

Exod 04-02-08b

Let's continue our worship this morning now as we examine the Word of God in Exodus chapter 21. We provided ourselves a little bit of context and viewpoint in our scripture reading from Philippians chapter 3 and from Timothy, which reminds us that this gives an idea of God's intention and God's jurisprudence, if you will, for the community. God is going to ensure the well-being and the continuity of the nation of Israel and the community is instructed to protect itself from corruption that springs up within.

That's what the intent of these are. There should be a reasonable amount of justice and as was rightly pointed out during the break, when we recognize the fact that we cannot expect there to be perfect equity and fairness and justice in this life, we are nevertheless promised by God that there are rewards and there are blessings that come to those who seek first the kingdom of God, who exercise faith and patience. That is the necessary qualification for inheriting in the kingdom and in the kingdom of the Father that is after the kingdom of the Son.

We comfort one another with these words that the Lord is going to return. There is going to be a balancing of the scales. Paul tells the afflicted saints, those who afflict you will be afflicted.

Well, many of them did not live to see that fulfilled, but there is a peace that passes understanding. There is an abundant life that is promised to us. And the great thing about it is that it is transcendent.

Our happiness does not depend on our circumstances. One of the ways that we assure that we have the viewpoint to appreciate that and to enjoy that is to disconnect ourselves from a need for perfect justice. Jesus pointed to this when he talked about turning the other cheek and going the second mile.

It is unjust to be slapped on the cheek. But if you turn the other also, you are demonstrating, you know, my happiness does not depend on how many times my cheek gets slapped or how many miles I have to unjustly carry someone else's burden. So, it does not matter to me if I am slapped on one cheek or two.

It does not matter to me if I carry the Roman soldier's burden one mile or two. I am not going to rise up in indignation because something unfair has happened to me. I have a transcendent happiness.

I have a hope and a confidence that gives me a prosperity and a level of blessing that does not depend on circumstances. And we have covered this before under our categories of subjectivity versus objectivity. What do I have my eyes on? If I am subjective, my eyes are either resting on myself, on other people or on things, on the details of this life.

If I am objective, I am seeing my life from God's perspective which is larger and much more inclusive. But there are promises and we should have that hope and confidence and that

happiness based on what God has said. We will not always be afflicted.

Jesus says in this world, you will have tribulation but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. When is the manifestation and the demonstration of Christ's victory over the world going to take place? At His return, at the inception of His kingdom.

And so, not to say, you know, abandon all hope ye who enter here. You go into Christian life and there is not going to be any justice for you. There is, but we do not look for it in the details and the circumstances of this life or the treatment that we receive at the hands of others.

We look at the treatment that we will receive in the hands of God. We are the sheep of His pasture. He does lead us beside still waters.

He does restore our soul. And a well-equipped and healthy soul finds its happiness unaffected. Even though we weep with those who weep, we mourn with those who mourn, and we rejoice with those who rejoice.

And we have levels and a spectrum of emotional response and of experience in this life. Yet, there is an underlying stable foundation of peace and of expectation that everything is in God's control. And there is a great new day approaching, and we wait for that with great hope.

Picking up our study now in chapter 21 of Exodus. Again, I just want to briefly, because this has been such a bone of contention in the pro-choice, pro-life debate over abortion. What's fascinating to me, by the way, and let me just sketch out if you're blissfully unaware of the contention over these verses 22 through 25.

Men fight, hurt a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely. Different translations have come out in different ways on this. Some of them say so that she has a miscarriage, and it's understood to be a miscarriage where the child is understood to have been born dead.

But there's no further injury, meaning that the woman is okay. The child was born dead, but the woman either does or does not suffer further injury. And so the pro-choice people say, look, even the law of God treats an unborn fetus differently than a living woman.

Her rights are protected under lex talionis. The justice for her is eye for an eye, tooth for tooth. But the unborn child, if he's just miscarried, well, you know, a little penalty that the husband incurs and so on.

Well, first of all, the normal word for a child being born is yatsai, comes forth. Or it is a form of the term child itself, yeled, which is used indiscriminately for infants and children. And so it says here in the plural, and we're not real sure why the plural is used here, did she have twins? Twins were quite common in the ancient world, as you can see from the Jacob Esau Perez episodes.

