

The Year of Expectation

“Now while the people were *in a state of* **“EXPECTATION”** and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, John answered and said to them all, “As for me, **I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”** John 3:15



This Year is “a Call” to Approach the year, and each day this year, with these Five View Points:

1. **Repent** (stop doing it our way and start doing it God’s way)
2. **Expect the Unexpected** (outside of our own natural understanding)
3. **Be Baptized** (physically, spiritually, emotionally *or* **Becoming Born Again** (“He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” Mark 16:16), **Becoming a New Man/Woman** (“Put on the new self (man)” Ephesians 4:4), **With the Outlook of a New Beginning** (“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” 2 Corinthians 5:17))
4. **With God’s Perspective and Not Man’s, and finally**
5. **Remembering those who have gone before us, in Faith.**

- The Ministry of John the Baptist – John the Baptist Prepares the Way

Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:2-8 and Luke 3:1-18

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible,
authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: “Follow Me: A Message from God”, a Journey with Jesus)

AD 27, October

... the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance* for the forgiveness of sins; saying, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” For this is the one referred to by Isaiah the prophet, saying, “BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ‘MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. EVERY RAVINE SHALL BE FILLED UP, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW; AND THE CROOKED SHALL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.” (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt about his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey[†]. Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan; and they were being baptized by him in the **Jordan River**[‡], as they confessed their sins. But when he saw many of the **Pharisees and Sadducees**[§] coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you, that God is able from **these stones**[¶] to raise up children to Abraham. And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, “Then what shall we do?” And he would answer and say to them, “Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise” . . . Now while the people were in a state of **expectation** and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, John answered and said to them all, “As for me, **I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.** And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people.

* **Repentance:** Stop doing it your way and start doing it God’s way.

† **Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt about his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey** (Mt 3:4, Mk 1:6, Lk 3:2-3) The Jews also knew several other things about Elijah: what he looked like, the area that he had last been seen in, that he had gone through the parted waters and that he had not died, but simply went to be with God. So when John the Baptist appeared dressed the same way as Elijah, in the same area and was baptizing people (**parting the waters ... separating them from their former lives.**) they naturally asked if he was Elijah, the prophet (*Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet . . .* Malachi 4:5-6). They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” (John 1:21) However, Jesus said of him, “If you are willing to accept it, **John himself is Elijah who was to come.** He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” (Matthew 11:14-15)

‡ **Mikveh/Baptism/Jordan River:** Most forms of ritual impurity can be purified through immersion in any natural collection of water. However, some impurities, require “living water”, such as springs or groundwater wells. The existence of a mikveh is considered so important that a Jewish community is required to construct a mikveh even before building a synagogue (ex. Leviticus 16:4, 23-28, Exodus 14 and Deuteronomy 17 (crossing of the Red Sea), and Joshua 3-4 (crossing of the Jordan River)).

§ “Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples)” **John 4:1-2**

¶ In recent years, some progressive Jews have also begun to use mikveh to mark various milestones, such as a graduation, a bar or bat mitzvah or an important birthday, and to signify a new start after pain or loss. For example, immersion can mark the completion of a year of bereavement, or recovery from divorce, rape, abuse, or life-threatening illness. Often **new prayers** are composed to accompany these new rituals.

* **The Sadducees** (meaning “The Righteous”) associated themselves with the priesthood. They tended to accentuate man’s “free will”, whose power and their influence came through politics, while **the Pharisees** (meaning “Separated” from the common people to the Law of Moses), whose power and influence came from religion, accentuated man’s “predestination.” Though both parties no longer exist, we might consider the ultra-orthodox Jews of today as being closely associated with the Pharisees.

* **These stones.** John was baptizing at Bethany beyond Jordan, the place where the Israelites crossed the Jordan River when Joshua (Jesus, in English) led the people into the Promised Land some 1,450 years earlier. These stones refer to the twelve memorial stones, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, left in the midst of the Jordan River at this spot. (Refer to Joshua chapter 4 and especially verse 9.)

