

Sermon Discussion Guide

Exodus 20:22–23:19 | The Holy God Cares About Every Detail of Life in His Community

March 8, 2026

PERSONAL REFLECTION

For quiet time, journaling, or prayer this week

1. When you read through Old Testament law passages, what's your honest gut reaction — boredom, confusion, distance? What might it look like to read them as a window into God's heart rather than a rulebook?

|"For I am compassionate." — **Exodus 22:27**

2. Three words tucked into the middle of a law code: "For I am compassionate." What does it do to you to hear God describe Himself that way in that context? Does that match the God you actually live toward day to day?
3. The sermon described the "Yahweh" life not as a survival-of-the-fittest scarcity mindset, but as working from a place of rest and gift. Where in your life are you striving from scarcity rather than resting in abundance? What would it look like to work from a different foundation this week?
4. The law called Israel to help their enemy's wandering animal — not just to avoid harming enemies, but to actively serve them. Who is the "enemy" in your life right now that God might be calling you toward rather than away from?

SMALL GROUP / COMMUNITY GROUP

For honest conversation and shared discernment together

1. The sermon opened with the honest reality that many of us skip or feel confused by Old Testament law passages. What's your history with these texts? Has your relationship to them changed over time?
2. God's very first instruction after the Ten Commandments wasn't a warning to stay back — it was an invitation to come near. He asked for a simple altar of earth, not impressive architecture. What does that simplicity say about the kind of access God wants to give ordinary people?
3. The servant laws, the eye-for-eye principle, the laws about negligence — God is forming a community where power is restrained, justice is proportional, and the vulnerable are protected. Where do you see your own community — family, workplace, church — reflecting or falling short of that vision?

|"If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him." — **Exodus 23:4**

4. The enemy's donkey command would have been genuinely shocking in the ancient world. Jesus echoes it directly: "Love your enemies." What makes this so hard? And what might it look like for ECC as a community to take this seriously — not just individually?
5. **Pushback:** Is it possible we've spiritualized the law so much that we've lost its earthy, social edge? These laws were about real economics, real courts, real land, real labor. What would it look like to take the social vision of Exodus seriously today — not just as personal ethics but as communal witness?

FAMILY & FRIENDS TABLE

Great for households, roommates, or anyone sharing a meal — simple enough for kids, rich enough for everyone

1. If you had to make one rule for your family or household that you think God would actually care about, what would it be and why?
2. The sermon said that God told His people to stop working and rest — not just people, but servants and animals and even the land itself. Why do you think rest was such a big deal to God? What makes resting hard for you?
3. William Wilberforce spent over 20 years trying to end the slave trade because he believed every person is made in God's image. Is there something you believe is wrong in the world that would be worth fighting for that long? What would keep you going?

Big Idea: *God's law isn't a rulebook to follow — it's a portrait of a community to become.*