There are several sets of twins mentioned in scripture, and it was not all that uncommon. And this covers whether it is a child or children, whatever it may be. But her children come forth.

They are born, in other words. Well, now you evaluate the status of the child. If it is healthy, then there has been no further injury.

It was just an untimely or unexpected birth. But after the child or children have come forth, now you evaluate the situation. If there is harm beyond the unforeseen timing, you didn't have time to call the midwife.

I mean, it just, the woman was struck, and this produces this, the children come forth. Well, now you evaluate what is the situation. And both the child or children and the woman are covered under this, any further injury follows.

If no harm follows, then the shock and distress occasioned by this unforeseen birth is penalized as the husband in concert with the judges work out. But if harm follows, and you'll notice the word any is in italics, and in some of the others it says further harm. Well, there is no further or any.

You can just scratch it out. If harm follows. If injury follows.

If there is some detrimental aspect of this. Now think also about the nature of children in the ancient world. Children are a heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward.

The woman is to give birth, goes back to God talking to Eve in the garden. And when you come to the New Testament, and Paul is talking about Adam was formed first, then Eve. And nevertheless, she shall be delivered in childbearing if she continues in faith and love and hagiois, sanctification, interestingly of the triad of Christian virtues, it doesn't mention hope there.

It says the woman will be delivered in childbearing if she continues in faith and love and sanctification. But the point here is that this was a highly regarded and highly important function. Children were valued.

Israel was notable. Remember, they've just recently come out from Egypt, and they were so prolific. You think, well, this seems kind of like an odd and remote possibility that two men would be struggling and injure a pregnant woman.

Remember how prolific Israel is in these days. They reproduced at an astonishing rate. This is why Pharaoh got so nervous, because they were becoming more numerous than the Egyptians themselves.

This is what's happening in a lot of places in the Middle East, where you had an Eastern Orthodox Christianity that is conservative and tries to limit the size of a family, and then you have Islam that promotes unlimited births, and in a country like Lebanon that has had a Christian, quote-unquote, government disposed toward Western culture and things American and British and so on, and then you have Islam. Well, they're basically winning the war of philosophies by multiplication. They're just going to outnumber them.

This has happened in the United States in certain regions, where white settlers came and opened up a country and developed it and founded cities and things, and then you have whatever it may be, Asians or Mexicans or blacks or whoever have come in and have, by unrestricted multiplication, outnumbered the people who got there first and kind of built the thing, and people are all upset. Well, Israel is very prolific, and pregnant women, you almost literally can't swing a cat by the tail without hitting a pregnant woman, and so this was not an uncommon occurrence. You're in the marketplace, and two guys are haggling over something, and they come to words and come to blows.

Well, there might be half a dozen pregnant women in various stages of pregnancy in the marketplace, and it was highly likely. They're big. They're easy to hit.

Somebody's going to injure one. So it's not as uncommon as it might appear. So they hurt a woman with child.

If any harm follows, then you shall give, and then we have this eightfold statement of equity, life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Why this eightfold statement, and why here? Because this is the first statement of the eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth concept in Scripture. First of all, there is a sense of equity.

There is a sense of not only retribution, but also of compensation for loss that is necessary for the preservation of the community. We're going to see as we go forward that this idea prevents discord and an ongoing grudge bearing. If someone produces an injury to someone else, whether it is economic or physical, the law that God gives to Moses says you need to square this.

You need to balance the scales so that there is not an ongoing sense of feud between households or between clans or between families in Israel. Now we just got through saying you can't look for personal justice in the law of Moses. That's not what it is designed to do.

But it is designed to protect the community. And so to the extent that the interest of the community is involved, this is the idea behind the Avenger of Blood. Some family member, he may not have been personally involved, but he is the designated representative of his family or his clan or his group to go make right and balance the scale of this murder that took place.

It is the fabric of the community that is at issue. Because where there is schism and where there is division, there is danger. There is peril.

