

Vineland Park Baptist Church
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God's Protection

We will continue in Deuteronomy 24, having looked at verses 1-4 that deal with divorce, in our previous study. Basically, the law given by Moses was to give some protection to the woman. Up to this time there was no Hebrew law concerning divorce. Following the example of the Canaanites the man could divorce his wife for any reason and Moses put some restrictions on the man.

Deut 24:1-4

"When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, ² when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man's *wife*, ³ if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts *it* in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, ⁴ *then* her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that *is* an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you *as* an inheritance.

The marriage institution, from the beginning, as explained by Jesus, was not intended to be separated by man for any reason. Adultery was not grounds for divorce; it was punished by stoning!

Matt 19:1-9

Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, *that* He departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. ² And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.

³ The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for *just* any reason?"

⁴ And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning '*made them male and female*,' ⁵ and said, '*For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh*? ⁶ So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

⁷ They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

⁸ He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹ And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

The severe punishment of adultery by stoning apparently was mitigated by Jesus in the instance of the woman in John 8.

John 8:1-12

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

² Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. ³ Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. ⁵ Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" ⁶ This they said, testing Him, that they might have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, as though He did not hear.

⁷ So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." ⁸ And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ Then those who heard *it*, being convicted by *their* conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest *even* to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰ When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

¹¹ She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

It was not my design to go back over the lesson on divorce but since I brought up the woman in John 8, do you know what Jesus wrote on the ground?

Jer 17:13

O LORD, the hope of Israel,
All who forsake You shall be ashamed.
"Those who depart from Me
Shall be written in the earth,
Because they have forsaken the LORD,
The fountain of living waters."

Jesus wrote something on the ground and I believe it was the name of each of the woman's accusers with a specific sin alongside.

The name of the oldest accuser and a sin;

The name of the next oldest accuser and a sin, and so on.

⁷ So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." ⁸ And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last.

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Back to Deuteronomy 24.

The next thing Moses did after putting some restrictions on divorce was to give some protection for newly married couples,

Deut 24:5

"When a man has taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and bring happiness to his wife whom he has taken.

What did you men do in the first year of your marriage?

Not only was the woman protected from a frivolous divorce she was to have the full attention of her husband for the first year to secure her happiness. This also prevented her from becoming an early war widow.

Let's briefly summarize the other laws in Deut. 24 & 25:

Not only was the woman protected these other laws show us the God is concerned about every aspect of our life. Sinful men left to their own devices will do what is right in their own eyes and take advantage of other men.

Deut 24:6, 10-13, 17 Protection for the debtor.

Someone in dire circumstances could get an interest free loan.

Deut 23:19-20

¹⁹"You shall not charge interest to your brother – interest on money *or* food *or* anything that is lent out at interest. ²⁰To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.

No interest but then it was permissible to take something in pledge to ensure that the loan would be repaid. The pledge could not be something that deprived a man from making a living.

Deut 24:6

"No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes *one's* living in pledge.

The poor man's feelings were protected from embarrassment.

Also, his cloak may be his only covering from the bitter cold of night.

Deut 24:10-13

¹⁰"When you lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. ¹¹You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you. ¹²And if the man *is* poor, you shall not keep his pledge overnight. ¹³You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and bless you; and it shall be righteousness to you before the LORD your God.

The widow was especially pitied and a debtor could not take her cloak for any amount of time. Remember that one time you were all as helpless as the widow when you were slaves in Egypt.

Deut 24:17-18

¹⁷"You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. ¹⁸But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing.

Deut 24:7

Kidnapping

Stealing was forbidden and this was true of taking a man's freedom either to make him a slave or to sell him

Deut 24:7

"If a man is found kidnapping any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and mistreats him or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die; and you shall put away the evil from among you.

Deut 24:8-9

Protections for the community at large

There were several skin diseases that were contagious and were called leprosy. The priests served as the medical authority and the people were to do exactly as the priests commanded. The mention of Miriam was to remind the people of the severe punishment for rebelling against authority. Cf. Numbers 12:1-16

Deut 24:8-9

⁸Take heed in an outbreak of leprosy, that you carefully observe and do according to all that the priests, the Levites, shall teach you; just as I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do. ⁹Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on the way when you came out of Egypt!

Deut 24:14-15

Protection for the employee

It was necessary for the poor to be paid at the end of the day so he could buy what was needed for the next day.

While this may not be necessary in our system of money and credit there is an application for the Christian. Pay what you owe in a timely manner.

Deut 24:14-15

¹⁴"You shall not oppress a hired servant *who is* poor and needy, *whether* one of your brethren or one of the aliens who *is* in your land within your gates. ¹⁵Each day you shall give *him* his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he *is* poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you.

