

# God's Promises Worked as They Obeyed God

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Turn with me, if you would, to Exodus chapter 21. And we are going to try to cover three chapters.

From Exodus 21 to Exodus 23. And I had great difficulty in trying to put this together for us tonight as a church as we would go through it.

And so, we're fixing to do a flyover. Exodus 21 through 23. If you'll go with me to verse 1, it says, Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them.

Following this, there will be 42 commands found in this list. It's like an outgrowth of the Ten Commandments. If you didn't understand, the fact is, the Jews called the Ten Commandments the Ten Words.

And so, they had the Ten Words, and you take the Ten Words, and then they've developed out of these 42 rules. They're connected to the alphabet to help them understand how the original ten words were to play out in their lives.

[ 1 : 06 ] Living these rules justly was a practical outworking of the righteousness of God. So, I want to walk you through them. We'll hit some of them a little better than others.

And you can go home and study. They're very good rules. Very good laws. But when I preach to you from the Bible, I think that the majority of the things that we want to accomplish are not horizontal from me to you, and you to me, and you to each other, but our relationship to God.

We can easily fall into moralism and try to say, Good Christian boys and girls do this. We can easily fall into, Here's some rules we're supposed to obey. But these rules were written for Israel.

They're Israel's laws, not our laws. They're extremely good laws. In fact, the good laws are kind of based on what you'd find in this passage of Scripture. And as a Christian, you ought to want that to work out in your life.

We are under grace, and we're not under the law, but we never use grace as an excuse to not do right. Can you say amen right there? And so, I want to know what's right.

[ 2 : 12 ] I know what God said was right for the nation of Israel, though this wasn't written to us. It's definitely got good stuff. Now, we just finished the Ten Commandments. We moved into chapter 21, 22, and 23.

He's going to build a tabernacle in 24, where you'll meet with God, but he's going to show us our lack of living and dying. He's going to explain. In fact, if I had the time, we could go. If I wanted to take the time, I could do have the time.

But I could take the time and show you everyone these 42 are connected in somewhere or other to one of the commandments. We're going to talk about a servant, and the servant's going to say to his master, I want to serve you.

And that's putting God first. And then you could go down through all of them. You could see that some are going to be attached to thou shalt not kill, and others are going to be attached to love your neighbor, don't want his stuff, don't take his stuff.

And so you'll get to read all of those. I want you to, if I could help you to get the idea of the message, it's this. God's word gets into my life and affects the way I live.

[ 3 : 10 ]     God's word gets into my life and affects the way I live. I think that you need to understand and read and know the Old Testament. I know it wasn't written originally to you. I know that its purpose was written to show us what Jews were doing, but God put it in the Bible because it has real value for us.

And so when I read rules and I read explanations of what they were supposed to do in the nation of Israel, I know that that works in my life because God wouldn't have put it in the Bible if it weren't true.

I would like to remind you before I get into this that Israel was not a country. Some of you grew up hearing eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, and it came out to mean to you that they were like a bunch of Westerners.

Everybody's carrying a sidearm. They all got a six-gun, a six-shooter on their hip, and they're all walking around, you hit me in the eye, I'm taking out your eye. You punch me, I punch you. You kill me, I kill you.

And that's not at all what's going to happen. As you read this, you're going to find out they had good, detailed laws. I'd like to remind you they had judges. They would come before Moses, and they would sit down with Moses, and they'd say, Moses, this guy's cow got loose and got in my pasture and ate of my field.

[ 4 : 15 ]     What are we supposed to do? Moses would say, well, I wrote that down in Exodus chapter 21, 22, and 23. Let's go look and see what we're supposed to do. So he was able to disciple people and teach them what to do.

I set a fire in the corner of my field, and it got out and burned my neighbor's field. Not my fault. Wind blew. Not my fault. No, God would have said, no, you start the fire, and you're responsible for the fire.

My dog bit your son and ripped his leg off. Not my fault. It's the dog's fault. No, it's your fault. And you're going to find out that's what he said as we go through the Bible. So I want you to go with me through these 42 things, if you would.

Verse 1 says, these are the judgments that you set before him. Explain to them, this is how we live out the Ten Commandments. Father, I pray now as we open the Bible and as we go through these three chapters and as we talk about these things, I pray that you would help your people to grow in them, and I pray that you'd help us to realize that these promises or the promises that you give are based on their obedience to what you've told them to do.