Even in the New Testament, you start out 1 Corinthians. Paul says, I hear that there is strife and division among you. It should not be so.

We are one in Christ, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. Do not let the sun go down in your anger. Do not bear a grudge.

If you do not forgive others, you yourself are not forgiven. This lex talionis, this eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, is to assuage and to compensate and to alleviate tensions and schisms in the community where one family says, you Clantons have killed one too many of us McCoys or whatever. And you have this ongoing family feud that is never resolved.

The law says, here is a way, and once you have done this, if the guy lost an eye, you take an eye or the payment equivalent to an eye, and now you've got no beef. So shut up. It's square.

You cannot come back with a grievance. It is to preserve the community. So the harm following, eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe, is these are different levels.

There is discrimination of the level of injury. And the compensation, the recompense, the justice should fit the crime. Punishment should fit the crime.

And there should be graduations. It's not if you committed a wrong, you die. Each of these is at a different level.

And ultimately in the law, there were monetary amounts assigned to each of these different levels. So you basically have sort of seven levels of compensation short of the ultimate penalty, which is you pay for this with your life. So that's in a nutshell why we have those here.

And, of course, seven is a number of completion or perfection. It is a combination of three, the perfect number of God, and four, which is the number of man. And when you combine those together, you get seven.

And so this is God's justice on earth for the community. To preserve the community, you assign these different levels. We have this now.

You have misdemeanors. You have felonies. You have different levels within those.

This is designed to instill caution in a master. He has got to learn self-control. Because even if he doesn't kill his servant, if he permanently disables him, one-eyed servants can be very difficult for him to be a good servant.

If he blinds him in one eye, he has done himself monetary damage. But he now has to let that servant go free. And that is a very big price to pay.

And this is preventative in nature. God doesn't say, well, you can strike your eye out any time you want. The whole idea is if you have to let him go free, you're going to be pretty careful.

And this is designed to instill self-control. And this is, by the way, a big part of all law. There's nothing like getting a moving violation ticket to make you a careful driver.

There's nothing like having the meter run out and have to pay \$25 to the city to make you really careful to put enough change in the parking meter. And to get back there, I think those things

have radio now. I think as soon as it clicks to zero, it sends off some kind of big signal because you can't be two minutes late in downtown Dallas without having to pay \$25 or \$35 for your meter running out.

And so it makes you careful. One little experience like that, whether it's you or someone that you observe, makes you careful. And this benefits the community.

It benefits the society that people are careful to exercise self-control. This is the great loss in our society. We promote loss of self-control.

The beer commercials and everything else is all about let's party and go out of control. They have a whole category of entertainment now, whether it's reality television or these late-night dating shows that are all how close to the edge can you go, how far afield, the thing with the Super Bowl entertainment. How much can we push the envelope? How far out can we go? We don't glorify self-control and restraint.

We glorify being out on the edge. And supposedly the desirable people are the ones who are just way out, no limits. I'll do anything.

You have to find a real far border that I won't cross. And this is supposedly desirable. This is what is glorified.

Not so in the society God mandates in Israel. Strike the eye of a male or female servant destroyed, he shall let him go free for the sake of his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his male or female servant, he shall let him go free for the sake of his tooth.

Now, verse 28, if an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten. But the owner of the ox shall be acquitted. But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to its owner, he has not kept it confined.

If we go back to the outline here that I gave you earlier on this legislation, I mentioned that, at least in my outline, it has 12 parts. The first part was about altars. Right after the Ten Commandments, we had four verses there on altars.

You make an altar of earth and stone, you don't raise your iron tool against it. And then that's followed in chapter 21, verse 11, regulations pertaining to servants. Well, then we began in 21-12 and following with things that are punishable by death.

So if you think about this, the first part, altars, what direction are you looking? You're looking up. When you have regulations concerning servants, which direction are you looking? You're looking down. Now you get to laws in the community that we've just covered about capital offenses for violence.

This is what you do to people at your own level, basically. If you lie in wait or if you accidentally

kill someone, here are the rules pertaining to that. And so then under that, in 18-27, we had physical injury of the active sense.

