



EXODUS 21

IN 5 MINUTES

When:

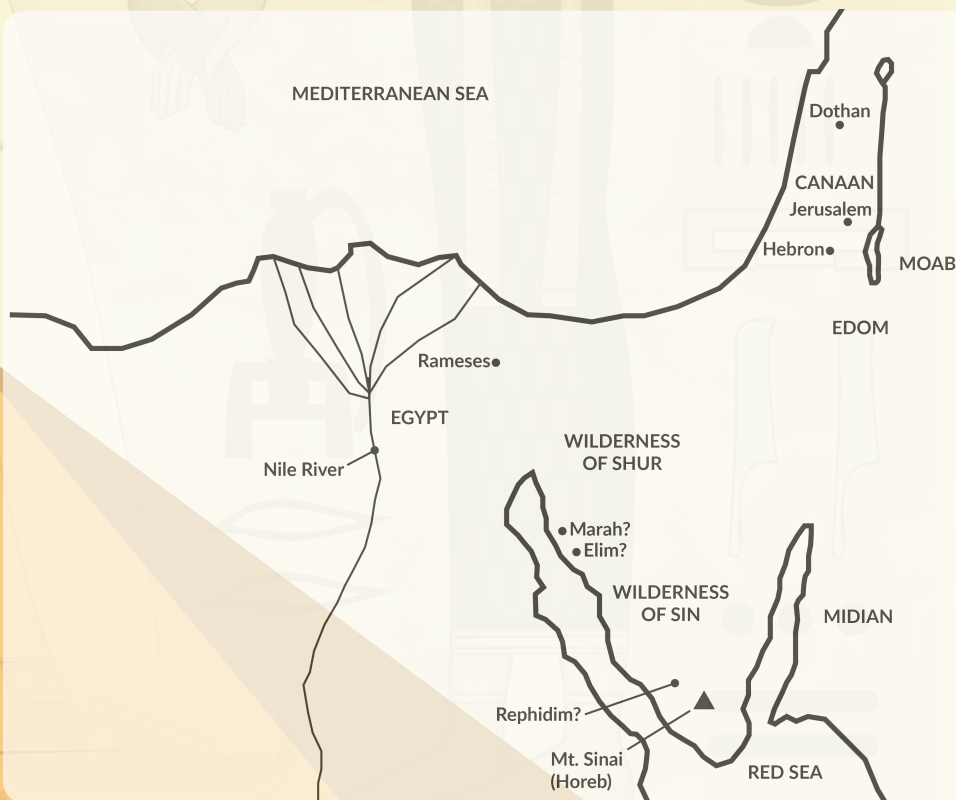
- God delivered the Israelites from slavery in approximately 1491 B.C.
- The events of Exodus 21 took place 3 months after the Hebrews left Egypt (19:1).

Characters:

- **God** – The Lord descended on Mount Sinai in chapter 19. In Exodus 21, God spoke with Moses on the mountain and gave him His law for the nation of Israel.
- **Moses** – A Hebrew who grew up in the house of Pharaoh. He fled Egypt in Exodus 2 and went to live in Midian. God called him back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from slavery.

Where:

- This conversation between God and Moses happened on Mount Sinai.



Outline:

- THE RIGHTS OF SLAVES AND SLAVE OWNERS (21:1-11):
 - + Hebrew slaves were to serve their masters six years and then given their freedom.
 - + If a slave loved his master and wanted to continue working for him after 6 years, the master was to pierce the slave's ear at the door of the house and the slave would remain in the master's service for life.
 - + If an Israelite man bought a female slave, seemingly with the intention of marrying her, and she displeased him, he was to allow her to be redeemed by another Hebrew man, but she was not to be sold to a foreigner.
 - + If he bought the slave girl for his son, he was to treat her as a daughter.
 - + If a man married a slave girl and then married another wife, he wasn't to treat his first wife poorly or neglect her.
 - + If he refused to keep these conditions the woman was to be set free.
- LAWS PERTAINING TO VIOLENCE AND ABUSE (21:12-32):
 - + These verses contain God's laws for how the Israelites were to deal with violent crimes, accidental harm done to another person, and violence done by animals.
 - + God laid out the judicial consequences for those who murdered, accidentally killed someone, those who struck or cursed their parents, masters who hit their slaves, men who injured one another in a fight, men who struck pregnant women, and animal owners whose animals harmed other people.
 - + In some cases, the punishments varied depending on the extent of the victim's injuries.
- LAWS REGARDING RESTITUTION FOR ANIMALS (21:33-36):
 - + If a man dug a pit and didn't cover it, and an animal fell into the pit and died, the man who dug the pit was required to pay the owner for the animal.
 - + If one man's ox killed another man's ox, the live ox was to be sold and the money divided between the two men.
 - + If the ox was accustomed to goring other oxen, the man who owned the violent ox was required to pay full price for the ox his ox killed.

Application:

- This chapter shows that God values life inside the womb as much as life outside the womb.
- Verse 21:22-23 prescribe the punishment for a man who hit a pregnant woman and caused her to give birth prematurely.
- If the child was born without "harm," the violator would only pay a fine, but if the child died, the violator was killed, "life for life."
- Notice, if a man caused a premature baby to die, his punishment was the same as if he murdered a person.
- There is no question that destroying the life of an unborn baby is against the will of God.