And I pray that your name would be glorified and magnified, and I'll praise you for all in Jesus' name. Amen. First thing you find in chapter 21, verse 2 down through verse 6, is the story you all know very well.

[ 5 : 28 ]     It's the story about the servant. He has been purchased. He's a Hebrew servant, and the Hebrews could not own themselves. They couldn't take each other like slaves. Anytime you got taken in, you could only be held for six years max, and on the seventh year, you were allowed to go free.

God freed the Hebrews, and he didn't want them to be in bondage. God said, and usually this guy that would be taken in for a slave for six years is more like an indentured servant.

He's a guy that kind of got himself in financial trouble. Somebody's going to take him in. He's going to work for them. He's going to be allowed to prosper. He's even going to be allowed to take a wife and children, and he is going to have a family.

He's going to work for the other guy, and if he came in single, he leaves single. If he came in married, he leaves married, or if at the end of the time he's been working there, he says, you know what? I really like it. I'd like to stay.

He was allowed to stay. God had freed the Hebrews, and they were never to be lifelong slaves again. This was often a way to overcome financial tragedy. You would serve a person who would pay off your debt and get you back on your feet.

[ 6 : 29 ] You came in with nothing, and you leave owing nothing. So if you've worked six years, your debt is paid. It doesn't matter how deep in debt you were. You paid your six years. On the seventh year, you're free.

If you receive from your master, you could choose to stay. So the guy gets ready to leave, and he gets ready to leave. The master would say, I've given you a wife. You've had three children. If you leave, they stay.

That's a pretty tough choice. You leave, they stay. And he would say, no, I'd rather stay with my wife and children. I love you. I love my wife, and I love my children, and I'd like to stay. They would go down to the judge, and the judge would put their ear on the post of the wall.

The door would put their ear on the post. They'd drive a hole in their ear, and that would be a symbol to everybody. He chose to stay. He chose to stay. He stayed because he wanted to.

Of all the people in the Bible, the most voluntary servant we have is Jesus Christ. He chose to stay. He chose to become a man. He chose to die. He chose to allow man to mistreat him.

[ 7 : 31 ] He chose to suffer because he loved us. He left great riches and made himself a servant forever. He put on a robe to wash the feet of his disciples and even the guy who would later betray him.

He went to a cross to die for us. By the way, we should serve him voluntarily. How about that? Amen? You and I should walk to the door and say, you've given me everything I have. You gave me my wife.

You gave me my children. You gave me my money. You gave me my health. You gave me everything that I have. Drive a hole in my ear to say, I love you. I don't want to leave. I prepared to die for Jesus, his kingdom, and his purposes.

Go with me if you would down to chapter 21 and verse 7. In chapter 21 and verse 7, that was for a boy. For a girl, for a female, she didn't get out after six years. In chapter 21 and verse 7, if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the men's servants do.

And so, you know, they got the betrothal rules. They got the marriage rules. They got you. You know, you buy wives. By the way, a lady in this particular chapter, we probably don't like that. You ladies are probably like, I don't appreciate that.

[ 8 : 35 ] Guys get to go free after six years and we're stuck. Can I remind you that Jesus gave women more dignity than they had ever had in history? They were property. Here he says you'll treat her right.

By the time you get to 1 Peter chapter 3, he said they are co-heirs with us. They're equal to us and you will treat them right. So it is Jesus who gives a lady purpose.

It's Jesus because society and men forever have been mistreating her. But the Hebrews were not to mistreat them even when they were sold as a wife.

Verse 7, it's not the same as a male servant. In verse 8, if her husband, the guy who bought her, didn't like her, she could be redeemed.

Her dad or somebody from her family could come back and say, you paid X amount for her. I'll pay it back. I want her back. If he took her in the house and gave her to his son, he had to treat her like a daughter.

[ 9 : 31 ] Look at verse 9 and underline that. If you take her to your house, buddy, you treat her like a daughter. If you give her to your son. And by the way, they had the customer taking more than one wives.

But if you took one of the Hebrew girls to be your son's wife or your wife, you could never cut down on the amount of food she got, the amount of clothes she got.

And even the relationship in the marriage could not be diminished. Verse 10. And if you did diminish any of it, she could leave without paying anything. So she wouldn't get free.