You have gone out of control and have injured someone. Here are the regulations for that. Now in this section, which is a subset of my fourth point here, the first point in this 12-point outline that covers all of this legislation, is altars, verses 22-26.

The second section that we studied was on servants. That was 21-11, looking down. The third is capital offenses, violent.

This is 21-12-17. Then beginning in 18, if men contend with each other, one strikes the other with a stone and he does not die, etc. This is physical injury due to an act that you perpetrate.

You're struggling, you're fighting, you get impassioned. And that's 18-27. Now we're starting in verse 28 with physical injury that is done, but it's passive.

This is liability legislation. You are liable for something that you didn't directly instigate or cause by your own actions. And this is going to be chapter 21, verses 28-36.

Physical injury in the passive sense. Physical injury for which you are liable. And that's going to, all of this, I put them both in the same point.

Physical injury, active and passive is 21-18-36. 18-27 is active, 28-36 is passive. So that's where we are.

Ox gores a man or woman to death. The ox is stoned. His flesh shall not be eaten.

Once again, a life for a life. In this case, the life of the ox. The ox is the guilty party.

Its flesh shall not be eaten because it is an accursed animal. The owner is acquitted. But if the ox has been known to do this, and there is negligence or apathy on the part of its owner, now the owner is going to incur some liability.

This ox, thrust with its horn in times past, has been made known to the owner. The owner didn't keep it confined, and it has killed a man or woman. Then the ox shall be stoned, and its owner shall also be put to death.

If you didn't keep your... In the modern day, what would this be? If you commit vehicular manslaughter, like this woman did with her husband that was stepping out with another gal, and so she found him and her coming out the hotel, and she took her car and ran over him, and then came around and ran over him again, and they had it on some kind of a video where she was going around running over the guy. Well, she's obviously used her vehicle as a murder weapon. Well, what if you have a slanted driveway, and you park your car there, and the brakes slip, and it rolls over somebody walking their dog on the sidewalk? Well, you would junk the car, shoot the car, and take the car to the junkyard.

The car is guilty of this manslaughter. But if you knew your brakes were faulty, and your car has rolled out in the street several times before, and this time it rolls over and kills someone, they would come get you and say, you should have done something about this problem car that has killed someone. You are negligent, and you are liable.

And in this case, because the ox gores someone, and you knew he was a goring type of ox, and you did nothing to restrain him, you pay with your life. It is all the same. You don't even get the city of refuge business here.

You are put to death because the ox is your proxy. The ox has malintent, and you are guilty for his malintent because you didn't rein him in. This is where you are held accountable.

Verse 30, If there is imposed on him a sum of money, then he shall pay it to redeem his life, whatever is imposed on him. He has a death penalty, but his life can be redeemed, in the same way that the firstborn owed their lives to God, but they were redeemed. You pay to the Levites, and then the firstborn can go free.

So, Whether it has gored a son or gored a daughter, according to the judgment, it shall be done to him. It doesn't matter if it's a man or a woman, if it's a son or daughter in Israel, the fine is the same. If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master 30 shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

So you get the idea that these 30 pieces of silver are the price for a servant. How many pieces of silver did Judas get for betraying the Lord? 30 pieces of silver? What type of form did Jesus take upon himself when he came to this earth? He took on himself the form of a servant. If a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, an ox or donkey falls in it, the owner of the pit shall make it good.

Restitution. He shall give money to the owner, the dead animal shall be his. So, he pays the owner for the ox, and he gets the dead ox.

Oh boy, what a prize. If one man's ox hurts another's so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the money from it. The dead ox they shall also divide.

If it was known that the ox tended to thrust in times past, its owner has not kept it confined. He shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall be his own. So, obviously, these are principles of fairness.

This is all in the horizontal plane. How do you deal with your neighbors? How can there be justice among neighbors? And the intent of it, obviously this doesn't cover every case. What if it wasn't an ox? What if it was a donkey that butted a man into a stone wall and gave him a concussion and he died? But there are principles here that are designed to preserve the integrity of the fabric of the community so that there are not these boiling, seething controversies and issues.

