

In order to understand Exodus 21:24, we have to read (once again), at least the whole chapter.

When you dive into Exodus 21, you see that it is dealing with slavery and servants.

If you dive into it, and what the definition was in that time, you see that it is not the “slavery” that we think is it. These people were not forced into slavery and there was no kidnapping involved. When you look at verse 16, you see this:

**Ex 21:16 “Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper’s possession.”**

So the slavery form that we know in our western society, is a whole other form. When you also look at Deuteronomy 23, you see in verse 15, 16 the following:

**“You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him.**

If the person was not treated correctly, he was free to escape and find another master.

The employment in part one, was max 7 years and after that, they were debt free and free to go.

**2: If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything.**

The thing to remember is that “filing for bankruptcy” did not exist back then. If we make debts today, and they go off the rails, we can file for it, but not back then. Back in those days the only way out of financial HUGE troubles, was to “sell” yourself to your debtor. When you did that, he had to treat you like his own family, and even had to pay taxes to the government as you were one of his family.

But, of course, people abused the situation (do we ever learn?), so God made rules. And, once again, if you do not behave, and do not make good rules and keep them, God will make rules and put strict restrictions on you.

So that is what’s Exodus 21 is all about. The “owners” did not behave, so God made rules and made it very clear how we should treat each other.

*It is not about: you treat me wrong, so ill go after you. It is about: treat each other right, as you would treat yourself.* What would you say when somebody did X to you, and he is allowed, by law to do the same to you? Would you still abuse that person? Of course not. That would be foolish.

That is the lesson that does still apply to us today.

What can I say about how this servant / slave / master thing was back in those days? Nothing. I was not there, its not my culture, it was theirs. Nothing for me to say about it, although I am glad I was not born back in those days... Jesus was not born back then, did no die for our sins... so we had to live by the law back then, and when you look at Exodus 21... I am glad I didn’t live back then.

But, in all honesty, is it different today? Generally speaking: Our bosses still pay late, underpay, “forget” to pay, treat you like dirt, or don’t pay taxes (so your health insurance and things like that are taken care off) although God is very clear that we should (Romans 13:1-6). And they should not behave like that.

The bible is very clear about it in this chapter in Exodus, treat another person like you should be treated. If they do not, it's a sin and God will not be happy about it... to say the least. The consequences for that are huge! (Romans 12:19)

**Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.**

So if you are an employer, behave and follow Gods rules. The consequences are HUGE when you do not.

If you are an employee, and you see your employer do the things that are written above, Deuteronomy 23:15 and 16 are still applicable today.

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