But she could never be sold outside of Israel. She was a Hebrew. Now go with me if you would down to chapter 21 and verse 12. Chapter 21 and verse 12. They had a death penalty.

They had a death penalty. The death penalty in Israel. God is the giver of life. He determines how long a person lives. In these laws, Israel is being taught to value human life.

[ 10 : 32 ] We ought to value human life. From the beginning, God has said, if you shed a man's blood, then yours will be shed. So in chapter 21 and verse 12, if you hit a man so he dies, you die.

If you hit a man so he dies, you die. Verse 21 and verse 14. If you plan a man's death. If you plan. If you decide, man, I'm going to kill that guy and you work out a plan, you die.

If you're a delinquent child and you don't respect your parents. Verse chapter 21 and verse 15. And you hit your parents. You hit your dad or your mother. Or you curse your dad or your mother.

You die. They probably had respectful kids. Amen. I mean, you didn't get detention or timeouts. You got killed. I can imagine that would pretty well wake some people up.

Next one, chapter 21 and verse 16. If you kidnap somebody. The value of human life is you can't control the life of another. You can't steal them out of their home against their will. Or you die.

[ 11 : 32 ] Chapter 21 and verse 29. You had to control your animals. Because if your ox had a habit of pushing with his horn. And he gored somebody.

The owner. The ox died. And the owner. If you know your dog bites. If you know your dog bites. You better not let it kill anybody. Because your dog will die.

And so will you. If you're a Jew. Don't you thank God you're an American. Amen. That's what was going on. Chapter 22 and verse 3. If you kill somebody who was stealing from you during the daytime.

You could be put to death. You'd have to go to the judge. They'd have to decide. But in chapter 22 and verse 3. If the sun be risen upon him. Upon the thief. There shall be blood shed for him.

For he shall make. He should make full restitution. If he have nothing. Then he should be sold for his theft. But watch this. If somebody's breaking into your house. During the daytime. And you can see that they're not really going to harm you.

[ 12 : 30 ] You can see what's going on. You can't kill them. That was their law. That they put into effect. Everyone around Israel. Will be involved. In the worship of false gods.

Everybody around them doesn't respect human life. There's all kind of looting and murdering and raping and kidnapping going on. But not in Israel. God's people are taught to live to a different standard.

And so if you got involved in 22.18 with witchcraft or demons. You died. In chapter 22 and verse 19. If you had sex with animals. You died.

In chapter 22 and verse 20. If you sacrifice to a false god. You died. Those are the death penalty rules. There was a clear death penalty.

In the nation of Israel. Next thing I want you to do. Is go with me to chapter 21 and verse 13. If you kill somebody. And you didn't premeditate it. And you weren't mad at them. It was an accident.

[ 13 : 25 ] In other parts of the Bible. You'll hear. That a guy might be. Chopping with an axe. And the axe head flies off. And kills a guy. And it's an accidental death. You didn't mean to kill him.

God made a plan. You would end up being locked up. But you wouldn't be put to death. You wouldn't be locked up in a cell. Like we do today. But God provided six cities of refuge. That we'll get to as we go through the Bible.

And you would run to them. And as you ran to them. The people are coming after you. To take your life. You'd get there. The judge would find out. If they really believed. It was an accident. If there was any notion. That you had hated him.

You had talked about killing him before. You would die. But if it was an accident. You wouldn't die. They would judge to see if it was intentional. Or not. If you got in a fight. And you hurt somebody.

You were liable for all costs. Look at Exodus 21. 18. And 19. If two guys are in a fight. One of them grabs a rock. And hits the other one.

[ 14 : 21 ] Or a club. Or shoots it with a pistol. They just didn't have pistols. But if you do that. And the other guy dies. You're in trouble. But if he doesn't die. He keeps his bed.

Verse 19. You shall pay for the loss of his time. And you shall cause him to be thoroughly healed. All the doctor bills are on you. Better he don't die. If he dies.

You're in really trouble. So just pray he doesn't die. What if you beat him up. Pray he lives. But then you're going to be stuck paying a bill. For a long time. By the way. If a guy accidentally disciplined.

His servant. And the servant died. He would be punished. He would go before the. He would go before the judges. And find out would he be punished. Or if not.

If he lived two or three days. That was his money. Slavery. Had an ugly face. Even then. Chapter 21 and verse 22. Every punishment was to fit the crime.

