

Ex. 22:1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

(3/10) The principle here seems to be that the consequence of the crime should be sufficient to be a deterrent.

Ex. 22:2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, *there shall no blood be shed* for him.

Ex. 22:3 If the sun be risen upon him, *there shall be blood shed* for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

Ex. 22:4 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

If you are defending yourself and your loved ones in the dark of night, you obviously can't tell if the thief is armed or not, so you would not be guilty of murder if the thief is killed in defense of your property. In the light of day, however, you can see whether or not he is armed and would be guilty of murder if you killed an unarmed man. If caught, the thief is required to make restitution or become a slave to pay the debt by double the amount of what he stole. If he cannot make restitution, he can be sold.

Ex. 22:5 If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution.

Ex. 22:6 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

These verses continue thoughts regarding responsible ownership, respect for the property of others and the penalty for irresponsibility. (revised 3/10)

Ex. 22:7 If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay double.

Ex. 22:8 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, *to see* whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.

Ex. 22:9 For all manner of trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which *another* challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.

Ex. 22:10 If a man deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing *it*:

Ex. 22:11 *Then* shall an oath of the LORD be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods; and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall not make *it* good.

Ex. 22:12 And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof.

Ex. 22:13 If it be torn in pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* witness, *and* he shall not make good that which was torn.

Ex. 22:14 And if a man borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it, he shall surely make *it* good.

Ex. 22:15 *But if the owner thereof be with it, he shall not make it good: if it be an hired thing, it came for his hire.*

These verses emphasize the seriousness of taking responsibility regarding someone else's possessions. I think I would have thought long and hard before agreeing to do that in that time. It seems that the phrase "no man seeing it" in verse 10 is important, because you can be diligent in care but yet be unable to see everything going on around you.

Observations:

- A man's word should be trustworthy.
- We should treat the possessions of others with great care and return borrowed items in the same condition in which they were borrowed.
- Risk is included as part of the cost of anything hired or rented.

(revised 3/10)

Ex. 22:16 *And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife.*

Ex. 22:17 *If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.*

Allowance is made for the father to assess the man involved and protect his daughter from being given to a dangerous or untrustworthy person.

Ex. 22:18 *Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.*

According to the Hebrew a witch is one who "enchants or practices magic or whispers spells.

Ex. 22:19 *Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.*

GROSS! It's unbelievable the things that man will choose to do if left without God's moral compass.

Ex. 22:20 *He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.*

This instruction was certainly not followed in future generations.

(My bible has an interesting footnote—The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord by destruction. Maybe this was intended to emphasize that human sacrifice was not acceptable to God. This may seem like an unnecessary statement except for the fact that many peoples of that time did practice such terrible types of sacrifice to their dead, impotent gods.)

Ex. 22:21 *Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.*

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Ex. 22:22 *Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.*

Ex. 22:23 *If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;*

Ex. 22:24 And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

God has a heart for those left at the mercy of others. (3/10) Point is made that God will personally inflict judgment on those who mistreat the helpless.

Ex. 22:25 If thou lend money to *any of my people that is poor by thee*, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

Ex. 22:26 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:

Ex. 22:27 For that *is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?* and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I *am* gracious.

You are not to charge interest when lending to the poor. (I would assume that anyone borrowing money for a valid reason would be considered poor—not those borrowing for luxuries or things they want above their means.) You are to be willing to help provide for others with sensitivity to their needs. (3/10) A person's raiment was often his only protection against the cold of the night.

Ex. 22:28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

After looking up the word for "gods" in the Hebrew, it would seem that this is referring to those in authority over us—magistrates, judges, rulers, etc. In other words, be careful how you talk about the president.

Ex. 22:29 Thou shalt not delay *to offer* the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.

Ex. 22:30 Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, *and* with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.

This is a repeat of a command that was given to the Israelites after they came out of Egypt in remembrance of God's provision for them during the plague of the death of the firstborn and which is remembered through the Passover feast.

I think it is interesting that the animal was allowed to stay a week with the mom; I believe this was for her benefit.

Ex. 22:31 And ye shall be holy men unto me: neither shall ye eat *any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field; ye shall cast it to the dogs.*

"holy" = consecrated, set apart, dedicated

I guess the reason these statements are coupled together is because you can't be clean (holy) if you partake of what is unclean. Who knows with what a beast of the field has been in contact!