- The Baptism of Jesus -
Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11 and Luke 3:21-22

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible,
authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: “Follow Me: A Message from God”, a Journey with Jesus)

Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” But Jesus answering said to him, **“Permit it at this time”**; for in this way it is fitting **for us to fulfill” all righteousness.** Then he permitted Him. And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, *“Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased.”*

* **Fulfill** - to be obeyed as it should be (ex. Matthew 3:13-15, “Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.”¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented.”).

* **Permit it at this time.** Although sinless, Jesus was baptized in water for the repentance of sins:

1. To fulfill prophecy.
2. To establish a pattern of righteousness.
3. Priests were washed daily in the bronze laver before doing any work in the temple. (Jesus is our High Priest.)

Like the Story in 2 Kings 2:8-15, we are provided a complete picture of Baptism:

⁸Then Elijah took his cloak (mantle) and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground. ⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.” ¹⁰And he said, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.” ¹¹And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. . . . ¹³And he took up the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴Then **he took the cloak (mantle) of Elijah** that had fallen from him and struck the water, **saying, “Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?”** And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over,” **2 Kings 2:8-15**

After Elisha put on the mantle he walked back to the Jordan River and struck the waters, as he called upon God. The waters parted and he walked back through them to the other side. **Providing us with this “complete” picture of baptism:**

- **Elisha went through the waters the first time with Elijah as an ungifted ordinary man.**
- **But when he came back through by himself he was supernaturally equipped to do the work of the ministry.**

What many Christians fail to realize is they are supposed to pick up their **mantle** (Christ’s glory - the Holy Spirit) before they come back up out of the water. They do this by faith, believing they have received what the Lord promised them. And of course they are to put it on just as the Scripture says. ***Put on the new self (man), which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (Ephesians 4:24)***

The Purpose of Baptism is not Cleansing, but Purifying, making something that is Unholy, Holy, pure.

When did Elisha begin his ministry? **After his baptism.**

When did Jesus begin his ministry? **After his baptism.**

This Week’s Reading

Mishpatim (Laws)

Exodus 21:1–24:18; Jeremiah 34:8–22, 33:25–26; Colossians 3:1–25

“These are the ordinances [mishpatim מִשְׁפָּטִים] that you are to set before them.” Exodus 21:1

In last week’s portion of Scripture, Israel received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai.

This week, God gives specific legislation—laws called **mishpatim**, which means judgments. These are intended to guide the daily lives of His holy nation in justice and righteousness.

In total, the Reading of the “Laws” (Mishpatim) contains 53 **mitzvot** (commands) 23 imperative commandments and 30 prohibitions.

This series of laws, also called “The Covenant Code” by some Bible scholars, specify penalties for various violent crimes such as murder, kidnapping, and assault. Pre-meditated murder, kidnapping, and striking or even cursing a parent all carry the death penalty.

“And he who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.” Exodus 21:17

Laws were also given regarding how to make reparation for assault and injuries caused by animals, as well as damage to crops or livestock. They prohibit seduction of virgins, the practice of sorcery, bestiality, idolatry, and mistreating the disadvantaged of society.

Infractions of these laws often carry the severest of penalties—death by stoning—since God wanted to keep peace and order within the camp.

But it is more than that. **God has genuine concern for justice and the well-being of the individual.**

For instance, if a widow or fatherless child is to cry out to God because of someone’s ill treatment of them, God promises He will pour out His fierce wrath upon their oppressor and kill them so that their wives would be widows and their children fatherless (*Exodus 22:22–24*).

G-d promises to bring the people of Israel to the Holy Land and warns them against assuming the pagan ways of its current inhabitants.

The people of Israel proclaim, “We will do and we will hear” all that G-d commands us. Leaving Aaron and Hur in charge in the Israelite camp, Moses ascends Mount Sinai and remains there for forty days and forty nights to receive the Torah from G-d.

Following the revelation at Sinai, at which the people of Israel committed themselves to uphold the Torah and received the Ten Commandments, G-d proceeds to communicate to Moses the rest of the mitzvot (“commandments”) of the Torah. The greater part of the Parshah of Mishpatim consists of this communication, containing 53 of the 613 mitzvot.

(Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel)

Let’s Review the Conclusion of Last Week’s Reading, “The Ten Commandments”:

Exodus 20:1-2

The Ten Commandments

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying, ² “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

I AM G-D YOUR G-D, WHO HAS BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT (20:2)

Would it not have been more appropriate for G-d to say, “I am G-d... who created the heavens and the earth”?