[ 15 : 15 ] God when he set up laws for them. He put the punishment. To fit the crime. In 21. 22. Guys are fighting. And a pregnant woman is there. And they hurt the woman with child. The judges will determine.

What happened. But if any mischief follows. In verse 23. They give life for life. If you kill the woman. You die. If you hurt her eye. There will be an eye paid for it. A tooth.

A tooth. In a fight. A woman got hurt. And lost her child. The men would pay her. That the ones that hurt her. Would pay her. It isn't the wild west. I want you to check this out. It was an eye for an eye.

Two things. Two things. You got to remember. They're going to go to a judge. They're going to go to a judge. This wasn't. It wasn't. Some hillbillies. In an old western you've seen. Come down to town. And going to kill people.

If you. If you knocked my eye out. We go to the judge. The judge would say. We're not going to charge you. We're not going to kill you. Because you knocked the guys out. That wouldn't be fitting to the crime. You took an eye. You'll lose an eye. You burn somebody.

[ 16 : 10 ] You'll get burned. You broke a hand. Your hand will be broken. It was to say. Just reward. For just. A crime. That's what you're going to get. If a slave owner.

Hurt his slave. He had to let him go. Look if you would. At chapter 21. In verse 26. If he knocked out his tooth. Through his eye. Those are the two examples given. He gets to go free.

So don't be hitting your slaves. If you're. If you're. An Israelite. Chapter 21. In verse 28. You are responsible. For the actions of your animal.

You're responsible. For the actions of your animal. If an ox gore a man. Or a woman. That they die. The ox will be stoned. And his flesh will not be eaten. But the owner gets away with it.

That's because he's not. Used to doing it. That's his first time. First time. Your animal. Your ox runs a. Your bull runs a horn. Through somebody. He's going to be killed.

[17:07] Or. The guy could say. I'll pay money. Chapter 21. In verse 30. And how much. Could I pay you. So I can get to keep my bull. How much. Got to pay you. So I can get to keep my bull.

And in verse 32. If you. If they heard a man servant. Or maid servant. There was a set price. That would be paid. An animal. That caused the death of a person. Had to be killed. It was possible.

To pay a ransom. If you had a pit. On your property. You dug a hole. On your property. And somebody's animal. Fell into the hole. Chapter 21. Verse 33. You had to pay.

For the animal. That got hurt. You had to pay. For the animal. That got hurt. You could eat the animal. So the animal. Falls in your pit. Breaks a leg. You're going to knock it in the head. You get to eat it. But you're going to pay. Full market value.

For the animal. If your. If your ox. Hurts another man's ox. There has to be justice done. Chapter 21. In verse 35. One man's ox. Hurts another. Is that he die. They sell the live ox.

[18:02] Divide the money. And then the dead ox. They also divide him up. So they both get to eat. Here's some good ones for you. I love these. Things. I realize full well. I realize full well.

These are details. That's why I'm flying through them. I can do this for weeks. But we're going to do it all in one night. Take your medicine. Amen. 22. One. In 22. One. If you steal something.

You're going to pay. So if a guy stole an ox. Or a sheep. And he kills it. Or sells it. He has to pay five big old bulls. For one that he stole.

Or four sheep. For a sheep. By the way. You remember King David. He took Bathsheba. And the prophet said. You'll pay four. He was going right back to the verse. Where they were told what to do.

If the thief came at night. He could be killed. Chapter 22. Verse 2. If a thief breaks into your house at night. You can kill him. No problem. You won't be judged for it.

[18:55] He shouldn't have been trying to break in at night. When you couldn't see. And you couldn't get help. And you had to defend your home. And your life. If he stole it in the daytime. You just make him pay. And if he can't afford.

He was stealing because he was poor. So you sell him. He's going to be one of those guys. That gets sold to pay. So he steals a bull. He owes five bulls. A bull is worth a thousand bucks.

He owes five thousand dollars. He can't do it. So somebody pays five thousand. And he's their servant. For the next six years. If the thief were caught with stolen goods. He had to pay double. 22. Verse 4.

If God's law was put into effect. It would probably make a major difference. They were never to take advantage of their neighbor. How about that? Never take advantage of your neighbor.

