

A Uwuphila njani umthetho:

❖ Indlela Yokuphatha Ubudlwangudlwangu (Eksodusi 21:1-32)

- The covenant code begins by regulating three vital aspects of Hebrew society:
- Ikhodi yesivumelwano iqala ngokulawula izici ezintathu ezibalulekileyo zomphakathi wamaHeberu:

(1) Ubugqili (Eks. 21:2-11): Amadoda akhululwa ngemva komnyaka wesikhombisa; abesifazane, uma bengagananga, bakhululiwe; umuntu angahlala eyisigqila uma ethanda.

(2) Isigwebo sokufa (Eks. 21:12-17): Ngomuntu obulele ngamabomu; kulowo olimaza loba othuka abazali bakhe; ngumthumbi

(3) Ukulimala (Eks. 21:18-32): Isibopho sokukhokha inhlawulo yezimali; uma kuphuma isisu, umahluli kanye lowesifazane (lomyeni wakhe) bayabhadalisa inhlawulo.

- Yonke le imithetho izama ukunqanda ukuhlukunyezwa lokudlwanguluzwa phakathi kwabantu

❖ Indlela Yokuphila Emphakathini (Eksodusi 21:33-23:19)

- UNkulunkulu akazange aneliseke ngokuthi asitshiye nje lemithetho “eyisisekelo” futhi asivumele siyisebenzise ngendlela esibona kufanele. Wathatha ngokunanzelela okukhulu ukusipha izibonelo ezibambekayo ukuze sizisebenzise ngendlela efaneleyo.
- Lezi zibonelo zihlanganisa ukuhlasela kwenyamazana yinyamazana (Eks. 21:35-36); imali yokubolekwa kanye leyokubhadala indawo zokuhlala. (Eks. 22:14-15); ubuhlobo abantu bengakatshadi (Eks. 22:16), njll.
- Kugcizelelwa ngokukhethekileyo ukuvikela ababuthakathaka labakhangelelwa phansi, kodwa ngaphandle kokubapha izinzuzo ezingalunganga—okuyikuthi, ngaphandle kokuhlanelkezelela ukwahlulela ukuze kuzuze loba kubalimaze (Eks. 22:21-23; 23:2-3, 6).
- Njengoba iyisivumelwano phakathi kukaNkulunkulu labantu bakhe, le mithetho yayihlanganisa lendlela okufanele sibe lobuhlobo ngayo Laye. Ngaphezu kokuphumula kweSabatha, kwakulesibopho sokugcina imikhosi esikhumbuza ukukhululwa kwethu esonweni, ekuvikelweni kwaphezulu, lasesikhathini esizayo esikhazimulayo esisilindeleyo.

❖ Indlela Yokunqoba (Eksodusi 23:20-33)

- Kungani uNkulunkulu engaphanga u-Abrahama izwe lamaKhanani? “Ngokuba ububi bama-Amori abukagcwali” (Gen. 15:16).
- Ngemva kweminyaka engamakhulu amane yomusa, amaKhanani ayengakanshintshi izindlela zawo. Kwase kuyisikhathi sokupha izwe ku-Israel... ngokuthula! (Eks. 13:17)
- Ngabe uNkulunkulu wayebakhiphe eGibhithe ngaphandle kokuba balwe, wahlukanisa ulwandle kabili, wabondla ngokuyisimangaliso, futhi wabaqondisa ngeNgelosi yaKhe... wayengeke yini akwazi ukubanika iKhanani ngaphandle kokuba balilwele?

(1) UNkulunkulu utshela u-Israyeli ukuthi enzeni

(a) Yizwani izwi lakhe, ukuze uNkulunkulu abe isitha sezitha zakhe (23:21-22)

(b) Khonza uNkulunkulu kuphela, ukuze asuse konke ukugula (23:24-26)

(c) Ukungenzi sivumelwano lamaKhanani, ukuze bangabakhonzi onkulunkulu bawo (23:32-33)

(2) UNkulunkulu utshela u-Israyeli lokho Azakwenza

(a) Uzathumela iNgelosi Yakhe ukuba ibavikele futhi ibangenise [ukuvikela] (23:20)

(b) Ingelosi iyohamba phambi kwabo futhi ibase eKhanani [isiqondiso] (23:23)

(c) Uzathumela ukwesaba kwabakhileyo (23:27).

(d) Uzathumela olonyovu ukuba babaxotshe (23:28)

(e) Uzawaxotsha kancane kancane (23:29-30).

(f) Uzawanikela esandleni sika-Israyeli aze abuse kusukela eMedithera kuze kufike e-Ewufrathe (23:31).

B How to understand the law:

❖ The law of retaliation.

- When Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, he abolished the law of retaliation (Mt. 5:38-42) ... or did he?
- The phrase “you have heard that it was said... but I say to you” did not abolish any law (Jesus used the same phrase for “you shall not kill” or “you shall not commit adultery,” but he never intended to abolish them). In fact, Jesus always expanded the Law, improved it, and gave it its true meaning.
- It was never the true intention of the law of retaliation that a person should lose his eye or his hand for having harmed another.
- This law was formulated with the intention of preventing revenge, putting an end to blood feuds, and retaliation without prior investigation. Damages had to be assessed by judges, and then appropriate monetary compensation was established and paid. This practice arose to prevent people from taking justice into their own hands. Justice needed to be done, but in harmony with God's Law.

❖ Reward and punishment.

- The desire for revenge is deeply rooted in us. And it's always disproportionate to the wrong we've received: "If he did this to me, I'll do more to him."
- Jesus invites us to do the opposite of what we desire: to repay evil with good (Mt. 5:44). So where is justice? Who will pay the offender what he deserves?
- God doesn't tell us that the aggressor won't be punished, nor that any act will be avenged. But He does tell us clearly that He will be the avenger (Rom. 12:19-21).
- Although personal revenge is tolerated in the covenant code, it was curbed by creating a judicial system to prevent abuse (Ex. 21:12-13, 22; 22:8-9).
- No one can simultaneously assume the role of judge, jury, and executioner. If punishment must be imposed, it must be done through a fair judicial process. And Christ will be the supreme and final Judge.