But G-d the creator is the G-d that Israel shares with the rest of creation. At Sinai, G-d did not speak to us as the author of nature, but as the executor of the miraculous Exodus. **For at Sinai we forged a covenant with G-d in which we pledged to surpass all bounds of nature and convention in our commitment to Him, and He pledged to supercede all laws of nature and convention in His providence over us.**

(The Chassidic Masters)

Exodus 20:3-12

The Ten Commandments

³ “You shall have no other gods before^[a] me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands^[b] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

Exodus 20:12-18

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder;
and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you **(the Spirit of the Law)** . . . **Matthew 5**

¹³ “You shall not murder.

¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid^[i] and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.”

AND MOSES DREW NEAR TO THE THICK DARKNESS WHERE G-D WAS (20:18)

There are three types of darkness: the “heavy darkness” of the Covenant Between the Pieces (Genesis 15:17); the “tangible darkness” of the ninth plague in Egypt (Exodus 10:22); and the “thick darkness” at the giving of the Torah.

(Rabbeinu Bechayei)

Meeting with God at the Foot of the Mountain

Standing at the foot of the mountain on the third day, the people of Israel met with God, as He descended with thunder, lightening, thick clouds, and the loud sound of the **shofar** (ram’s horn).

The whole mountain was covered with smoke, since God came with fire, as it is written, “The Lord is a consuming fire.” (*Deuteronomy 4:24*)

It was such a fearsome sight that the people trembled and told Moses,

“You, speak with us, and we will listen. But don’t let God speak with us, or we will die.” (*Exodus 20:19 [16]*)

Exodus 20:20-23

²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.” ²¹ The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Laws About Altars

²² And the Lord said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: ‘You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. ²³ You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold.’

Exodus 20:24

²⁴ An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. **In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless (more of – be fruitful and multiply – an opening for more) you.**

Keeping His commandments is how we show our love for God. His commandments provide a guide for a healthy, happy, productive, and harmonious life in relationship with God and with other people.

“For this is love for God, to keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” (1 John 5:3)

Jesus has not set us free from sin so that we can live lawless lives. The Word of God even warns that our prayers may not be heard if we are walking in blatant disobedience to God’s laws.

“One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.” (*Proverbs 28:9*)

The law of God guards our relationships. The first tablet containing the first five of the Ten Commandments deals with our relationship to God. The second set of five commandments deals with our relations with our neighbor. That is why Jesus said that loving God and loving our neighbor sum up the commandments. (*Matthew 22:37–40*)

The God of Israel is not an impersonal “force,” but a God of love who becomes intimately involved with the affairs of mankind to save, rescue, redeem and deliver. This is the God who is worthy of our love and devotion, and no one else.

This Weeks Reading Begins with:

Exodus 21:1

Laws About Slaves

¹ “Now these are the rules that you shall set before them.

AND THESE ARE THE LAWS WHICH YOU SHALL SET BEFORE THEM (EXODUS 21:1)

The phrase “and these” (ve’eileh) implies that they are a continuation of what is written before. This is to teach us that just as the laws written above (the Ten Commandment) are from Sinai, these, too, are from Sinai.

(*Mechilta; Rashi*)

Since the majority of laws set forth in the Parshah of Mishpatim are logical laws, the Torah wishes to emphasize that these, too, are divinely ordained.

(*The Commentaries*)

Exodus 21:2

² When you buy a Hebrew slave,^[a] he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing.

Once We Were Slaves

“When you acquire a Jewish bondsman, for six years he shall work and in the seventh year he shall go free.” **Exodus 21:2**

Since the Israelites had just been released from slavery, the first of God’s mishpatim (laws) deals with servants and slaves.

According to the rabbis, the six years that a slave is obligated to work represent the 6,000 years that we will work to serve the Lord. **The seventh year of freedom represents the Messianic age—the thousand years when we will rule and reign from Jerusalem with Messiah, who will sit on the Throne of His earthly father David.**

(*Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel*)

IF YOU PURCHASE A HEBREW SLAVE... (21:2)

There is nothing more difficult for a person than to be subjugated to another person. This is why the Reading begins with the laws on how the Hebrew slave is to be treated.