In 22. 22. 5. If you. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten. If you let your animals go eat another man's field. Pull up like my uncle did. And let the other guy's bull walk in your barn.

[ 19 : 52 ] You're going to pay. And what they're going to do is you make restitution. Look at chapter 22. Verse 5. Put a circle around. Make restitution. It's not enough to go say. I'm sorry. My bull got out.

Was eating in your cornfield. That's not working. That doesn't work. He got out. Got in the other guy's phone. Cornfield. You'll go pay the bill. Chapter 22. Verse 6. I'm going to rush. I'm going to speed up.

So I can get through here. If fire breaks out. You make restitution. The last two words of chapter 21. And verse 6. By the way. What if you're holding something. What if somebody comes over to you and says.

Hey. I need you to hold on to this for me. He delivers some money or stuff. 22. 7. To keep. And he gets stolen out of your house. If the thief be found. He pays double. If the thief be not found.

The master of the house shall be brought before the judge. Remember I told you there were judges. Brought before the judges. To see whether he had put his hand. If it was honestly stolen. The thief pays. They can't find out.

[ 20 : 48 ] They get judged. And the judges will decide who gets paid. Chapter 22. And verse 9. I already told you about the animals.

If you borrow something. 22 and verse 14. Here's a good one. If you borrow something. You have to take care of it. And make it good. If it tears up while you got it. Don't borrow it.

If it's going to tear up while you got it. Because you got to fix it. So I'm going to loan you all something I know is about to break. Come on over the house. I'll loan it to you. When you bring it back. You have to fix it. But if you rent it.

If you have the guy come and work with it. Or you rent it from him. He's responsible. 22. 15. Good rules. Good rules. You had sex before marriage. You will marry her.

Or pay the dowry. Pay her price. The fourth thing I want you to look at real quick. I'm going to run through these. Not even tell you the verses. But you can go through the verses. And check. They were taught how to treat others.

[ 21 : 44 ] They had a death penalty. And then they had crimes. And they had what you had to pay. If you were involved in that. But then they were taught. Now it's just don't do this. This is how we do things.

We're God's people. And we're different. So they never were to take advantage of foreigners. That might be good for us. I know that sometimes we get tired of illegals in our country.

And everybody likes to make a big deal of it. But we don't oppress them. We don't take advantage of them. They don't work for us. And let's try to get more money out of them than we should. That's 22.

21. And 23. 9. We never take advantage of widows and orphans. We never take advantage of poor people. Chapter 22. Verse 25. Get this one.

If you came to me and you said I need a loan. And you're a widow or an orphan. And you came and you said. Or you're just a poor guy. And you came and said. Could you loan me 10 bucks? And I said yeah. Give me your coat. Or give me your blanket.

[ 22 : 39 ] Or give me your shoes. Tonight when it gets cold. I got to go back over to your house and take your stuff to you. And say hey. I don't get to keep your stuff. Because I don't mistreat poor people. That's how they were taught to do it in 22.

By the way. They didn't charge interest to each other. You never mistreat poor people in favor of the rich. And you never take the side of the poor people either. You give good judgments.

You give good judgments. Don't damage someone else's character. Can I get you to go to that 23. 1. Chapter 23 and verse 1. Thou shalt not raise a false report.

But put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. Don't get involved in lying. And telling stuff you ought not tell.

Don't tell stories. Don't tell stuff that's not true. Stay away from falsehoods. Chapter 23 and verse 7. Look at it. Keep away from false matters.

[ 23 : 35 ] Chapter 23 and verse 2. Don't run around with people that do wrong. If somebody. You know. Sometimes you're hanging with your friends. You know. There were some young men in a county to the north here.

Three young men. Took a girl on prom night. I think it was. Took her over to Gilmer County. And she has been raped supposedly. You know. You can honestly say. Well. Only two of them really. I mean.

To do this. Somebody very likely could come out and say. I never planned that. It wasn't my idea. It was George's idea. Here's what God would say. You aren't to run with people that do stuff wrong. When they do wrong.

Get away. Don't go with the crowd. Stay away from the crowd. Chapter 23. And verse 2. I love 23. 4 and 5. Did you know that if your enemy's ox.

If your enemy's ox or his ass is going astray. You're supposed to go get it and bring it back to him. So you look out there. And here comes your enemy's ox walking down the street. You know. They don't have fences. It's in like Georgia.