Punishment for offenses in the Eastern world can be unjust and cruel by Western standards. In part of the Muslim world today a woman is stoned to death for adultery and a hand is cut off for stealing.

In the time of Moses families of offenders were often killed although they had nothing to do with the offense. An example, in Babylon, if a builder's error led to the death of the house owner's son the son of the builder could be killed.

God under Moses' law prohibited such reprisals.

Deut 24:16

"Fathers shall not be put to death for *their* children, nor shall children be put to death for *their* fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin.

Deut 24:17-22

Protection for the weak

The Lord made provision for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow.

Deut 24:17-22

¹⁷"You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. ¹⁸But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing.

The poor were allowed to glean the fields and the landowner was to leave something for them to gather.

The story of Ruth is a beautiful case of how this law allowed, in the providence of God, for the grandmother [by over 30 generations] of Jesus to meet and marry Boaz. Cf. Luke 3: 23-32

¹⁹"When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²¹When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean *it* afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²²And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing.

It was necessary to put guidelines on how to administer corporeal punishment.

Deut 25:1-3

"If there is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that *the judges* may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked, ² then it shall be, if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. ³ Forty blows he may give him *and* no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother be humiliated in your sight.

There are seven rules given:

- 1) A fair trial; no mob rule.
- 2) There must be more than one judge.
- 3) The offender must be found guilty. Beating was an option; not required. Cf. Deut 22:19; 2 Chron 16:10 [fines or prison]
- 4) The punishment must not be excessive.
- 5) The punishment must be in front of the judge.
- 6) The number of stripes must not exceed 40. Judge decided how many.
- 7) The offender must not be humiliated.

The Jews were so concerned that they might exceed the 40 stripes that they reduced the maximum to 39 stripes. Cf. 2 Cor 11:24

Deut 25:4

Animals also are protected

Moses adds a law regarding the humane treatment of animals.

Deut 25:4

"You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out *the grain*."

Earlier we discussed how Paul makes an application of this law.

1 Tim 5:18

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

1 Timothy 5:17-18

Cf. 1 Cor 9:9

Deut 25: 5-10

The bereaved wife

Our culture is so different from the Hebrew's at this time that we cannot really grasp the wisdom of this law. This is called the Levirate marriage.

A form of marriage prescribed by the Law of Moses in which a man was required to marry the widow of a brother who died with no male heir. The term levirate means "husband's brother." The purpose of the law was to provide an heir for the dead brother, thereby preserving his name and estate. The law also was designed to provide for the welfare of the widows (Deut 25:5-10).

The story of Ruth and Boaz, recorded in the Book of Ruth, is a good example of the levirate form of marriage. Reference to levirate marriage was also made by the Sadducees, who tested Jesus with a question about the resurrection

(Matt 22:23-33).

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It was a disgrace for a man not to have a son to carry forward his name. Another aspect is the care of the bereaved widow. Without a son she had no support. So the law provided for both concerns. If the brother refused to marry her it was a shame to him.

Deut 25:5-10

⁵ "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be *married* to a stranger outside *the family*; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶ And it shall be *that* the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. ⁷ But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.' ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But *if* he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,' ⁹ then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

Deut 25:11-12

The violent

Deut 25:11-12

¹¹ "If *two* men fight together, and the wife of one draws near to rescue her husband from the hand of the one attacking him, and puts out her hand and seizes him by the genitals, ¹² then you shall cut off her hand; your eye shall not pity *her*.

This is even more difficult for us to imagine. Two men are fighting and the wife of one man grabs the private parts of the other man.

The cultural issue is the high view of the sanctity of the human body held by the Hebrews. The dignity of the woman is another issue. No Hebrew woman would do this; but if she did the consequences were severe!

Deut 25:13-16

Honest weights and measures.

This law speaks for itself. Don't try to cheat!

Deut 25:13-16

¹³ "You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a heavy and a light. ¹⁴ You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵ You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, that your days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶ For all who do such things, all who behave unrighteously, *are* an abomination to the LORD your God.

Deut 25:17-19

¹⁷"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, ¹⁸how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you *were* tired and weary; and he did not fear God. ¹⁹Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess *as* an inheritance, *that* you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

The attack by the Amalekites came soon after the Hebrews had escaped from Egypt and they were in no position to fight a battle. The stragglers were the lame and infirm, the elderly and children.

The battle was won by prayer [Ex 17:8-16].

Amalek was a grandson of Esau and the Amalekites were enemies of the Hebrews. From Exodus through 1 Samuel there are accounts of attacks against Israel.

The history of the Amalekites was behind the command by Moses to destroy them,

that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

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