

- But if government is to play that role effectively, it must exact a price for sin that inhibits such acts.
- In this case, the price is pretty steep.
  - If you steal, you lose as much as you tried to take.
  - If you steal and deny the man the chance to recover his property, you will give at least four times as much.
  - But then the law goes further to disincentivize theft.
- 2) In v.2 the law says that if the thief is caught breaking into a house in the night and he is caught in the act and killed by the property owner, his killer is guiltless.
  - A property owner may defend his property with lethal force when in his home
  - But if the sun rises, and then the thief is caught at a later point, the property owner can't commit vigilante justice.
    - The man may not be killed
- 3) The idea is that one who breaks into a house at night has a reasonable expectation of confronting the owner and presumably intended to harm him.
  - So the killing is self-defense, and self-defense is a justified killing.
  - In Texas today, we have exactly this same law.
    - It's called the Castle Doctrine.
    - If someone enters a home, they can be killed and the homeowner will not be charged.

## Verses 5-15...

### *1. Crimes of Negligence or Malfeasance* (wrongdoing, especially by a public official)

In this section, you can see the Lord's desire to emphasize responsibility, fairness and accountability.

- a. Men are to uphold their responsibilities to protect another man's property.
  - If you damage his property through negligence or malfeasance, then you make restitution.
  - But if you are not culpable, then fairness dictates that you suffer no loss.
- b. These principles are best summed up as "love your neighbor as yourself"
  - Jesus said that this is one of the tenets upon which hang the entire Law.
  - The Law sought to demonstrate a sense of love for other people
    - While it discusses how to handle theft or loss of farm animals, the same principles are true for any other situation.
    - Borrowing a neighbors tools
    - Damaging a neighbor's fence
  - So when you reflect on Jesus' words, here in the Law we have tangible examples of what that looks like.
- c. Once again, notice there are consequences for failing to do the right thing under the Law
  - And we know today there are consequences in our nations' laws for damaging another's property, etc.
  - But what about our consequences with the Lord?
    - Since Christians are not under the OT Law, how does the Lord respond to us when we don't show love to our neighbors?
    - Are there consequences for failing to live up to this standard in the Law of Christ?

- In Hebrews, we're reminded that the Father will discipline His children when we fail to exhibit righteousness.

### **Hebrews 12:5-11**

- a) The writer says as children of God, we must expect to receive His discipline at times.
  - If it were otherwise, we would not be His sons truly
  - Just as a stranger cannot discipline another person's child, nor does God discipline those who are not His children.
- b) Discipline is a corrective measure intended to compel obedience and deter future acts of disobedience.
  - The unbeliever does not receive discipline.
  - Instead, they will receive God's wrath in the day of judgment.
- c) And that writer goes further to say that if believers are determined to disobey the Lord, the penalties under the Law of Christ are significant.

### **Hebrews 10:26- 31**

- Willful sinning has remedy in the New Covenant
  - There are no temple sacrifices available to appease God
  - We remain exposed to His discipline
- And if the Law handed out a penalty of physical death for the one who violated the lesser Law of Moses, then what should we expect if we insult the Spirit of grace?
  - The writer offers only one thought: the Lord will judge His people.
  - And it's a terrifying thing to face His judgment.
- While this judgment is not a matter of salvation, it still has consequences and we must concern ourselves with its outcome.

### **Verses 16 -17...**

1. Now the laws become increasingly general... We move toward crimes against the society at large.
  - In this case, the crime was against another family.
  - A daughter who was seduced has been defiled and is no longer considered fit for marriage.
    - So in a sense, her father has lost the ability to gain a dowry for her.
    - And so he is due a dowry.
  - And the man must do the right thing by the woman and marry her.
    - Yet the man must still have the father's permission.
    - But if the father refuses, then the other man still pays the dowry anyway.
2. This law makes abundantly clear that God's expectation is that men and women save their purity for marriage.
  - And if that purity is given away before marriage vows are spoken, then the next best thing is to marry the partner.

### **Verses 18 -20...**

Next, the Lord condemns anyone who practices these particular practices.