It is resolved, and you go your way, and don't bring it up. You will also notice that in no place have we seen any imprisonment. You will serve 30 days in jail for your... Imprisonment is not an option.

It's not a punishment. It's not even contemplated. Well, this brings us to chapter 22.

Now, if a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox, four sheep for a sheep. This is a place where we can see some of the difficulties in dealing with English instead of in Hebrew because the word for the ox that is stolen is not the same as the word for the oxen that are returned. By the way, what is the difference in a bull and an ox? It is the same as that between a stallion and a gelding.

Bulls don't reconcile themselves to pulling plows and pulling carts. They are too interested in other things. Oxen, however, can be controlled.

We'll plow. We'll pull carts. And unfortunately, our English translation tends to blur that distinction, but there are two separate words in Hebrew here for bull and for ox.

And here, the word that is translated oxen in the second case here means from the beefs or from the herd. He will restore. This could be any combination of beef cattle that come from the herd, and it could be any combination from the flock for the sheep that is stolen and slaughtered.

Any combination of four could be kids, could be goats, could be sheep. The word is used indiscriminately for all of those. If the thief is found breaking in and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed.

And this is assuming that it happens at night. Thieves operated in cover of darkness. If the sun has risen on him, there will be guilt for his bloodshed.

He should make full restitution. If he has nothing, he should be sold for his theft. If he is breaking in at night, and this is essentially the law here in Texas.

If somebody breaks into your house at night and you shoot them, you will not be charged with murder, manslaughter, or anything else. If somebody breaks into your house at night, you can shoot them, but not in daylight. Not if you can see them.

There is a difference because you don't know what the threat is in the darkness. And the guy basically forfeits all his rights in the darkness because you don't know what kind of mayhem he may be contemplating. In the daylight, if he is running out with your television set, well you know he is a thief and the penalty for theft is not death.

But the penalty for creeping in and nobody knows what your intent is, you will pay with your life for that. So if the sun has risen on him, there will be guilt if you shed his blood. He should make full restitution.

This is what any good justice system should endeavor to do is wring restitution out of the guilty party. I think prisoners, rather than wasting time trying to rehabilitate them, should be put to work. I like to see the guys in the orange suits out there picking up litter on the highway.

That is a good way to recompense the community for whatever havoc they have wrought. And if they can engage in the manufacture of license plates or anything else, if they can earn money in prison, it ought to be sent to the families of their victims or sent to their victims. There should be some form of restitution associated with criminals.

And if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. And so the penalty in Israel for grand theft was slavery. You get sold as a slave.

If the theft is found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or a sheep, he shall restore double. You steal one donkey, you better excrete another donkey and return two to the victim. So there is double.

This, by the way, when you go to the Zacchaeus story, and Zacchaeus says, If I have taken from any man, I will restore it fourfold. He is basically doubling what the law required. The law said restore double.

He says, I'll double the doubling. If I have taken anything that I should not have from you all in the course of my tax collecting, I will restore it fourfold. Which goes back to the sheep thing at the beginning of the chapter.

If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed and lets loose his animal and feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. You basically let the victim pick. That's how you make sure it's the best.

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. If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, it is stolen out of the man's house. If the thief is found, he shall pay double.

If the thief is not found, then the master of the house shall be brought to the judges to see whether he has put his hand into his neighbor's goods. Well, I don't know. Somebody broke in and stole your stuff.

Well, they will investigate to find out if you have, in fact, just defrauded the man. This is sort of a fraud type of thing. Much like an employee who cooks the company books and takes something for himself, fraud or embezzling is covered under this general principle.

If you can't figure out who stole it, then you go look at the man who had charge of it, and if you find out that he's the one that took it, then he owes double. If a man delivers to his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and it dies, is hurt or driven away, no one seeing it, an oath of the Lord shall be between them both that he has not put his hand into his

neighbor's goods. The owner of it shall accept that, and he shall not make it good.

You have to take the man's word. You make an inquiry. If you can't find the missing stock, it's an oath of the Lord.

You just have to take it on faith that the guy tells you, look, I don't know what happened to it. It just disappeared. I don't have it.

It's an oath of the Lord. The guy swears before the Lord that he's not responsible. You have to let it go.

