

**Exodus 19:5-6** – Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

Israel is free and has begun preparation to enter the Promised Land. The first thing that needs to be accomplished is a spoken and written agreement between YHWH and the nation He has chosen.

### **The Righteous Standard (So Far) – Exodus 20:22-22:31**

In evaluating the righteous standard of God, we saw how the character of the nation represents YHWH in three main areas: justice, mercy, and faithfulness. The faithfulness is to be toward YHWH; justice and mercy are toward one another. God's character cannot be explained by only one attribute. All of these attributes that He demands of the Israelites He demonstrates to them. God is faithful to Israel, even in full knowledge of their failures, unbelief, and rebellion. YHWH keeps His covenant to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Just as He demands Israel to act, so does God. We left off in Exodus 23 after the command to have rest days and resting in their labor, their land, and their animals.

### **Exodus 23:14-17 – God values remembrance and honor**

Basic Principle – God set up three feasts that would cause them to remember the salvation, atonement, and perpetual sustainment that God had provided for them.

1. Unleavened Bread is connected with the Passover – No leavened bread for 7 days prior to Passover
2. Harvest is connected to Pentecost (Deuteronomy 16:9) – Sacrifice of the first fruits
3. Ingathering is also known as Booths (Tabernacles) or Sukkot – Remembrance of the travel from Egypt to the Promised Land

### **Exodus 23:18-19 – God values distinction and precise adherence to the sacrificial system**

Basic Principle – The manner in which the Israelites are to worship God and sacrifice to Him must be according to His word, not their imagination or in copying other nations.

1. Israel is to observe the Passover with no leaven.
2. The Passover is not a typical meal; it is a remembrance. Therefore, leftovers are forbidden (Exodus 12:10).
3. Israel is not to take the last of the harvest for a sacrifice; they are to take the first of the harvest and sacrifice it to God. By this, they are indicating that they are trusting in God for the rest of the harvest to come in.
4. You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother. This prohibition is repeated two other times (Exodus 34:26 and Deuteronomy 14:21)
  - a. This is a strange statement; here are some interpretations:

## Exodus – I AM, YHWH: The Lord Makes Himself Known

- i. Most Jewish commentaries interpret this as do not eat meat with milk and no cheeseburgers. No to: 1) cooking meat and milk together, 2) eating meat that was cooked with milk, 3) receiving any benefit from such a concoction.
  - ii. Some refer to this as a prohibition against a pagan ritual, specifically in Canaan.
  - iii. Some state this was to keep distance between a mother and the sacrificial offering of the firstborn – “to [understand] a tender appreciation of the natural order and of the relation subsisting between the mother and her offspring. It was against nature to make the mother an accomplice in the death of her child.”
  - iv. One Rabbinic school teaches that there is a mistranslation - that *boil* actually means grow or complete – “do not allow [the kid] to grow up and be weaned from its mother's milk. [In other words, do not] wait until [the kid]’s mother nurtures it with her milk, rather bring it at the beginning. This fits with the context of the first part of the verse, “the choice first fruits of your soil [you shall bring].” But the context of Deuteronomy does not fit (14:21).
- b. The word for *boil* is “בָּשָׂה *bāshal*” and means to be prepared or can mean to ripen, but the idea of not allowing the kid to finish weaning does not fit the word or the Deuteronomy context.
- i. The idea of preparing meat with its mother’s milk (not necessarily boil) can be considered. Although the reason still seems too ambiguous.
  - ii. The other use of this word in Exodus is in 12:9.
    1. The prohibition here states with water.
    2. The context of Exodus 23 is that of the sacrifices and feasts of Israel.
    3. This may be an addendum to that prohibition.
- c. Regardless of the meaning of the text, Israel would have had no problem understanding the context and the full meaning of the prohibition. There was a reason for this statement, however we may not ever truly know it.

This concludes the initial giving of the righteous standard of YHWH.

### **The Plan of YHWH to conquer the Land of Canaan – Exodus 23:20-33:**

In this plan of God, there are two concepts; the first is provision and the second is instruction. These two concepts are interwoven with each other so that the provision and the instruction cannot be separated. This is done to show that His provision will not happen (or happen fully) without Israel following His instructions. In fact, the children of Israel broke many of these instructions at the first opportunity in Exodus 32. There is one difference in this text that is different from any other provisions outside of Exodus 23.

## Exodus – I AM, YHWH: The Lord Makes Himself Known

In Exodus 23:23 we see that the Angel of the Lord will destroy them. The word *destroy* is “כָּחַד kāchadh” and means to secrete, to destroy, to desolate, to cut down, to conceal (from sight), or to hide (Exodus 9:13-16). After the golden calf incident, the provisions and instructions of Exodus 23 are repeated but minus this word. In fact, the word is not used of any adversary in the Pentateuch or the writings speaking of destruction of enemies except in 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 32:20-22.

Many of the inhabitants were not destroyed and, in fact, became a snare to Israel.

### The Provision

The Lord will send an Angel. Who is the Angel? It is the Angel of the Lord or the pre-incarnate Christ. How do we know this?

1. Obey His voice, the Angel has authority over Moses
2. My name is in Him (*name* invokes characteristics). This Angel will have the character, power, and authority of YHWH.
3. The Angel has the power to forgive or not forgive.
4. Commonality in function: “He will bring”...”I will destroy them”

YHWH takes personal interest in bringing the people into the land. Moses records 13 times that YHWH says “I will,” usually the imperfect or perfect tense of the verb with the 1<sup>st</sup> Person Singular.

1. I will be hostile to those who are hostile
2. I will oppose those who oppose you
3. I will destroy...them
4. I will remove sickness from your midst
5. I will make full the number of your days
6. I will send my terror before you
7. I will throw into a confusion all who come against you
8. I will give your enemies backs to you (they will flee)
9. I will send out hornets before you to drive them out
10. I will drive them out in due time so that the land does not become dangerous
11. I will drive them out little by little until your population grows
12. I will place your boundaries
13. I will give in your hand the dwellers of the land

## Exodus – I AM, YHWH: The Lord Makes Himself Known

In addition to the “I will” statements, there are two more that need to be highlighted. First is that God will bless your bread and your water. The next is that there shall be no one who miscarries or who is barren.

Blessing the food and water is clear - if the people keep the covenant then they will never go hungry or thirsty. It is a land flowing with milk and honey. They will never be in need.

The word *miscarrying* is not a good translation. This word is “לכֹּחַ *shākhōl*” and means to be bereaved or to be deprived of a close relation. In context, this would indicate a child. So the word includes the idea of miscarrying but also includes sons and daughters. In general, the people will be full of days and the young will grow old and the old will be full of days. In the days the prophets when the people break the covenant, this becomes one of the main curses (Jeremiah 15:6-9; Hosea 9:11-17).

### The Instruction

1. Obey the Angel of the Lord
2. Do not be rebellious
3. Obey His voice and do all that I will say
4. Do not worship their gods
5. Nor serve them
6. Nor do according to their deeds
7. You shall overthrow and in shattering you shall completely shatter their pillars
8. You must serve YHWH your God
9. You must not make any covenant with them or their gods
10. They shall not live in your land