# *Crime and Punishment*

# Reading 2 Peter 1:1-10

# Theft: Leviticus 6:2-5

If a person sins and commits a trespass against the Lord by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has extorted from his neighbor, or if he has found what was lost and lies concerning it, and swears falsely -- in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins: then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he has sworn falsely. **He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it**, and give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering.

# Theft of Livestock: Exodus 22:1, 4

If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore **five oxen for an ox** and **four sheep for a sheep.**

4 If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall **restore double.**

# False Witness: Deuteronomy 19:16-21

If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then **you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother;** so you shall put away the evil from among you. And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

# Destruction of Property: Exodus 22:5-6

If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed, and lets loose his animal, and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. If fire breaks out and catches in thorns, so that stacked grain, standing grain, or the field is consumed, **he who kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.**

Leviticus 24:18 Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, animal for animal.

**Miscellaneous Disputes : Deuteronomy 25:1-3**

If there is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that the judges may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, then it shall be, **if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence**, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. Forty blows he may give him and no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother be humiliated in your sight.

**No Money To Repay After Stealing: Exodus 22:1-4**

If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep... He should make full restitution; **if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.** If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

Exodus 21:2 If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.

## Capital Punishment

Genesis 9:6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.

Many centuries later, God made a covenant with the nation of Israel. Not only did God repeat His desire for murderers to be put to death, He also added other crimes to the list that should be punished by death.

Numbers 35:16, 17, 18 ...the murderer shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 20:10 The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 20:13 If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them.

Leviticus 20:15-16 If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood is upon them.

Deuteronomy 22:25 But if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.

Exodus 21:16 He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 22:18 You shall not permit a sorceress (witch - KJV) to live.

Leviticus 20:2 ...Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.

Exodus 21:15,17 And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.

Leviticus 24:15-16 ...Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death.

Deuteronomy 13:1-10 If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' -- which you have not known -- 'and let us serve them,' ...that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the Lord

Deuteronomy 17:12 Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest, who stands to minister there before the Lord your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel.

Exodus 22:20 He who sacrifices to any god, except to the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

Exodus 35:2 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

If the Israelites kept God's commands consistently and fairly, it would have made a very safe and peaceful society. Not only would they not have the problem of "repeat offenders" that plagues our society, but also the public execution of the criminals would have an effect on others.

Deuteronomy 13:6-11 If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known... you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him; but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. And you shall stone him with stones until he dies... So all Israel shall hear and fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you.

Deuteronomy 17:12-13 Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest, who stands to minister there before the Lord your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city... Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.

Although some today claim that strong punishment on the wicked does not deter others from committing crimes, God does not hold to this view. God is the one who created us and understands us better than we understand ourselves. When God says that punishment of the wicked has an effect on others, who are we to argue with God?

Proverbs 19:25 Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge.

Proverbs 21:11 When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise; but when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

**New Testament**

Although we do not live under the Old Covenant given through Moses, the death penalty was still in effect in the New Testament. Notice what is recorded concerning government:

Romans 13:4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil"

***Acts 25:11 For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying..."***

He was saying that if he had committed some crime worthy of execution, he would willingly accept the punishment he deserved. Paul clearly approved of the government's ability to execute criminals.