

# Exodus – The Revealing of God’s Glory and His Design for the Chosen

#74 – Laws of Retaliation

Exodus 21:12-36

Capital crimes – Verses 12-17

Personal injuries – Verses 18-27

Criminal negligence – Verses 28-36

## **Exodus 21:12**

“<sup>12</sup> He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.”

Hebrew – “dying, he shall be  
put to death.”

## **Genesis 9:5b-6**

“<sup>5b</sup> And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. <sup>6</sup> Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.”

## **Deuteronomy 17:6-7**

“<sup>6</sup> On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. <sup>7</sup> The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.”

## **Exodus 21:13-14**

“<sup>13</sup> But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint you a place to which he may flee. <sup>14</sup> If, however, a man acts presumptuously toward his neighbor, so as to kill him craftily, you are to take him even from My altar, that he may die.”

## **Exodus 21:15**

“<sup>15</sup> He who strikes his father  
or his mother shall surely be  
put to death.”



## **Exodus 21:16**

“<sup>16</sup> He who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his possession, shall surely be put to death.”

## **Deuteronomy 24:7**

“<sup>7</sup> If a man is caught kidnapping any of his countrymen of the sons of Israel, and he deals with him violently or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall purge the evil from among you.”

## **Exodus 21:18-19**

“<sup>18</sup> If men have a quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist, and he does not die but remains in bed, <sup>19</sup> if he gets up and walks around outside on his staff, then he who struck him shall go unpunished; he shall only pay for his loss of time, and shall take care of him until he is completely healed.”

## **Exodus 21:20-21**

“<sup>20</sup> If a man strikes his male or female slave with a rod and he dies at his hand, he shall be punished. <sup>21</sup> If, however, he survives a day or two, no vengeance shall be taken; for he is his property.”

## **Exodus 21:22**

“<sup>22</sup> If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide.”

## **Exodus 21:28-32**

“<sup>28</sup> If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished. <sup>29</sup> If, however, an ox was previously in the habit of goring and its owner has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. <sup>30</sup> If a ransom is demanded of him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded of him. <sup>31</sup> Whether it gores a son or a daughter, it shall be done to him according to the same rule. <sup>32</sup> If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall give his or her master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.”

## **Exodus 21:33-36**

“<sup>33</sup> If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, <sup>34</sup> the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his. <sup>35</sup> If one man's ox hurts another's so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide its price equally; and also they shall divide the dead ox. <sup>36</sup> Or if it is known that the ox was previously in the habit of goring, yet its owner has not confined it, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall become his.”

# LEX TALIONIS

## Exodus 21:23-25

“<sup>23</sup> But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, <sup>24</sup> eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, <sup>25</sup> burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”



## **Matthew 5:38-42**

“<sup>38</sup> You have heard that it was said, ‘AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.’ <sup>39</sup> But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. <sup>40</sup> If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. <sup>41</sup> Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. <sup>42</sup> Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.”

“Underlying this proscription is the obvious implication that in cases of physical assault other than murder, compensation was practiced and sanctioned. This, indeed, is the traditional rabbinic interpretation of the *lex talionis*,”

## **Matthew 5:39**

“<sup>39</sup> But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.”

**Assaulting another  
person, who was made in  
the image of God,  
warrants death.**

Family

Community

Work

Church

**Do not make judgments,  
determinations, and rulings  
before you have all of the facts.  
Remain neutral.**

**Be responsible with your  
property, possessions and  
animals so as to protect  
other people from injury.**

**Err on the side of  
“turn the other cheek”  
than “eye for eye.”**