

Deuteronomy
October 19, 2008
Law of Love Applied
Chapters 22-26

I. Chapter 22:1-12 – Miscellaneous Laws

Why does God give so many laws? Some of these appear unimportant to us, such as why does God care if clothes are made of wool and linen woven together?

How would you feel if someone was thoughtful to your possessions in the way indicated in the first four verses? Have you ever done this for someone else?

Verses 5-8 and 9-12 contain a chiasm in common. Both are speaking to alterations in divinely ordered ways of doing things. The chiasm is:

Dress	5	11-12
Animals	6-7	10
House/field	8	9

II. Chapter 22:13-30: Laws concerning Sexual Relations

Why is God concerned with the sexual practices of people? Why do you think that sexual sin was punished so harshly? Can we learn anything from this section today?

How embarrassing would applying verse 15 be?

Verse 28-29 makes sense when we realize that sexual intercourse is tantamount to marriage in the OT.

III. Chapter 23:1-8: Those Excluded from the Assembly

Verse 1: If accidental or genetic, then this command does not disallow the eunuch from engaging in worship or being part of the community in other ways.

Isa 56:4-6

4 For this is what the LORD says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant — 5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. 6 And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant —

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Verse 2: When it says the tenth generation, it might as well state for all eternity. The “even” is not actually in the Hebrew. While this practice appears particularly discriminatory, it does provide some guarantee for the continuation of the Israelites dedicated to the LORD. This command also does not limit someone from participating in other worship or in the community. Also, in the history of Israel, it is not clear that a full believer in the LORD was ever subjected to this law.

Do we ever exclude people from our fellowship? Or asked a different way: Who is most welcome?

IV. Chapter 23:9-28: Sanitary, Ritual, and Humanitarian Precepts

Verse 15: Legislation for Hebrew slaves was discussed in Chapter 15. This section (verses 15 and 16) might be dealing with a slave that has escaped from some other country. The Israelites were escaped slaves, and apparently, they were to be very humane to other escaped slaves.

Verse 18: "Dirty" money is as detestable to the LORD as their detestable practices. The prostitute is apparently not a shrine prostitute. "Male prostitute" is Hebrew in "dog." Apparently, linguists believe that the word "dog" in this context is a derogatory term relating to a male prostitute.

Verse 19: Loans were not made as part of commerce as today. Instead, they were made to relieve the poverty of the borrower. As such, charging interest did not make sense. The point is that Israelites were supposed to help their brothers. If they had extra money and if someone else needed it, they were expected to give it to them. As such, no paying interest but paying back the principle is helpful to the lender and also to the self respect of the borrower.

V. Chapters 24 and 25: Miscellaneous Commands

24:1-4: This section covers divorce and remarriage. Divorce is generally condemned in the NT, and I do not find any passage in the NT that allows remarriage without there being sin present.

24:6 An analysis can be made for many of these, such as:
"If one of the millstones is taken, the other one would be useless. The upper one would be the easier of the two millstones to take away. Taking a millstone would endanger the livelihood/life of the family who would loose it. Since one millstone would be worthless, one would be taken only to put pressure on the family to repay the loan."

24:16 This is rather unique in the ancient Near East and Middle East. It does not mean that the ramifications of the act do not affect the entire family. Indeed, David's indiscretion with Bathsheba caused the sword never to leave his house.

24:19 Many of these laws are put into place so that the poor would be helped. For instance, this deals with gleaming, which is referenced in Ruth:

Ruth 2:2-4

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." 3 So she went out and began to glean in the fields behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. 4 Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The LORD be with you!" "The LORD bless you!" they called back.

25:3 By NT times, the top number of lashes had become 39 to assure that the maximum was not exceeded in case of an error. The Apostle Paul received this at least five times:

2 Cor 11:24

24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.
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25:7 This one is also referenced in Ruth (4:6-10)
Since one millstone would be worthless, one would be taken only to put pressure on the family to repay the loan.

25:14 The law from Lev 19:35-36

35 "Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. 36 Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt.

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25:19 It took some time until the days of Hezekiah, but eventually Israel was successful in achieving this goal.

1 Chron 4:41-43

42 And five hundred of these Simeonites, led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, invaded the hill country of Seir. 43 They killed the remaining Amalekites who had escaped, and they have lived there to this day.

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VI. Chapter 26:1-15: Tithing Again

Chapter 14 has already addressed the tithe. Here we see some additional specifics.

What is the purpose of the tithe, as indicated in this section?

It has been estimated that Christians spend 99% of their money for personal use? What precepts from this section might we apply today?

In verse 5, Abraham or Jacob was the wandering Aramean, but is usually considered to be Jacob. While the land was promised to both of them, neither one of them had a substantial part of it. Both wandered in it. Once the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they will then have what had been promised. They will be able to offer the first fruits of the land to the LORD in thanks of what He had done.

In verses 13 and 14, A person can fail in at least three ways:

1. Not giving the tithe
2. Turning aside from God's commands
3. Forgetting some of His commands.

The offering was not contaminated in any of these ways:

1. None was eaten while he was in mourning.
2. None of it was moved when he was unclean.
3. None of it has been offered to the dead.

Some take "the dead" as a reference to Ba'al who died in Canaanite mythology. Other possibilities include:

- Burying the food with the dead
- Giving to relatives of the dead
- Selling to pay for a funeral

VII. Chapter 26:16- 19: Closing Remarks

This ends the second sermon.

The phrase “treasured possession” was first used in Ex 19:5-6

5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. 6 Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

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While Israel has not been able to totally fulfill its side of the bargain (and is no longer called a “kingdom of priests”), God has kept His side of the bargain as Israel continues to be his treasured possession (or “chosen people” as translated into the Septuagint and used by Peter in 1 Peter 2:9).