

Exodus 21:12-26: Laws...

I. (12-17) Capital punishment.

Premeditated murder, violence and evil speech against one's parents and kidnap are all punishable by death.

[Genesis 9:6](#) - *Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.*

[Numbers 35:31](#)- *Moreover you shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall surely be put to death...*

Manslaughter was not punishable; later on in Numbers 20 we'll see God establishing Cities of refuge for such unintentional offenders until the matter is conclusively investigated.

II. ([18-19](#)) Laws regarding compensation for personal injury.

If, because of a conflict, one is injured, **confined to his bed**, the one who injured him must pay compensation to the man and his family. However, if the man could recover from the injury, the guilty party was only required to pay for his medical recovery and for his lost time.

III. ([20-21](#)) Law regarding the beating and death of a servant.

Violence against employees was punishable; the master was responsible for the wellbeing of their servants in case of injury to them.

IV. ([22-25](#)) Laws of revenge.

If a pregnant woman was injured in a conflict, and she gave birth prematurely, a penalty was only to be assessed if there was lasting damage. If lasting damage resulted, principle of limited revenge applies – eye for eye, tooth for tooth...

[Matthew 5:38-39](#) - *“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ “But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.*

V. ([26-27](#)) The law of injured employees.

If injured by the master, the servant received something more precious than an eye – his freedom.

VI. ([28-32](#)) Laws regarding animal control and damage.

This law addresses *neglect*. An owner of a man-killing ox could not be held guilty if the animal had no history of aggression towards people. Yet the animal must die, and the owner was forbidden to profit from the animal or its death (**its flesh shall not be eaten**). No one was to profit from or regard casually even accidental death.

Yet, if an ox owner had an ox whom he knew to be aggressive and he failed to control it, he was guilty of murder and punished as such.

If the survivors of the dead man accepted monetary restitution in lieu of the owner's death, this was an acceptable settlement.

If a servant was killed under such circumstances, the price of restitution was thirty shekels of silver, which was considered the price of a slave.

VII. ([33-36](#)) More laws regarding the principles of negligence.

These laws communicate the principle of responsibility for the consequences of an individual's actions upon another. The example given had to do with necessary restitution when the digging of a pit caused the death of an animal.

***Romans 13:3-4** - For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 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.*

***Romans 3:19** - Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

***Galatians 5:14** - For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*