

THE LAWS OF THE BIBLE

Forms of Government, Citizenship Under the Theocracy, Laws of the Theocracy, Criminal Laws, Laws Pertaining to Domestic Relations, Estates — Descent and Distribution Laws, Social Security and Welfare Laws, Laws Pertaining to Contracts, Religious Laws, Laws Pertaining to Legal Procedure, Tort Laws, Laws of Sanitation and Cleanliness, Laws Pertaining to Animals, Laws Concerning Interest and Loans

I. FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

A. Patriarchal. The family being the unit of life, the father as head of the family was the authoritative Ruler: Judg. 11:29-40; Job 1:5

B. Theocracy. God was the direct ruler of His people: Ex. 19:3-8

C. Government by judges. The people forgot God. God chastised them by selling them into slavery to their enemies. Upon repentance God raised up military chieftains as deliverers: Judg. 2:13-18

D. Monarchy. This was begun by the coronation of Saul, reached its height in David and Solomon, and ended with the Babylonian captivity: I Sam. 10:24

II. CITIZENSHIP UNDER THE THEOCRACY

A. Israelites. Those of Israel who ratified the covenant of Sinai, and later their children, were entitled to the rights of citizenship: Ex. 19:5-8; Deut. 6:1-9

B. Moabites and Ammonites excluded: Deut. 23:3

C. Edomites and Egyptians in the third generation were eligible: Deut. 23:7, 8

III. LAWS OF THE THEOCRACY

A. Pertaining to citizenship

1. Law applied equally to strangers as to natives: Lev. 24:22; Num. 15:22-30

2. Jew not to marry a stranger: Gen. 34:14

3. Strangers could own slaves: Lev. 25:47-55

B. Pertaining to slavery

1. Slaves obtained

- a. Captured in war: Num. 31:7-11
- b. Inherited: Lev. 25:45-46
- c. Bought: Ex. 21:2
- d. Sold for debt or theft: Ex. 22:3; Deut. 15:12

2. How to treat slaves

- a. Israelites could be redeemed from slavery: Lev. 25:47-55
- b. Jewish slaves to be set free in Year of Jubilee: Lev. 25:39-41
- c. Regarded as part of owner's household and possession: Gen. 12:16; Ex. 20:17
- d. Could be struck by master: Ex. 21:20, 21
- e. Fugitive not to be returned: Deut. 23:15, 16; I Sam. 30:15
- f. Freed if ill-treated: Ex. 21:26, 27
- g. To enjoy the Sabbath: Ex. 20:10

- C. Pertaining to taxation

1. Census taken: Luke 2:1-3
2. Purpose of taxes
 - a. Valuation of persons: Lev. 27:1-13
 - b. Temple service: Ex. 30:11-16; II Chr. 24:6, 9
 - c. Taxes: Matt. 22:15-21; Rom. 13:6, 7
3. Amount of taxes: I Sam. 8:10-18
4. Priests and attendants exempt: Ezra 7:24

- D. Military laws

1. Age of soldiers: Num. 1:2, 3, 26:2
2. Selective draft: Num. 31:3-7

3. Exemption from service

a. Levites: Num. 1:49

b. Certain individuals: Deut. 20:5-7

c. Fainthearted: Deut. 20:8

4. Cleanliness in camp: Num. 31:19, 20; Deut. 23:9-14

5. Regulations in battle

a. Notice to be given: Deut. 20:10, 11

b. Fruit trees spared: Deut. 20:19, 20

c. Treatment of captives: Num. 21:2, 3, 35, 31:17, 18; Deut. 20:14-18; Josh. 11:14