(Ibn Ezra)

The law that the Hebrew slave must be set free on the seventh year is reminiscent of the Exodus from Egypt referred to in the first of the Ten Commandments. As the Torah says regarding the Hebrew slave: *“And you shall remember that you were a slave in the Land of Egypt, and G-d redeemed you; therefore I command you this thing today”* **Deuteronomy 15:15**. It is also reminiscent of the work of creation, because, like the Shabbat, the Hebrew slave gains respite from serving his master on the seventh year... All time cycles are ordained as cycles of seven—to refer to the seven day cycle of creation. Thus it is fitting that this mitzvah should come first in our Reading this week.

(Rashi)

Exodus 21:3-6

³ If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out alone. ⁵ But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,’ ⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave **forever**.

And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl (21:6)

Why the ear? The ear that heard at Mount Sinai “For the children of Israel are My servants”—yet this person went and acquired a [human] master for himself—that ear should be pierced.

(Rashi)

And he shall be his slave forever (21:6)

But even this **“forever”** is interpreted by the Sages as extending only until the Jubilee which occurs every 50th year, at which time all Hebrew slaves go free, regardless of their desire to remain indentured.

Exodus 21:7-25

⁷ “When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸ If she does not please her master, who has designated her^[b] for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. ⁹ If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. ¹⁰ If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. ¹¹ And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

¹² “Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. ¹³ But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴ But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

¹⁵ “Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁶ “Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

¹⁷ “Whoever curses^[c] his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁸ “When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, ¹⁹ then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

HE SHALL PAY FOR THE LOSS OF HIS WORK, AND HEAL SHALL HE HEAL (21:19)

From here is derived that a physician is allowed to heal (and we do not say that since G-d afflicted the person, it is forbidden to cure him).

(Talmud, Bava Kama 85a)

Exodus 21:20-25

²⁰ “When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. ²¹ But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money.

²² “When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³ But if there is harm,^[d] then you shall pay life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot; a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, a bruise for a bruise (22:24)

According to the traditional interpretation of Torah (handed down by Moses from Sinai together with the “Written Torah”) these words are not to be understood in the literal sense, but as a judgment of monetary compensation that must be made by the perpetrator to the victim in

five areas: (a) actual damage inflicted on the victim; (b) pain and suffering; (c) medical expenses; (d) lost workdays and productivity; (e) redress for the insult and humiliation involved.

The Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5:38–42 & Luke 6:29–30

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible,
authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: “Follow Me: A Message from God”, a Journey with Jesus)

You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.' But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

In His next subject, in His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus opens the topic of just compensation for personal injury with a statement concerning physical injury, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth (Lev 24:20). Then He challenges His disciples to take a different view. By using four cases of personal injury Jesus demonstrates that He wants them to be generous people, those who do not demand their rights.

The first case involves mental and emotional injuries received by a disciple. Jesus said, *“But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.”* A clenched fist indicates that a fight is occurring. A slap is done with an open hand. It conveys the idea of an insult. It is used to humiliate someone or provoke a fight.

Turning the cheek is an Aramaic idiom meaning “don’t start a fight or quarrel.” It takes two people to fight or have a quarrel. If the injured person does not retaliate then there is no fight or quarrel. Jesus wants His disciples to give up their right to be right. God will vindicate the righteous.

The second case involves harm caused by a disciple. Jesus said, *“And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.”* In this case the injured party is seeking a stated compensation for injury but has not gone to court yet to collect it. Jesus tells the disciples to meet the demand and give even more. The reason for it is to produce friendship with the injured person. Jesus wants His disciples to give up the right to personal legal protection when they have wronged someone. God will see that justice is done.

The third case involves lack of compensation for services rendered by a disciple. Jesus said, *“And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two.”* Going the second mile means doing more than what is required. Jesus wants His disciples to give up the right to compensation for use of their time and talents. God will reward.

Loaning something the disciple has, to someone who asks for it is the fourth case. On the surface this appears rather easy. It is Luke 6:30 that declares the truth of the matter, *“Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back.”* It involves the loss of the disciple’s property. Jesus wants His disciples to give up the right of return of their property. God is the owner of all things.

