more. Nothing beyond that was to be taken from the field. Likewise...

**<sup>25</sup> When you come into your neighbor’s standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand,**

Moses introduces two new words here. The first is qataph, meaning to crop off, cut down or up, or pluck. It will be seen five times, once here, twice in Job, and twice in Ezekiel.

The second word is found only here, melilah. It refers to the head of grain. Anyone could pick the heads and eat them at will, just as with the grapes. It is what Jesus, and His disciples, did as is recorded in the gospels –

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. <sup>2</sup> And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, ‘Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!’” Matthew 12:1, 2

What they were doing was perfectly legal. It is not the eating that they say isn't lawful, but the picking of the grain. As this was considered a work, the Pharisees spoke against him for it.

In turn, Jesus defended Himself by citing accounts from Scripture to demonstrate to them that what they were doing was not without precedent, and then applying such exemptions to Himself. As far as the law of the grain, they were not in violation of the precept. The allowance is given by Moses. However...

**\*25 (fin) but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.**

Here is the second and last use of the word khermesh, meaning a sickle. It comes from kharam which is the act of devoting something to God through destruction, exterminating, and so on.

Like filling a vessel with grapes, it was forbidden to cut down stalks of grain which could then be carried out of the field and threshed. One could only pick and eat what was in his hand.

The point of these last two verses is summed up in Jesus' final words to the Pharisees as He responded to their accusations –

“But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. <sup>8</sup> For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

Matthew 12:7, 8

The law set down by Moses now is one of mercy for the hungry. Though the field is the property of another, the law says that this is not stealing. Therefore, the law is given, in this case, to provide mercy to the hungry. That takes precedent over the eighth commandment. However, to take more would be a violation of the command.

As this is so concerning the law being one of mercy, then the hungry are not disobedient to the Sabbath when they eat what comes to their hand. No violation of the fourth commandment results.

Along with that, as the Sabbath was made for man (Mark 2:27), and as Christ is the ideal Man, and as there was a need to be filled for the Man, then what occurred on the Sabbath could not be considered a violation of the law.



The idea of purity, holiness, and of what is just has been the guiding thought of what is presented in this chapter. Each point was given to Israel to guide their conduct and to maintain them as a holy people before the Lord.

And yet, each point has – in one way or another – anticipated the Person and work of Christ who would come and fulfill both the legal requirements set down for Israel, and also the typology set forth by the Lord in the various precepts.

Again, and again, the law is revealing to us the greatness of what God has done in Christ by leading us to the law, through the law, and into a new place where we can fellowship with Him apart from the condemning influence of the law.

In this, He asks us to have faith in what He has done. It is this simple act of acknowledging His work that brings us into a right relationship with Him. As such, we can then live for God without the sentence of death hanging over us that has troubled man since our first father.

Let us be wise and accept the Gift of grace by receiving Christ as Savior. This is what God would ask of you today, and it is what I ask you to consider with all of your heart and mind. Reach out and be restored – to the renewing of your soul in Christ our Lord.

**Closing Verse:** *“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”*

*Romans 10:4*

**Next Week:** Deuteronomy 24:1-4 Israel often issued these without considering the Source... (A Certificate of Divorce) (69<sup>th</sup> Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

### **Holy Conduct Before the Lord, Part II**

You shall not give back to his master, this you shall not do  
The slave who has escaped from his master to you

He may dwell with you in your midst  
In the place which he chooses within one of your gates  
Where it seems best to him  
You shall not oppress him as this word states

“There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel

Or a perverted one of the sons of Israel, so to you I tell

You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog  
To the house of the LORD your God, such thinking  
-----would be flawed  
For any vowed offering  
For both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God

“You shall not charge interest to your brother  
This is a command and not a request  
Interest on money or food  
Or anything that is lent out at interest

To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother  
You shall not charge interest, so to you I address  
That the LORD your God may bless you  
-----in all to which you set your hand  
In the land which you are entering to possess

“When you make a vow to the LORD your God  
You shall not delay to pay it, such you shall not do  
For the LORD your God will surely require it of you  
And it would be sin to you

But if you abstain from vowing, if this you do  
It shall not be sin to you

That which has gone from your lips  
You shall keep and perform, as certainly  
-----as north is north and south is south  
For you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God  
What you have promised with your mouth

“When you come into your neighbor’s vineyard  
You may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure  
But you shall not put any in your container  
Your mouth is to be the sole measure

When you come into your neighbor’s standing grain  
You may pluck the heads with your hand again and again  
But you shall not use a sickle

On your neighbor's standing grain

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word  
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You  
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard  
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone  
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise  
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown  
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...