

Sermon Notes

Exodus – The Revealing of God’s Glory and His Design for the Chosen #71

“God’s Plan for Responsible Independence
Slavery: Part I” – Exodus 21:1-4

I. Introduction.

A. Noting what has been covered thus far in our study of Exodus.

1. A chronology of events through Chapter 20.
2. The next three chapters are often viewed as unimportant – not as entertaining.
3. Listing of laws in Chapters 21-24:1a covers various aspects of life.
4. Book of the Covenant contained within Exodus 21:1–24:3a.
5. However, there is much to learn and it is not boring.

B. Reading of the text – Exodus 21:1-4

II. Exposition.

A. Verse 1

1. “These are” – a common heading in the Torah.
Gen. 2:4, 6:9, 11:10.
2. “Ordinances.”
 - a. i.e. Case laws establishing general principles.
 - b. Contrast with Egypt.
 - c. Contrast with other Ancient Near East law codes.
 - d. Why is there some similarity with law codes which were older than given at Sinai? Everyone should know the answer.

B. Verses 2-4

1. Law on slavery.
 - a. Contrast with Code of Hammurabi.
2. Begins with slavery as did the giving of the Ten Commandments. – Exodus 20:2.
3. God did not abolish slavery.
 - a. Yet, this slavery is not what was practiced in the years leading to the Civil War.
 - b. The Book of the Covenant describes slavery as voluntary servitude.
 - c. Involuntary slavery is condemned – Exodus 21:16.
 - d. Another difference with USA slavery – The Israelite servitude was T_____. Freed in the Sabbath year.
 1. Deuteronomy 15:12-15.
 2. Principles for employers.
4. Why did servitude come about? Bad debts. because of calamity or irresponsibility.
 - a. The slave’s situation could improve with good work and responsibility.
5. Verse 3. A further difference to U.S. slavery concerns marriage.
 - a. In U.S. slavery, families were often separated. This was not the case in Israel.
6. Verse 4. Is this sexist? No.
 - a. The concern is for the wife and children.

III. Points for Reflection

- A. We were all former slaves.
- B. The Union of Marriage is always important to God.
- C. Pray for your elders who sit at the city gate to judge the people.
- D. Now we are bond servants of Christ, and Jesus gave us the example to follow.