d. Plunder: Deut. 20:14

e. Indemnity: II Kings 3:4

IV. CRIMINAL LAWS

A. Crimes against the public

1. Bribery: Ex. 23:8; Deut. 16:19; Prov. 17:23

2. Contempt for the law: Num. 15:30; Deut. 6:16, 17

Penalty: Deut. 17:12, 13

3. Perjury: Ex. 20:16; Lev. 19:12

Penalty: Deut. 19:16-20

4. Perverting or obstructing justice: Ex. 23:1, 2, 6; Lev. 19:15; Ps. 82:2

Penalty: Deut. 16:19, 20

5. Conspiracy: II Sam. 15:10-12

B. Crimes of immoral acts

1. Adultery: Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18

Penalty: Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22-25

2. Rape: Deut. 22:25, 26

Penalty: Deut. 22:25-29

3. Prostitution: Deut. 23:17

Penalty: Lev 19:29, 21:9

4. Seduction: Ex. 22:16, 17

Penalty: Deut. 22:28, 29

5. Incest: Lev. 18:6-18; Deut. 22:30

Penalty: Lev. 20:11-21

6. Sodomy: Lev. 18:22, 23; Deut. 23:17

Penalty: Ex. 22:19; Lev 20:13, 15, 16

C. Crimes against persons

1. Murder: Ex. 20:13

Penalty: Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:12

2. Manslaughter: Ex. 21:12-14; Josh. 20:3-6

Penalty: Num. 35:11, 22-28

3. Assault: Ex. 21:18-26

Penalty: Ex. 21:19-27; Lev. 24:19, 20

4. Kidnapping: Ex. 21:16; Deut. 24:7

5. Slander: Lev. 19:16

D. Crimes against property

1. Stealing: Ex. 20:15, 22:1-12; Deut. 23:24, 25

2. Arson: Ex. 22:6

3. Moving a landmark: Deut. 19:14

V. LAWS PERTAINING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS

A. Marriage

1. Ordained by God: Gen. 1:27, 28, 2:18, 24
2. Within the tribe: Num. 36:6
3. Polygamy forbidden: 1 Cor. 7:2; I Tim. 3:2 (sic.)
4. Marriage forbidden with:
 - a. Stepmother: Lev. 18:8, 20:11
 - b. Aliens: Ex. 34:13-17; Deut. 7:1-3
 - c. Sister: Lev. 20:17
 - d. Aunt: Lev. 20:19
 - e. Grandchild: Lev. 18:10
 - f. Daughter-in-law: Lev 18:15
5. Divorce: Lev. 21:7, 22:13; Is. 50:1; I Cor. 7:10, 11
 - a. Not to remarry woman divorced by another man: Deut. 24:1-4
 - b. For committing adultery: Jer 3:8

B. Parent and child

1. Father has authority over child: Num. 30:3-5
2. Father to arrange marriage: Gen. 24:2-4
3. Parents to educate: Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4
4. Parents to discipline: Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 22:15
5. Children to honor parents: Ex. 20:12, 21:15
6. Children to be regarded as gift of God: Gen. 33:5, 48:9; Josh. 24:3
7. Penalty for children who dishonor parents: Lev 20:9; Deut. 21:18-21

VI. ESTATES -- DESCENT AND DISTRIBUTION LAWS

A. Inheritance

1. Sons inherit father's estate: Gen. 21:10-13; I Chr. 5:1
2. Double portion to firstborn: Deut. 21:15-17
3. Wife not heir, but descends with property to next of kin: Ruth 4:1-12
4. Daughters heirs when no sons: Num. 27:8, 9
5. When no sons or daughters, inheritance to nearest relative Num. 27:9-11

B. Real property titles

1. Real estate

- a. Land divided among tribes: Num. 26:52-56; Josh. 14:5
- b. Not transferable: Num. 36:6-9
- c. Not permanently sold: Lev. 25:23-28
- d. Value of land according to years after Jubilee: Lev. 25:15, 16
- e. Release of land: Lev. 25:8-34
- f. Mode of transfer

(1) Deed made: Jer. 32:9-14

(2) Taking off sandal: Ruth 4:3-11

(3) Deed delivered in presence of witnesses: Jer. 32:10, 12

(4) Deed recorded: Jer. 32:14

2. Personal property (All property which is moveable, as against real property such as houses and lands)

a. Sale recognized: Lev. 25:14

b. Pledges of:

(1) Children given as: II Kings 4:1-7

- (2) Upper and lower millstone prohibited: Deut. 24:6
- (3) Not retained over night: Ex. 22:26, 27; Deut. 24:13
- (4) Voluntary: Deut. 24:10, 11

VII. SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE LAWS

- A. Widows and orphans: Ex. 22:22, 23; Deut. 14:28, 29; Acts 6:1-4; I Tim. 5:3-16
 - 1. Widow to marry nearest relative: Deut. 25:5-10
 - 2. Widow and orphans not to be oppressed: Zech. 7:9-12; Mal. 3:5
- B. Neighbors: Lev. 19:13
- C. The poor: Ex. 22:25-27; Lev. 19:9, 10; Deut. 15:7-11; Luke 3:11, 14:13, 14
- D. Strangers or aliens: Lev. 19:33, 34; Deut. 24:19-22; Zech. 7:9-12
- E. Poor and needy: Deut. 24:14-15
- F. Servants: Deut. 24:14-15
- G. Handicapped
 - 1. Blind: Lev. 19:14; Deut. 27:18; Luke 14:13, 14
 - 2. Deaf: Lev. 19:14
 - 3. Lame: Luke 14:12-14

VIII. LAWS PERTAINING TO CONTRACTS

- A. Debts: Ex. 22:25; Deut. 15:1-3; Neh. 5:10, 11
- B. With neighbors: Deut. 15:1-3
- C. With foreigners: Deut. 15:1-3
- D. Interest: Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35-37; Deut. 23:19, 20; Ezek. 18:10-13
- E. Loans: Ex. 22:25; Deut. 23:19, 20; II Kings 4:1-7; Neh. 5:2-5

F. Mortgages: Neh. 5:2-5

G. Pledges: (See VI. B. 2)

H. Sales: Lev. 25:14

I. Sales of Land: Lev. 25:23-28; Ruth 4:3-11; Jer. 32:9-14

J. Of servitude: Ex. 21:2-4; Deut. 15:12

K. Sureties: Prov. 6:1, 2, 17:18

IX. RELIGIOUS LAWS

A. Clean and unclean meat: Lev. 11:2-31; Deut. 14:3-21

B. Forbidden foods

1. Fat and blood: Lev. 17:10-14

2. Flesh torn by beasts: Ex. 22:31

3. Fruit of young trees: Lev. 19:23-25

C. Sacred obligations

1. Firstborn: Ex. 34:19, 20

2. Firstfruits: Ex. 34:26; Deut. 18:4

3. Tithes: Gen. 14:19, 20; Lev. 27:30-33; II Chr. 31:4-12; Mal. 3:8-11; Matt. 23:23

4. Atonement money: Ex. 30:12-16

5. Freewill offering: Lev. 22:17-20; Num. 15:1-4

D. Sacred calendar

1. Sabbath: Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 16:23; Lev. 23:3; Num. 28:9, 10; Deut. 5:12-15; Neh. 10:31; Ezek. 46:3