1. Each of these practices finds its source directly in the occult and the demonic world. **186**

- Practicing black magic or sorcery is channeling the enemy's power, which demands death
  - Unnatural sexual behavior is an offense to the sanctity of procreation and God's purposes through it, and is abhorrent.
    - Some pagan peoples practiced bestiality in their worship of false gods.
  - And sacrificing anything to false gods is worshipping Satan and must be ended.
    - In fact, this law provides for a penalty even more severe than it sounds.
    - The word for destroyed in Hebrew literally means to be banned.
    - It means that the person was untouchable and must be destroyed utterly.
2. We see this same judgment applied to the city of Jericho.
    - Not only were the people put to death, but everything in the city was to be destroyed.
    - Except one of the men disobeyed the ban judgment... *Joshua 7:1*
    - Ban judgment was the command of God for idol worshippers.
  3. These practices were often associated with the worst periods in Israel's history.
    - They are barometers of the heart of the people.
    - When depravity of this nature is accepted in the culture, it reflects the strength of the enemy's hold and the extent to which the people have abandoned the Lord.
    - Therefore, the death penalty is an appropriate punishment to place a restraint on the enemy's influence in the culture.

### Verses 21 -27...

Ordinances addressing the needs of the Vulnerable and Defenseless in Jewish society

1. A stranger refers to an immigrant or someone who is wandering through the land of Israel
  - This person must receive respect.
  - Though he or she might not be Jewish, nonetheless they deserve the respect common to all people.
  - And the Lord reminds Israel what it was like to be a wanderer in Egypt and to be oppressed
    - Therefore, don't repeat the sins that were brought against you.
2. Widows and orphans must not be oppressed, which means they must be taken advantage of
  - Since these groups are defenseless in Jewish society, the Lord promises to be their defender
    - He promises to take the lives of their oppressors so that their wives become widows and their children become orphans.
3. This law reveals an important principle of scripture concerning our relationship with the Lord
  - He is our defender and will bring justice in His timing and according to His purposes
  - Notice He doesn't promise to prevent oppression of widows and orphans directly
    - They might suffer injustice from time to time, but the Lord promises to be watching
    - And when the injustice takes place, He will respond against the oppressor but in His own timing.

### **Rom. 12:17 – 20**

- Paul taught from the same Biblical principle when he said we should never repay evil with evil.
  - And breaking the peace with other men, even with those who harm us, is an evil in God's sight.
  - Leave room for the vengeance of God.

- If we remain innocent, we give God room to bring judgment
  - But if we break the peace and bring our own sin into the equation, we circumvent the justice of God.
  - This doesn't preclude self-defense
- 4. Vs.25, Israel is commanded not to charge interest of one another when lending money
  - The point was to prevent Israel from profiting from the misfortune of another
    - Interest could be charged of Gentiles however.
  - The Jews found a way around the letter of this law through other means, like over charging for goods bought on credit, etc.
  - The heart attitude is the key here: don't take advantage of another person's need
- 5. Likewise, if a man gives up his outer garment as a pledge of repayment, then mercy must be shown.
  - That garment was also the man's warmth at night, so he must not be denied it
    - The man denied his cloak would be at the mercy of the other man
    - And he would be in a vulnerable position and could be forced into accepting unreasonable terms.
  - The point here is that any unfair advantage that could leave one man enslaved so to speak to another was to be avoided.
    - God had freed Israel from slavery
    - So he didn't want the nation to enslave itself one man to another in these way
  - God promises to punish those who take advantage of other Jews in this way.
    - Finally, injustice against higher stations of Jewish society

### **Verses 28 -31...**

In v.28...God demands respect for both Himself and for the rulers He places over Israel

1. This law has a direct parallel in the New Testament Law of Christ as well

**1Pet. 2:13 - 15**

- a) The command to respect and obey leaders is not conditional on their worthiness to receive such respect.
  - The Lord demands it irrespective of they personal behavior, because all human rulers reach their positions of power according to the Lord's will and hand.
- b) He places all rulers into power and they serve according to His purposes
  - Sometimes good rulers enter power and sometimes evil rulers reign
  - And God is working His plan through all of them
  - So if we resist a leader, we are resisting God's will, as Paul said in Romans **13:2** Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.
    - Finally, the Lord reminds Israel to keep the commandment of the first fruits, both of sons and animals and to avoid eating meat torn by a beast.