[ 24 : 31 ] It's more like a Texas. And there goes his ox. And you're thinking. Yes. He lost his best ox. No. You got to go out there and say. I don't like that guy. But that's his ox. I'll take it back to him. By the way.

If you found your. Your enemy's donkey. And his burden was too heavy. And he fell down on the road. He can't carry the burden. You know what you're supposed to do. You're supposed to go pick him up. Pick up his load.

Even if it's your enemies. You're going to do that. Now go with me to 22. 29. I will slow down now. We're on page 17. Page 24 notes.

That's all. You can't hold back on giving your offerings. Said Israel. The firstborn belonged to me. That's chapter 22. Verse 29.

The firstborn belonged to me. The firstborn baby belongs to me. The firstborn animal belongs to me. And what y'all do is you tend to hang on to what you got. You're like you want to check and make sure. Maybe you're trying to figure out how to give him the second born.

[ 25 : 25 ] He said no. You don't delay. I told you what to give me. Bring it to me. Chapter 22. Verse 29. Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy right fruits of your liquors, your firstborn of your sons.

Bring them to me. Give me the offering for your firstborn. They were to let the poor people eat. In chapter 23 and verse 11.

They didn't harvest their fields. For six years they could work a field. And after they got through working that field. They had to leave it alone for a year. And the poor people got to eat. By the way, America had big problems because we didn't understand crop rotation.

Jews understood crop rotation. Back in Exodus. For six years you could work that field. But that last year you let it alone. You let the stuff grow up. Let people eat what they wanted to eat.



And the ground would recover. And you could go back to work on that ground. Everybody got a break. 23-12. One day out of seven was to be given even to their servants.

[ 26 : 24 ] Chapter 23 and verse 13. This has always been a verse that impresses me. Don't study falsehoods. Don't study falsehoods. In 23-13 it said, In all things that I have said unto you, be circumspect.

Be wise. And make no mention of the name of other gods. And neither let it be heard out of thy mouth. Don't talk about other gods.

Here's what we've got so far. Kind of summing it up now. We've got a whole bunch of rules. 42 of them. I tried to put them together. I tried to go quickly. We've got 42 rules.

God gave them 10 words. The 10 commandments. He develops it out into 42 words. That's not the whole law book. But it gives them an idea. How am I supposed to treat people? I'm a child of God. I belong to God. I'm part of the nation of Israel.

We're different. We're not like our neighbors. We don't worship false gods. We don't do things wrong. We don't abuse people. We don't take care of. We don't beat up on other people. We don't abuse people. We don't take advantage of other people.

[ 27 : 20 ] We're different. We are Jews. We take care of our poor people. We take care of our poor people. We don't even oppress a people by charging interest. We don't. And if we even take some guarantee, we give it back to them when they need it.

Man, we're just different people. They're God's people. God's people. Now, here's the problem. They couldn't keep those laws either. I mean, honestly, sooner or later, you're going to see your neighbor's donkey falling down, and you're going to be dancing a jig.

I'm glad my enemy's donkey can't get up. I'm glad his ox got away. I'm glad some things are going wrong for him. And so you're going to mess up. So the next thing on the schedule is there will be three feasts.

Three times a year you're going to go before God. Three times a year you're going to go to God because you need to worship God. It's never a morality issue. It's never. These are rules.

It was never set up to be just the Supreme Court and making rules. So in chapter 23 and verse 15, they have the Feast of Unleavened Bread or the Passover that speaks of the death of the Lamb of God, of Jesus Christ.

[ 28 : 28 ] That's what it takes to fix it when we mess up and we all mess up. And then it speaks of the Feast of the Harvest or Firstfruits of the Resurrection. And then it speaks of the Feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles to remind us he is coming again.

He is coming again. In chapter 23, verse 19, you're to bring your offering. Look at 23, 19. Those Jews knew. Take your offering. The first of the firstfruits of thy land, thou shalt bring it to the house of the Lord thy God.

Take what God gives you and bring it to him. And then the other has a reference to a pagan ritual. They used to cook their baby lambs in the mama's milk.

And it spread that milk on plants. So it's a reference probably to that. Now then, as they lived out God's truth, he promised them great things. God said, I've got a place prepared for you.

I'm going to take care of you. I'm going to take you to the special land. I'm going to do great things. But you are to honor and obey my angel. You're to honor and obey God. You're to do what you're supposed to do.