In each case, Jesus asked His disciples to do more than was required. In other words, they were to give gifts or bless others. Jesus wants his disciples to be like their Father in heaven, generous, people of an open hand. They should not grasp the things of this world or hold onto their rights, for their Father in heaven shall reward them.

The point of the lesson, and the answer to the proposed question, “How are friendships formed?, is to do more than is required.

Exodus 21:26–37

²⁶ “When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. ²⁷ If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

²⁸ “When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. ²⁹ But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰ If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. ³¹ If it gores a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. ³² If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels^[s] of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

Laws About Restitution

³³ “When a man opens a pit, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make restoration. He shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

³⁵ “When one man's ox butts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share. ³⁶ Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall repay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.

He shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep (21:37)

See how valuable work is. For an ox, whose theft deprived the owner of its labor, the thief pays fivefold. For the theft of a sheep, . . . he pays but four times.

Exodus 22:1-20

22 “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. ² If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him, ³ but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He ⁴ shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. ⁴ If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double.

⁵ “If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

⁶ “If fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he who started the fire shall make full restitution.

⁷ “If a man gives to his neighbor money or goods to keep safe, and it is stolen from the man's house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. ⁸ If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. ⁹ For every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case of both parties shall come before God. The one whom God condemns shall pay double to his neighbor.

¹⁰ “If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep safe, and it dies or is injured or is driven away, without anyone seeing it, ¹¹ an oath by the Lord shall be between them both to see whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's property. The owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. ¹² But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. ¹³ If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence. He shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

¹⁴ “If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is injured or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. ¹⁵ If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hiring fee.

Laws About Social Justice

¹⁶ “If a man seduces a virgin ¹⁷ who is not betrothed and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. ¹⁷ If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁸ “You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

¹⁹ “Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

²⁰ “Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the Lord alone, shall be devoted to destruction

Exodus 22:21-25

In the next passage, the painful experiences of the Israelites in Egypt are highlighted again, this time to **elicit empathy for the foreigner**. God commands the Israelites that foreigners be treated with kindness and respect.

(Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel)

21 “**You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.** ²² You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. ²³ If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, ²⁴ and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

²⁵ “If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him.

WHEN YOU LEND MONEY TO ANY OF MY PEOPLE (22:25)

Wherever the Torah says the word *im* (“if” or “when”), the implication is that we are speaking of an action that is optional, except in three instances, where the spoken action is obligatory; this is one of them. (In other words, a person is obligated to loan money to a fellow in need of a loan).

(Mechilta; Rashi)

YOU SHALL NOT ACT TOWARD HIM AS A CREDITOR (22:25)

Do not show yourself constantly to him... Do not press him for payment when you know that he is unable to pay.

(Mechilta; Rashi)

When you lend money to any of My people that is poor by you, you shall not act toward him as a creditor; neither shall you lay upon him interest.

(The Chassidic Masters)

Exodus 22:26-23:5

²⁶ If ever you take your neighbor's cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, ²⁷ for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

²⁸ “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

²⁹ “You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. ³⁰ You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

³¹ “You shall be consecrated to me. Therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

Exodus 23:1-5

¹ “You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

⁴ “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. ⁵ If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

IF YOU SEE THE DONKEY OF YOUR ENEMY COLLAPSING UNDER ITS BURDEN, AND ARE INCLINED TO DESIST FROM HELPING HIM, YOU SHALL SURELY HELP ALONG WITH HIM (23:5)

The Hebrew for “donkey,” chamor, also means “material.” Thus, this verse also instructs us as to the proper attitude toward the body and physicality:

“When you will see the chamor of your enemy” - initially, you will see your material self as your enemy, as something that obstructs and hinders your spiritual growth.

“collapsing under its burden” - in such a state of animosity between body and soul, the body resists the Scripture (Torah) and its commandments, making them an unbearable burden for it..

One’s first inclination may be *“to desist from helping him”* - to shun the body, suppress its instincts and deny it its wants.

Says the Scripture (Torah): *“you shall surely help along with him.”* Aid the material self with its *“burden”* by training it to recognize that the Scripture (Torah) is the vehicle for its own refinement and elevation.

(Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov)

Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Exodus 23:6-12

⁶ “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. ⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. ⁸ And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

⁹ “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
Laws About the Sabbath and Festivals

¹⁰ “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, ¹¹ but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

¹² “Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

Remember the Sabbath

This Reading also reveals the law of the Sabbath, which is more than a Sabbath rest every seventh day.

Every seven years, the land is to enjoy a Sabbath rest called the Shemitah. Israel ended its seventh year of letting the land lie fallow in September 2015.

(Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel)

Exodus 23:13-17

¹³ “Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.

¹⁴ “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. ¹⁵ You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. ¹⁶ You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. ¹⁷ **Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord God.**

Remember the Appointed Times

As well, the three pilgrimage festivals are mentioned as a time when all adult Jewish males are to appear before the Lord: Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Pentecost), and Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles).

(Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel)

It is here that we must recognize, just like we did at the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, that the next Appointed Time that God asked His people to write down, before they were to leave Egypt, in addition to the Passover, was the “Feast of Weeks”, or as you may know it, “Pentecost”, fifty days following “Passover”, and more specifically “The Feast of First Fruits”, would not only be the Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai (one of the soul purposes of the Exodus), but on that same day nearly 1,500 years later, in fulfillment of God’s Appointed Time, when God would reveal another step in the Redemption of Mankind, Jesus pours out the Promised “Holy Spirit” to equip and empower all Followers of God to walk out this Life as God has intended us, that all man might see God, that none should Perish. It would be with this second fulfillment of God’s Appointed Times, that sets up God’s Final Appointed Time, in a two-tear fulfillment, and the Third and Final step in the Redemption of Mankind, The Return of the Messiah, His Millennial Reign on Earth, and Final Judgement.

Exodus 23:18-25

¹⁸ “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

¹⁹ “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

Conquest of Canaan Promised

²⁰ “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

²² “But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

²³ “When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, ²⁴ you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. ²⁵ **You shall serve the Lord** your God, and he^[m] will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you.

AND YOU SHALL SERVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HE SHALL BLESS YOUR BREAD, AND YOUR WATER (23:25)

In Hebrew, the pronoun “you” has both a singular and a plural form. The above verse, as written in the Torah, is a grammatical abnormality: the words “your bread and your water” (et lachmecha v’et meimecha) are in the singular form, while the “you” in “you shall serve” (va’avadetem) is plural.

Explained the Rebbe of Kotzk: A Jew praying, even a single Jew praying alone, is nevertheless praying for, and together with, the entire community of Israel.

Exodus 23:26-24:1

²⁶ None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. ²⁷ I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸ And I will send hornets^[m] before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. ²⁹ I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. ³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. ³¹ And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates,^[m] for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³² You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. ³³ They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

Exodus 24:1

The Covenant Confirmed

¹ Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar.

AND TO MOSES HE SAID, “GO UP TO G-D...” (24:1-18)

The commentaries differ as to the timing of the events described in the closing verses (Exodus 24:1-18) of Mishpatim. According to Rashi, the Torah now returns to fill us in on the events that occurred before the revelation at Sinai and the speaking of the Ten commandments (recounted in chapters 19-20 above). Moses’ summons to the top of the mountain mentioned here is that of the 4th of Sivan—two days before the Giving of the Torah. On that day he relayed (as mentioned in verse 3) “the words of G-d” to the people of Israel commanded in chapter 19 above (to fence in the mountain and sanctify themselves in preparation for the Giving of the Torah), as well as the “laws” which they had already received in Marah; he also “wrote all the words of G-d” (v. 4)—i.e., from the beginning of Genesis until the middle of Exodus, bringing the Torah “up to date” until the Revelation. The altar and the sacrifices mentioned here (verses 4-8) was built and were offered on the 5th of Sivan, which is also the day on which the people of Israel made the famous proclamation: “We will do and we will hear” (verse 7). Then the Torah describes how they “saw the G-d of Israel” at the Giving of the Torah on Sivan 6th. Finally, we read

how, following the (general) Giving of Torah, Moses is summoned to the top of the mountain for 40 days to receive the detailed communication from G-d (including the laws we just read in the first chapters of Mishpatim). This is consistent with the rule that “There is no earlier and later in Torah” - i.e., that the Torah does not necessarily relate events in the order in which they occurred.

