

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS

May 7, 2025

Exodus 23:20-33

Introduction:

- Chapter 23 is the end of the first set of instructions given by God to Moses.
 - Exodus 20.1-21:** God speaks the Ten Commandments directly to Israel.
 - Exodus 20.22-23.33:** God speaks His Law to Moses.
 - Exodus 24:** Moses delivers the Law of Israel.
- The last section of chapter 23 addresses their journey to the land of promise.

I. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ANGEL

A. **Exodus 23.20:** *"Behold, I send an Angel before you"*

- Angel (Malak): Generic word for a messenger. (cf. 1 Sam. 23.27; Mal. 1.1)
- What are angels in the Bible?
 - Angels are innumerable. (Heb. 12.22; Rev. 5.11)
 - Angels have a hierarchical structure. (1 Thess. 4.16)
 - Angels are ministering spirits. (Heb. 1.14)

B. Who was this "Angel?"

- A possible reference to Jesus Christ? (Ex. 14.19; 1 Cor. 10.1-4)
- The Angel represented the very presence of God. (Ex. 33.2,14; Isa. 63.9,10)

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE ANGEL

A. **Exodus 23.20:** *"to keep you in the way"*

- Keep (samar): "to protect, watch over, take heed, guard" [Mounce; Strong]
 - Exodus 23.21:** *"Beware of Him"* (*"Pay close attention"*; ESV).
 - Exodus 23.13:** *"be circumspect."* (*"Pay attention"*; ESV).
- The Angel will give His attention to Israel and protect them along the way.

B. **Exodus 23.20:** *"and to bring you into the place which I have prepared."* His purpose was to lead them to the promised land. (Ex. 23.23)

III. THE AUTHORITY OF THE ANGEL

A. **Exodus 23.21:** *"Beware of Him and obey His voice..."*

- Why were they to obey Him? *"For My name is in Him"* (cf. Ex. 5.23; Col. 3.17)
- The promises of God were conditioned on obedience. (Ex. 23.22)

B. **Exodus 23.21:** *"Do not provoke Him."*

- Provoke (marar): "To make bitter, suffer anguish, weep bitterly" [Mounce]
- The children of Israel provoked God. (Ps. 78.40.56)
- Disobedience causes the heart of God to grieve. (Gen. 6.6; Eph. 4.30)

C. **Exodus 23.21:** *"He will not pardon your transgressions"*

- Their sins will be punished. (cf. Ex. 32.34; Num. 20.12; Deut. 3.26)
- Israel did not inherit the land. (Num. 14.35; Heb. 3.11,16-19)