a. Punishment for not keeping: Num. 15:32-36

b. Made for man: Mark 2:23-28

c. Healing on the Sabbath: Luke 13:14-17, 14:3-5; John 5:8-16

2. Passover: Ex. 12:1-14; Deut. 16:1-8; Ezek. 45:21, 24; Luke 22:7-18

3. Feast of Unleavened Bread: Ex. 34:18

4. Feast of Weeks: Deut. 16:9-11

5. Feast of Tabernacles: Lev. 23:33-44; Num. 29:12-40; Deut. 16:13-17

6. Sabbatical (seventh) Year: Ex. 21:2-6, 23:10, 11; Lev. 25:1-7; Deut. 15:1-14; II Chr. 36:21; Neh. 10:31

7. Day of Atonement: Lev. 23:26-32

E. Crimes against God

1. Worship of false gods: Ex. 20:1-5

Penalty: Ex. 22:20

2. Spiritualism: Lev. 20:27

Penalty: Ex. 22:18

3. Blasphemy: Lev. 24:16; Deut. 5:11

Penalty: Lev 24:16

X. LAWS PERTAINING TO LEGAL PROCEDURE

A. Judges appointed: Ex. 18:13-26; II Chr. 19:4-11

1. Moses, first judge: Ex. 18:13-27

2. Priests judge in small matters: Ex. 18:22

3. King as judge: I Kings 7:1-7

B. Submission of cases

1. Ordinary cases submitted to judges: Deut. 25:1, 2

2. Exceptional cases taken to Levitical priest for verdict: Deut. 17:8-11

3. Extreme cases submitted to the LORD for decision: Num. 5:11-31; Deut. 21:1-9

4. Judges must not pervert justice: Ex. 23:6-8

5. Bribery forbidden: Deut. 16:18-20

C. Where courts were held

1. At gate of city: Deut. 21:19

2. In Hall of judgment: I Kings 7:7

D. Judgments

1. Regarded as from God: Deut. 1:17

2. Righteous to be justified and wicked condemned: Deut. 25:1

3. Sentence to be executed Deut. 25:2, 3

E. Appeals

1. To Moses: Ex. 18:26

2. To priests: Deut. 17:8-11

3. To the king: I Kings 3:16-27

F. Damages

1. For disfiguring a person: Lev. 24:19, 20

2. For stealing: Ex. 22:4, 5

3. Kindling a fire which destroys property: Ex. 22:6

4. Breach of trust: Lev. 6:1-5

5. Killing an animal: Ex. 21:35, 36; Lev. 24:18, 21

6. Loss of animal falling into pit: Ex. 21:33, 34

7. Loss of borrowed property: Ex. 22:14

G. Methods of punishment

1. Infliction in kind: Gen. 9:6; Lev 24:19, 20

2. Burning: Lev. 20:14

3. Mutilation: Deut 25:11,12

4. Hanging: Deut. 21:22, 23
5. Stoning: Lev. 24:16
6. Beating: Deut. 25:2, 3
7. Excommunication: Ezra 10:8
8. Imprisonment: Ezra 7:26
9. Compensation for damages: Ex. 21:19, 32, 36
10. Restitution for stolen or borrowed property: Ex. 22:12, 14, 15

H. Method of protection

1. Cities of refuge appointed: Num. 35:6-15
2. Protection till trial could be held: Num. 35:12
3. Murderer unprotected Num. 35:30, 31
4. Unintentional manslayer remained in city of refuge till death of high priest: Josh. 20:1-6

XI. TORT LAWS

- A. Assault: Ex. 21:18, 19
- B. Compensation: Ex. 21:18, 19, 32
- C. Damage by animals: Ex. 21:32
- D. Damage by fire: Ex. 22:6
- E. Injury to animals: Ex. 21:33-36; Lev. 24:18, 21
- F. Loss of borrowed property: Ex. 22:14, 15
- G. Personal injury: Lev. 24:19, 20
- H. Rights of strangers: Lev. 24:22

XII. LAWS OF SANITATION AND CLEANLINESS

- A. Cleansing the woman after childbirth: Lev. 12:1-8
- B. Test for leprosy: Lev. 13:1-59
- C. Cleansing of the leper's house: Lev. 14:33-57
- D. Cleansing of males with discharge: Lev. 15:1-15
- E. Laws concerning the woman during menstruation: Lev. 15:24-33

XIII. LAWS PERTAINING TO ANIMALS

- A. Beasts of burden: Ex. 23:12; Deut. 25:4
- B. Beasts of the field: Ex. 23:11
- C. Mother and young: Lev. 22:28; Deut. 22:6, 7
- D. Enemy's animals: Ex. 23:4, 5; Deut. 22:4

XIV. LAWS CONCERNING INTEREST AND LOANS

Interest on money was called usury in biblical times. (Now usury means excessive interest.)

- A. Taking of interest forbidden among Jews: Ex. 22:25; Deut. 23:19, 20

The money was borrowed for relief of distress.

- B. Allowed to be taken from foreigners: Deut. 23:20

Money was borrowed by foreigner to develop trade.

- C. Property returned without interest: Neh. 5:11-13
- D. Differing weights and measures forbidden: Deut. 25:13-16

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