According to Nachmanides, the Torah is following chronological order. All the laws that we read in the first chapters of *this weeks reading* (*Mishpatim*) were communicated to Moses immediately after the Giving of the Torah on Sivan 6th—before the events related in chapter 24, which occurred on the 7th of Sivan, the day after the Revelation. Hence, “the words of G-d” and the “laws” which Moses related to the people (v. 3), and the divine words which Moses transcribed (v. 4) are the Ten Commandments and the laws we just read in the first part of *this weeks reading* (*Mishpatim*). Following that, Moses ascended the mountain for 40 days to receive the rest of the Torah.

Exodus 24:2-7

² Moses alone shall come near to the Lord, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him.”

³ Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules.^[a] And all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do.”⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. ⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.”

AND [MOSES] TOOK THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT, AND READ IN THE HEARING OF THE PEOPLE; AND THEY SAID: “ALL THAT G-D HAS SPOKEN, WE WILL DO, AND WE WILL HEAR” (24:7) When the people of Israel gave precedence to “we will do” over “we will hear,” a heavenly voice issued forth and exclaimed to them: “Who revealed to My children this secret, which is employed by the angels?” As it is written (Psalms 103:20), “Bless the L-rd His angels, those mighty in strength, who fulfill His word, who hear the voice of His word”—first they fulfill and then they hear....

There was a certain Sadducee who saw Rava engrossed in his studies while the fingers of his hand were under his feet, and he ground them down, so that his fingers spurted blood. “You rash people,” he exclaimed, “who gave precedence to your mouth over your ears, still persist in your rashness! First you should have listened, and if it is within your powers, accept; if not, you should not have accepted!”

(Talmud, Shabbat 88a-b)

The greatness of the people of Israel was not that they were prepared to “blindly” do G-d’s bidding without understanding (in which case they would have said only, “We will do”), but that they placed their doing before their understanding. G-d desires that we should do as well as “hear” and comprehend His will, so that we serve Him not only with our hands and feet, but also with our minds and hearts. But our doing should serve as the basis of our understanding, rather than the other as way around.

(The Chassidic Masters)

Exodus 24:8

⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.”

It is here that we find, Moses reads before all the people the Book of the Covenant that God has given Israel. After the people commit to keeping God’s law, Moses sprinkles blood upon the altar and on the people as well, since **all covenants are formally ratified and are usually sealed with blood.**

“Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.’ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.’” (*Exodus 24:7–8*)

Likewise, the New Covenant was sealed with the blood of Messiah, Yeshua, the Lamb of God. **At the Passover meal with His disciples, Yeshua held up the cup of redemption** and said, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.” (*Luke 22:20*)

The most righteous of all men, Yeshua HaMashiach, became the final atonement for all generations who accept His sacrifice on their behalf.

“I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. **I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles**, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.” (*Isaiah 42:6–7*)

(Messianic Bible - Bibles For Israel)

Exodus 24:9-18

⁹ Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up,¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

¹² The Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” ¹³ So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.”

¹⁵ Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

This Weeks Story:

To your question of “can one lose their salvation”, there is much debate about this. The majority of the Church (meaning the worldwide, universal Church) believes that the answer is “no”. This is partly evident in why the Catholic Church began centuries ago baptizing infants so that they could “secure” the salvation of everyone possible. As for Protestants, the belief really didn’t come about until around 1600 AD with John Calvin (the “founding father” of the Presbyterian denomination) who developed a system of theology known as Calvinism that has been condensed to a single statement used by many evangelical Christians today - “once saved, always saved.” Unfortunately, there are many doctrines that the Church has come to believe in wholeheartedly and fully embrace as Gospel-truth that never came into existence until centuries and centuries after Jesus walked on the earth. Jesus warned us to beware of false teachers. So in order to get the Truth, we must go back to the Word of Truth and not base our beliefs on the opinions of mere men. We must always be like the Bereans in the Book of Acts and examine what is being taught against the authority of God’s Word. While there is Scripture used to support both sides of the once saved, always saved debate, let’s go back to Jesus’ words.

