

Deuteronomy 25 - Sanctification of the Kingdom; Firstfruits and Tithes

II. Second sermon: What Israel must do for God (Deut 4:41—26:19)

(3) Exposition of the Decalogue (Deut 12:1—25:19)

(I) Laws arising from the ninth commandment (Deut 24:8—25:4)

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(a) Levite marriage (25:5-10)

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Deuteronomy 25

(g) Rights of the accused (25:1-3)

1 "If there is a dispute between people and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they declare the righteous innocent and pronounce the wicked guilty,

1 "If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges decide their case, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked,

1 "When there is a conflict between individuals, let them come to court to judge the case, decide who is innocent, and condemn the guilty person.

1 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

2 then it shall be if the wicked person deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and have him beaten in his presence with the number of *lashes* according to his wrongful act.

2 then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, the judge shall then make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of stripes according to his guilt.

2 If the guilty person deserves a beating, the judge will make him lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of lashes fit for his crime.

2 And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number.

- Hate and revenge could not be gratified at the pleasure of the offended but must always be regulated by judges in the court

3 He may have him beaten forty times, *but* not more, so that he does not have him beaten with many more lashes than these, and that your brother does not become contemptible in your eyes.

3 He may beat him forty times *but* no more, so that he does not beat him with many more stripes than these and your brother is not degraded in your eyes.

3 But he must not be beaten more than 40 lashes, because if he receives more than 40 lashes, your brother will be humiliated in your eyes.

3 Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.

(h) Rights of animals (25:4)

4 "You shall not muzzle the ox while it is threshing.

4 "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.

4 "Don't muzzle an ox while it is threshing grain."

4 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

- This doesn't just refer to the beast of burden. It is often cited as justification for wages earned; twice in the NT for ministry (1 Cor 9:9-11; 1 Tim 5:18)

(J) Laws arising from the tenth commandment (25:5-19)

(a) Levite marriage (25:5-10)

5 "When brothers live together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be *married* outside *the family* to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall have relations with her and take her to himself as *his* wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

5 "When brothers live together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be *married* outside *the family* to a strange man. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her to himself as wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

5 "When two brothers are living together and one of them dies without leaving a son, his widow must not be married outside the family to a foreigner. Instead, the brother-in-law must go to her, take her as his wife, and by doing so perform the duty of a brother-in-law.

5 If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child [son], the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

6 It shall then be that the firstborn to whom she gives birth shall assume the name of his *father's* deceased brother, so that his name will not be wiped out from Israel.

6 It shall be that the firstborn whom she bears shall assume the name of his dead brother, so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

6 The firstborn whom she will bear will continue the name of the dead brother, so his name will not be erased from Israel.

6 And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel.

- Levirate Marriage (from Latin *levir*, "husband's brother") (v5-10; Cf. Lev 18:16; 20:21)

— Not compulsory; yet refusal required consideration by the elders (Cf. Ruth 4:1-17)

— Perpetuation of the deceased name as member of the covenant is in view

— Daughters could inherit under special circumstances (Cf. Daughters of Zelophehad, Num 27:4-8; Luke 3)

The son-in-law was adopted by the father of the bride (Cf. Luke 3). [In view of the provision of Num 27:4ff, there would be no need for the levirate marriage if the deceased had daughters. Hence the AV seems preferable to the RSV in rendering in Deut 25:5—no child rather than no son]

7 But if the man does not desire to take his brother's widow, then his brother's widow shall go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.'

7 But if the man does not desire to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to establish a name for his brother in Israel; he is not willing to perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.'

7 But if the man does not want to marry his brother's widow, then she must go to the elders at the city gate and declare, 'My husband's brother refuses to perform the duty of a brother-in-law in order to preserve the name of his brother in Israel. He is not willing to perform the duty of a brother-in-law.'

7 And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

8 Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And *if* he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her;'

8 Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him. And *if* he persists and says, 'I do not desire to take her;'

8 Then the elders of the city are to summon him and speak with him. If he insists on saying, 'I don't want to marry her,'

8 Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;

9 then his brother's widow shall come up to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'This is what is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house!'

9 then his brother's wife shall come to him in the sight of the elders, and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face; and she shall declare, 'Thus it is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.'