But if in fact it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution under the preceding quantities. Four for one, five for one, double depending. If it is torn to pieces by a beast, he shall bring it as evidence.

He shall not make good what was torn. If a man borrows anything from his neighbor, it becomes injured or dies. The owner of it not being with it, he shall surely make it good.

If its owner was with it, he shall not make it good. If it was hired, it came for its hire. All of this is liability, injury, loss for things that are not a result of an action.

So this is property. We had physical injury in the preceding section. Now we have property damages.

This is still in the horizontal realm, whether it's damage, safe deposit or borrowing. We just saw borrowing in these last two sections. So that's our fifth category, legislation regarding property.

This last little bit here, 16 and 17, is seduction. If a man entices a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall surely pay the bride price for her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, which you could see as being likely, he shall pay money according to the bride price of virgins.

So he has to pay the bride price regardless. And it's basically up to the father whether the deflowered maiden becomes his wife or not. He can either let them get married or he can collect the dowry and say, you're not marrying my daughter.

Either way, the guy has to come up with the full bride price for a virgin. And that is all that is said on that subject. And you move then to a new section.

We've covered six points in my outline now. Altars, servants, capital offenses, physical injury, active and passive, and then property. Chapter 22, the first 15 verses there, is all about property.

Whether it's theft in the first four verses, damage in verses 5 and 6, safe deposit in verses 7 through 13, or borrowing in verses 14 and 15. That's all property. Then we have seduction in these two verses.

A man gets this gal. The father is going to determine he's going to pay the bride price either way. Wouldn't that slow down a lot of teenage interaction if the young man had to come up with a couple of thousand dollars for his lack of self-control or his design and malice of forethought in having his way with someone.

Well, that is point 6 there. 22, 16, and 17 is seduction. Now you can draw a line because we're going to have six more points and we're going to start again with capital offenses.

And that's where we're going to begin next time. But in this section, responsibility, accountability is what is taught here. There is responsibility in different areas.

Neighbor to neighbor. That's what this whole section is about. We had alters looking up.

We had servants looking down. And then all the rest of this up to this point has been how do you love your neighbor. This is detail.

This is just dealing with your neighbor. And loving your neighbor as yourself and restoring and having equity and maintaining harmony so that there is no rift and there is no schism was a responsibility that was legislated in Old Testament Israel. It is also a responsibility that is commanded to us.

We are to have no schism in the body. We are not to bear a grudge. We are not to have a sense of injustice within the household of faith, within the family of God, within the body of Christ.

And as we look at our interrelationships with our fellow believers and with people in general, this section of Scripture should remind us that we may take a hit. We may be wronged and there isn't recompense. There isn't justice.

We are slapped on the cheek. Jesus says, turn the other. We are told to go a mile that we shouldn't have to go.

He says, keep on going if you need to. Better to be wronged, Paul tells the Corinthians, than to take it before unbelievers, to engage in the ways of the world and try to get worldly justice. Leave it in the Lord's hands, just as the Israelites had to do.

I may just have to take an oath of the Lord here and let this thing go. I have strong suspicions that you did something sneaky. You sold my animal to a passing caravan.

That's why we can't prove it. But if you give me an oath, I have to leave it in the Lord's hands. There is a level of responsibility and opportunity that we have for securing our rights and our property and our freedom.

And then there is a place where on that seventh day we turn it over to the Lord and rest in His justice. You have to be able to turn it loose. Are we really so occupied with the things of this world and with our possessions that our happiness depends on it and we can't move forward? There are people for whom this is the case.

We don't want to be in that number. We have to learn. Part of self-control is turning loose and letting God handle it.

That's the picture that we have in this section of Scripture. Well, we'll pick up next time with this new set of capital offenses in chapter 22, verse 18 and following. Father, thank You for the model and the example that You give us in the Old Testament for how we can live our lives as individuals in the New Testament age.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will help us to evaluate our lives, our thoughts and decisions, and the circumstances we find ourselves in so that we do rest in Your perfect justice and Your perfect will for us and abide in hope and in expectation of the return of our Lord. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.