[ 29 : 43 ] And as they honored God, they were going to be blessed. As they learned to live in obedience, they would receive the blessings of God. Chapter 23, verses 25 to 28, their babies wouldn't, their babies, nor the animals wouldn't be aborting their babies or losing their babies or miscarrying their babies.

That wasn't going to happen. God was going to even destroy their enemies and keep their enemies away. But I want to show you now. I want you to walk with me through some big truths now.

First, let me just stop and say this. And by the way, believe me, if you think it's hard for you tonight, it's really hard for me. But here's what's happened. God's got a whole bunch of rules. And he said, this is the way you're supposed to live.

This is how it's going to happen. You wouldn't need those rules unless human nature goes against those rules. If my fire breaks out, I really don't think I need to pay for your field. Not my fault my fire got away.

But God said, no, this is the way we do things. If my animal does something he shouldn't do, I kind of tend to think, you ought to let my animal alone. I don't think you need to kill my dog. But God said, no, this is the way we've got to do things.

[ 30 : 43 ] If something goes wrong, I've got a plan here. If a thief comes in my house and I kill him during the daytime, I'm going to be in trouble. There's all kinds of rules they've got going. Then they've got these offerings. But see, here's what happened.

As they understood what God wanted, it was supposed to get in them. And you and I don't live with a set of rules on the outside that tell us what to do. We don't go around trying to say, I've got to obey all these rules.

But what does happen is you put the word of God in your heart. It begins to flow out of you and you begin to do it out of your heart because you want to. You don't do to be, but you do because you are.

You don't do to be, but you do because you are. And so it's a whole big, it's a different way of looking at it. It's a different way of doing it. Now watch what's happened. God says, if you learn to do what I tell you, I've got big promises for you.

But then he reminds him in chapter 23 and verse 29, it doesn't happen immediately. Chapter 23, verse 29. I will not drive them out before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate.

[ 31 : 44 ] Now, won't you look here just a second? Some of you got right with God and you're like, why won't God answer my problem? Why won't God do something for me quick? Because you're not ready for it yet.

God could give you instant victory right now. God could help you overcome all of your enemies. He could throw everybody out. He's going to throw them out. He said he was going to throw them out when he sold to the nation of Israel.

But he said, I won't do it in a year. Because if I did, you wouldn't be ready to occupy the land. You wouldn't have a big enough family. You wouldn't be ready for it. You wouldn't be able to handle it. It's kind of like winning the lottery.

Almost everybody who wins the lottery loses everything they got. It destroys their home because they're not ready for it. They're not able to handle that. And that's what's going on here. He said, hey, I'm not going to let you win in a year.

And some of you have been serving God and you're like, why won't God fix this? Why won't God answer this? Because God says, you're not ready for it. I'm going to take some time. Look at what he says in chapter 23, verse 30.

[ 32 : 41 ] By little and little, I will drive them out from before thee until you be increased. He said, little by little, I will give you victory.

But it will be little by little. You will slowly win. Here's a missionary on deputation. And he says, I don't know why God doesn't just give me my support.

I don't know why things aren't working out better. And often it's not that the promise isn't there and it's often that God's not doing it. But God's sitting back and said, you ain't big enough to handle it yet. It'd go to your head.

You wouldn't be able to appreciate what God's done. I got to do it little by little because you ain't big enough. I got to do it little by little because you need to grow. That's all being told to Israel. But I think it works for us.

Amen. Some of us are like, I keep all the stinking Ten Commandments. Why don't God do what I ask him to do? Maybe you ain't ready. Maybe you aren't big enough. Maybe you haven't grown enough.

[ 33 : 36 ] He said, by little and little I will drive them out from before thee until you be increased. Go down to chapter 23, verse 33, if you would. Thou shalt not dwell in the land.

They shall not. Those that worship false gods shall not dwell in the land. Lest they make thee sin against me. For if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

The next thing I want you to do is get separate. You see, I got holy laws. I got holy laws. I got righteous living. I know what God expects and what God wants me to do.

I've even got a place to go and make my sacrifices. And I'm understanding that God is building me while he builds my ministry. He's building me while he helps me overcome these problems. But I need to remember this as he finishes this chapter.