In a few different instances, but most prominently in Matthew 24, when asked about the end of the world by his disciples, the very first words Jesus says are “Do not be misled.” If our salvation is so secure that we cannot lose it, then why would Jesus be concerned about us being misled?

In verse 24 of Matthew 24, Jesus says that the signs and wonders performed by false messiahs and false prophets will even deceive the “very elect.” This phrase used by Jesus literally means God’s “chosen ones.”

As Jesus continues to describe the last days to his disciples, He then mentions that many will “fall away.” Literally, the Greek word used here is the word “apostatize,” which means to renounce one’s beliefs. If we can’t lose our salvation, then who are these that will fall away? And how can one apostatize if they never believed in the first place?

One of the arguments of the once saved, always saved doctrine is that those who fall away were never fully Christians, to begin with. If that’s the case, then what are these so-called non-Christians falling away from? You can’t fall away from something if you don’t first stand firmly in it. In fact, looking at the disciple Peter’s own words in 2 Peter 3:17: Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. Peter is writing to Christians here (“dear friends”), not non-believers. He is thus indicating that believers can be “carried away” and even “fall away” from their secure position! Secure position in what? In their salvation and status in eternity. Any time something along the lines of secure position in relation to our faith is mentioned in Scripture, it is always in the context of our eternal salvation (i.e. whether our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life), not just a position such as James and John argued about who will sit on Jesus’ right or left hand in His Kingdom.

While proponents of the once saved, always saved belief lean on Jesus’ words that “none of them is lost” and “no one can take them from me”, what they fail to recognize is the foundational belief to our faith of free will. If I have the free will to accept and receive Christ, then I must also have the freedom to reject Him, even if that means doing so after having first received Him.

Here is a critical part of this debate - finding the answer in the entirety of our faith in its original context. In Jude 11, it says - Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. Here are three Old Testament examples of those that once had a relationship and even intimacy with God, yet were led astray, rebelled, and fell away from their secure position,...and perished! And it is Jude in the New Testament, after Jesus’ resurrection, who states that false teachers and those that follow them will face the same fate. Korah was one of the leaders of the Levites. This was no ordinary man who was just amongst the tribes of Israel. This was a leader in leading the nation of Israel in worshipping God. Yet due to his rebellion, as well as all of those that followed him, they all perished and were killed by God. This is a clear example of a follower of God, a believer, losing their salvation. And Jude states that even after Jesus establishes the New Covenant, this is still possible.

Here’s another thing to consider, from the very words of Jesus once again:

Mark 3:28-29

²⁸ “Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever **blasphemes*** against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—

Matthew 12:31-32

³¹ Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but **blasphemy*** against the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Luke 12:10

¹⁰ And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever **blasphemes*** against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

***Blasphemes (STRONG’S NO. 988 – blasphemía):** “switches” right for wrong (wrong for right), i.e. calls what God *disapproves*, “right” which “exchanges the truth of God for a lie” (Ro 1:25 - “because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie”; Isa 5:20 - “you who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness,”). Literally, slow (sluggish) to call something *good* (that *really is good*) – and slow to identify what is truly bad (that really is evil). (**THAYER’S GREEK LEXICON**): *a.* universally, slander, detraction, speech injurious to another’s good name.

I will end with this, a parable from Jesus Himself in Matthew 25 of the Ten Virgins. In this parable, Jesus is returning for His Bride, but five are prepared with enough wick and oil and are awake and alert for when he returns, while the other five are not. To those who are prepared, He welcomes them into His glorious Kingdom; to those who are not, He casts out and states "I never knew you." Now all throughout Scripture, virgins always represent God's people (i.e. Israel, the Church, believers). By Jesus' own words, He is stating that there will be those who were part of the family of God but because of their own choices in not being obedient and prepared as He instructed, they will lose their secure positions (of being virgin brides prepared to meet their bridegroom).

We hope this answer helps and we certainly encourage you to continue searching the Scriptures as the Bereans did.

Blessings,

Brandon Shirkey
Co-Pastor
Springs of Living Water

Next Week's Reading:

Week 19 - TERUMAH (Offering)
Exodus 25:1–27:19; 1 Kings 5:26–6:13; Hebrews 9:1–28