9 then she is to approach her brother-in-law in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal, spit in his face, and say in response, 'May this be done to the man who does not preserve the lineage of his brother.'

9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.

10 And in Israel his family shall be called by the name, 'The house of him whose sandal was removed.'

10 In Israel his name shall be called, 'The house of him whose sandal is removed.'

10 Then his family name in Israel will be known 'as the family of the one whose sandal was removed.'"

10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

- He had to meet three conditions to make it work:

(1) He had to be a near kinsman

(2) He had to be able to perform

(3) He had to be willing; it was not required

(4) (implied) He had to take on all the obligations that went along with his decision

- If he chose not to, he had to give her his shoe, a symbol of shame; he had failed to do the kinsman's part

- She would spit in his eye and take his shoe, a symbol of shame; he had failed to do the kinsman's part

— He would walk around barefoot the rest of the day, a symbol that he didn't "step up" to the opportunity

— As time went on, the woman stopped spitting in his eye and just took the shoe

— To the next of kin, the shoe was a marriage license

(b) Unfair fighting by a wife (25:11-12)

11 "If *two* men, a man and his countryman, have a fight with each other, and the wife of one comes up to save her husband from the hand of the one who is hitting him, and she reaches out with her hand and grasps that man's genitals,

11 "If *two* men, a man and his countryman, are struggling together, and the wife of one comes near to deliver her husband from the hand of the one who is striking him, and puts out her hand and seizes his genitals,

11 "If two men are fighting together, and the wife of one comes to rescue her husband from the grasp of his assailant, and she reaches out and seizes his genitals,

11 When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets:

12 then you shall cut off her hand; you shall not show pity.

12 then you shall cut off her hand; you shall not show pity.

12 you are to cut off her hand. Don't show any pity."

12 Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity her.

(c) Unjust weights and measures (25:13-16)

13 "You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a large and a small.

13 "You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a large and a small.

13 "Don't have different weights in your bag—one heavy and one light.

13 Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.

14 You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small.

14 You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small.

14 Don't have different measuring devices in your house—one large and one small.

14 Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small.

15 You shall have a correct and honest weight; you shall have a correct and honest measure, so that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

15 You shall have a full and just weight; you shall have a full and just measure, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

15 You must have honest weights and measuring devices, so you may live long in the land that the LORD your God is about to give you,

15 But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

16 For everyone who does these things, everyone who acts unjustly is an abomination to the LORD your God.

16 For everyone who does these things, everyone who acts unjustly is an abomination to the LORD your God.

16 for anyone who does these things—anyone who deals dishonestly—is detestable to the LORD your God.”

16 For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

- Just weights and measures are expected: integrity in the marketplace (Cf. Lev 10:35-37)

- Even “arms length” dealings were to be honest. Fiduciary relationships are required of Christians (Eph 6).

(d) Command to blot out Amalek (25:17-19)

17 “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt,

17 “Remember what Amalek did to you along the way when you came out from Egypt,

17 “Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the road while you were coming out of Egypt,

17 Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;

18 how he confronted you on the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.

18 how he met you along the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were faint and weary; and he did not fear God.

18 how when you were very tired and weary, they lay in wait for you on the road and eliminated everyone who was lagging behind. They had no fear of God.

18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

- The Amalekites savagely attacked Israel from behind (Num 14:45)

19 So it shall come about, when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies in the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an **inheritance** to possess, that you shall wipe out the mention of *the name* Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

19 Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

19 Therefore, when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies who surround you in the land that he is about to give you to possess as an inheritance, you must completely erase the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven. Don't forget!"

19 Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.

- "...inheritance" - the Promised Land was Israel's inheritance (not a "type" of heaven");
Cf. Deut 15:4; 19:14; 26:1

- On the charge to exterminate Amalek (see Ex 17:8-16). Throughout these extended instructions and admonitions in which the Israelites are encouraged to constantly express their wholehearted devotion to God in their daily lives, there are also the promises and assurances of God's continued goodness and mercy as well as warnings.

- In this manner a vital relationship with God was not only initially established, but it could also be maintained. These promises undoubtedly were designed to provide a stimulant to their total pattern of living.