He said, hey, stay away from the wrong people. They'll mess you up. Stay away from people that worship false gods. Stay away from people that don't do what's right because they'll mess you up. He said, so if they worship a false god, get away from them.

[ 34 : 37 ] Get them out of the country. Get them away from it because they will surely be a snare, a trap set for you. As they allowed God's word to get into their hearts and influence their thoughts and actions, God would bring promises to pass in their life.

As I learned to obey God and walk with God, he will make promises come to pass in my life. God gave them good laws that would cause them to grow in his grace and live out the great miracle he had done in them.

He had rescued them from Egypt and slavery. He had given them a new life. They have great promises, but the promises are conditional. The promises are conditional.

The land's yours, but grow. The land's yours, but do your part. It's not like it's just going to happen. They can enjoy great blessings or they can miss them if they will not obey God.

Grace is never an excuse not to do right. We can never say we're under grace. Rules don't matter. God doesn't matter. We don't have to worry about stuff.

[ 35 : 37 ] We just do what we want to do. Never. That's not who we are. We never use grace as a cover for sinful living or lawless living. God had saved them. He has separated them.

But they are now to live out what God has done in them. They are to live it out. God will bring them into greater and greater blessings. God's done a big work in you. He saved you.

He brought you out of sin. And he gave you victory over sin. But you still got some sins that are attached to you and some sins that are hard for you to overcome. And you said, I just don't seem to grow. And I just don't seem to progress in my walk with God.

And my holiness doesn't seem to grow. And I wish all of a sudden it just happened. That's not how it's going to happen. It's going to happen because every day you get up and you make little decisions. And every day you say no to sin and yes to Jesus.

And as you do that, God does a big work in your life. As a young preacher, I wanted miracles to happen in my life. And charismatics made it sound like it would.

[ 36 : 34 ] And many independent baptists made it sound like it would. I can remember one time when Steve McVeigh and I got alone with, we got alone with, I shouldn't have said all of his names. We got alone in a church and fasted for three days.

We didn't take a bath. We just brushed our teeth and prayed the whole time. We laid on the altar. We slept on the altar. We said, God, we've got to have you do something. We were like 22.

We just knew that God was going to come down and do a big thing on us. And we'd get up and all of a sudden we'd have the power of God. And everybody would be like, wow, there goes the man of God. After about three days, we both got up tired and said, I ain't doing this again.

Let's go take a bath and go back to work. Because you want something magical to happen. God's got a big promise. There's a big piece of land that's yours. But you're going to have to grow.

You're going to have to live out the promises. You're going to have to obey God little by little, step by step, until God brings it to pass in your life. He will give them victory over more and more enemies.

[ 37 : 34 ] He will give them more of what he has for them. How are you handling the grace of God that he has given you? He is at work in your life. Young people were like, I want it and I want it now.

And God's like, you ain't ready for it, big boy. I've got to grow you. Do you seek to grow in his grace and his strength? Do you want to serve him and love him more every day?

I think that's what these three chapters are about. I really don't think it's about all the rules here. Though they are going to be in our lives and we are going to do right. I know it's about those sacrifices that we go and the Passover and Jesus died.

I know all that's true. But I think the big lesson is this. You have great grace in your life. God has saved you from sin. God has given you a new life. God has brought you out.

And God has big stuff for you. But you're going to have to obey. You're going to have to obey. It's not a matter of simply praying and it's going to happen. It's not a matter of showing up for every church service. It's a matter of tomorrow, getting up and saying, I know what God wants me to do.

[ 38 : 38 ] And today I do right. I say no to sin and I say yes to Jesus. And the next day, it's what you do in your marriage. It's what you do in your marriage. It's what you do with your money. It's what you do with everything that God's given you.

You say, I just wish my marriage would be fixed. Like that. Not going to happen. I just wish that all my financial issues would just go away like that. Not going to happen. But there's no I dream of Jeannie.

There's no witch that can twinkle her nose and everything be fixed for you. That's not how God does it. Here's how God does it. Obey me. Honor me. Put me first.

Make small decisions. Take step after step. And you'll grow. And I'll give it to you. Father in heaven, I love you. And I thank you for the chance to serve you. I pray that your name would be honored and glorified.

I pray you'd work in our lives. We'll give you praise. In Jesus' name. Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com), where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recording.

[ 39 : 44 ] Thank you. All right. See you.