

ONE in the word

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: **and they are they which testify of me** (Jesus).” (John 5:39)

January 27

TODAY’S READING: Exodus 22-24

OVERVIEW: God gives examples of His “judgments” by which to judge right from wrong; Israel agrees to obey God’s commands; Moses goes up again to meet with God on Mount Sinai.

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS: As we read Exodus 21, God laid down specific examples to serve as guides for properly judging His people. Remember, Israel was the first and only Theocracy – God was to be legislator, judge and chief executive. (Note that it was not a democracy or a republic!) The plan was simple: obey God and you will be happy, protected and prosperous. So note that the bottom-line is not how man relates to his fellow man, but how man relates to God (Jeremiah 11:4).

It is interesting to note the very first thing God says after giving them the “Big Ten” (Commandments). Treat your servants right! Keep in mind that they had just been delivered from 400 years of servitude to the Egyptians. Israel’s ideas concerning servant-hood needed serious renovation. What follows are various laws that appear to be random, but God was very calculatingly laying down each one because they were essential examples for them to understand His character and values.

Just as Israel was invited by God to live inside the protection of a government under God’s watchful eye, so are we (Hebrews 8:9-10). In our Lord’s very first sermon, He specifically said that He had not come to do away with these laws, but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17). As we read these commands we can see the importance of motive for judging to what degree wrong has been done. The bottom-line issue is all about the heart, and ultimately, the state of our heart is the summation of the law (Mark 12:30; Romans 13:8, 10).

One of the most simple, yet profound (and blessed) verses in this entire section is found in chapter 24 and verse 12. God is inviting Moses to come up to Mount Sinai to receive the infamous “tables of stone.” It is obviously a very significant piece of the entire puzzle concerning God’s dealing with man. The wording of verse 12, however, not only screams out the heart of that passage, but the very heart of God! Note that God DOES NOT say to Moses, “*Come up into the mount, and I will give thee tables of stone.*” What God says to Moses is, “Come up TO ME into the mount, and BE THERE: and I will give thee tables of stone...” God lets Moses know

that even more than giving him the incredibly significant tables of stone, what was important to His heart was that Moses come into His PRESENCE and just BE WITH HIM!

So often we relegate the Christian life to "DOING." God wants us to know that though there certainly are many, many important things that need to be done, what is vitally important to His heart is that we simply desire to BE with Him. Like He desires to BE with us!

As you continue to make your journey through the word of God, remember that what is in God's heart is not simply that you DO your assigned daily readings, but that every day you come up into His PRESENCE through the pages of His glorious Book to BE WITH HIM!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

- Through MOSES who delivers God's commands, consummates a blood sacrifice and communes with God for 40 days – Exodus 24:2, 3, 8, 18 (Hebrews 10:12; Mark 1:13)