

## Chapter 23

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- 23:1 Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.
- 23:2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil;  
neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to *wrest* judgment:  
wrest: *To obtain by, or as if by pulling with, violent twisting movements: wrested the book out of his hands; wrested the islands from the settlers.*  
*To usurp forcefully: wrested power from the monarchy.*  
*To extract by force, or, as if by force, with twisting, or persistent effort; wring: wrest the meaning from an obscure poem.*  
To distort or twist the nature or meaning of: wrested the words out of context.  
*To divert to an improper use; misapply*
- 23:3 Neither shalt thou *countenance* a **poor man in his cause**.  
*countenance: A look or expression indicative of encouragement or of moral support.*  
*Support or approval.*  
**question:** *Or, does the word, countenance, have a different meaning now, than that which is listed above? Could it have referred to the countenance of a person; such as, that of frowning? In other words; is God telling us, not to publicly frown, or otherwise openly look disapprovingly, in considering such a cause?*
- 23:4 If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.
- 23:5 If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.
- 23:6 Thou shalt **not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause**.  
**question:** *This seems to indicate that, we should not inhibit the execution of a judgment made on behalf of the poor. Is this to be differentiated from 23:3; because it involves a judgment given to a poor man, rather than being centered on the cause itself?*  
**answer:** *It is adding an exclamation mark to 23:2-3, for the specific sake of the poor. Without this emphasis, there may have been some minds that thought thusly: certain ones are free to secretly malign the poor, while they stay clear of appearing to do so. (23:3). This brings to mind those capitalists that pay their big investors first, after allowing favorable terms to them, without allowing any group negotiation for the sake of the small investor. A secret wresting behavior is just as egregious as the public kind.*
- 23:7 Keep thee far from a false matter;  
and the innocent and righteous slay thou not:  
for I will not justify the wicked.
- 23:8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.
- 23:9 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- 23:10 And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:
- 23:11 But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still;  
that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat.  
In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.
- 23:12 Six days thou shalt do thy work,  
and on the seventh day thou shalt rest:

that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

- 23:13 And in all things that I have said unto you be circumspect:  
and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.
- 23:14 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.
- 23:15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:)
- 23:16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.
- 23:17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the LORD God.
- 23:18 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread;  
neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning.
- 23:19 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God.  
Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.
- 23:20 Behold, I send an Angel before thee,  
to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.
- 23:21 Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions:  
for my name is in him.
- 23:22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak;  
then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.
- 23:23 For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.
- 23:24 Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.
- 23:25 And ye shall serve the LORD your God,  
and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water;  
and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.
- 23:26 There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land:  
the number of thy days I will fulfil.
- 23:27 I will send my fear before thee,  
and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee.
- 23:28 And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee.
- 23:29 *I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.*  
thought: *If we stop, and think a moment, about this wisdom of God; then, we will better understand the nature of that certain action which was undertaken by God, back at the time of Noah. God set the nature of Creation, such that, the beast of the field would have been a conquering force against Noah and his gathering, if they were not removed from the scene. This is the counterbalance that is in mankind's gift from the Creator: dominion.*
- 23:30 *By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased*, and inherit the land.

thought: By little and little: *that also points to another fact of the dealings of God with man: yes, God could create a desolate place, for man to fill in; yes, the LORD could destroy all obstacles in our path, even before we come there (and, in the background, He does); and yes, God could do it in an instant; but, in doing so, the LORD would leave desolation that would be filled in by the other forces of Creation.*

*For example: if God immediately removes all sorrow from the earth; then, the beast known as, pride and arrogance, would creep in, and it would give us the following impression: that, we have done something on our own, without our being dependent on the help of God*

*Yes, God could have, in an instant, delivered the children of Israel from Egypt; but, as we now see, as described in the overview of the hearts of both the Egyptians and the children of Israel: the LORD delivers a clear statement of His presence, in the matter that is done for Israel's sake . . . and, too, for the sake of the Egyptians. Sometimes, it takes a seasoning of "negative" action, to really get our attention, and to cause us to see that our sufficiency is only in God. For, even when the LORD delivers us, with Patience and His Mighty Hand; still, we, as was done by the children of Israel, complain about our lot in life; rather than meekly returning to God, for further direction as to where, and how, we should go.*

23:31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river:

for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.

thought: *Also note this: once the LORD gives us the eventual and inevitable victory, He also sets bounds for us, so that we can continue to properly manage the situation and the whole of life that He has given us.*

23:32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.

23:33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.