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Deuteronomy 22 - 23



Deuteronomy - Steve Gregg

Expounding on Deuteronomy 22-23, Steve Gregg explains how these laws are not directly related to tabernacle worship, but rather concentrate on preventing people from rebelling against their own gender. The laws, for instance, prohibit a woman from cutting her hair like a man, just as it does not command males to cover their heads. He then goes on to discuss the legal issues surrounding a woman who lies about her virginity to her husband, adultery, rape, and vows made to God. Gregg also highlights the importance of keeping vows made to God and encourages repentance and seeking forgiveness when one fails to fulfill them.

Transcript

All right, we're now at Deuteronomy chapter 22, and things continue a little bit as they have in the past several chapters, and that is with miscellaneous laws. Some of them don't appear to be closely related to each other in the same chapter. They are often just a smattering of laws on different subjects, many of which, perhaps most of which, have been mentioned earlier in Exodus or in Leviticus, or sometimes even in Numbers.

And so there will be enough repetition here that it should look familiar to us, much of it. For example, this part here. You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep go astray and hide yourself from them.

You shall certainly bring them back to your brother. And if your brother is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain there with you until your brother seeks it. Then you shall restore it to him.

You shall do the same with his donkey, and so shall you do with his garment. With any lost thing of your brother's, which is his lost and you have found, you shall do likewise. You must not hide yourself.

You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fall down along the road and hide yourself from them. You shall surely help him lift them up again. So there's here a repetition of something that was said earlier, although in the earlier occasion, which was in Exodus chapter 23 specifically, it was said that you should do these acts of kindness

for even your enemy.

It says in Exodus 23 verses four and five. If you meet your enemy's donkey or his ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him. If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under his burden and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.

Now that's the same instructions. The difference is here in Deuteronomy. He just says your brother in Exodus.

It specifies even if it is your brother Jew who hates you and who is not friendly to you and therefore who you would not naturally be inclined to feel like doing favors for. Well, you should do it anyway. It's the right thing to do.

And he says it's not a finders keepers losers weepers kind of situation. Anything of your brother's that he's lost that you found, you hold on to it for him until he comes looking for it. Presumably, if it's a value to him, he'll he'll visit all the neighboring farmers to see if his animals wander over there and he'll find his animal again.

Verse five. A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment for all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God. Now, this law has been interpreted by some, though not very many in our time, but there still are some Christians.

A lady called me on the air either yesterday or the day before who goes to church that teaches that a woman should never wear pants. And of course, we have the instructions of Paul in first Corinthians eleven about a woman not cutting her hair and a man not having long hair and not a woman covering her head when she prays or prophesies and a man must not cover his head when he prays or prophesies. Now, these are all instances of styles which in some cultures are associated with a particular gender and not with the other.

For example, women wearing pants is an issue that could have been raised, I would think, probably back in the 1920s or something like that. I don't know when women first began to wear pants as a style might be even later than that, although I imagine on farms, farmer women may have worn overalls sometimes even before that. I don't know.

In any case, pants at one time in this particular culture were considered to be a male style of clothing, whereas women wore dresses, and some people would like to preserve that as a perpetual God ordained dress style. And yet God has not ordained any particular dress styles for men and for women. The wearing of pants is not divinely ordained as a male style.

It was a it's a matter of custom. It's a matter of culture. And probably, you know, the first time women in Western civilization, you know, put on pants instead of dresses, they

were actually putting on men's clothing.

And probably that was, in spirit, a wrong move to make. Just like if a man today would put on a dress and go out, you know, in public that way. That would be, obviously, we call that transvestism.

That's cross-dressing. Now, transvestism was part of some ancient cults, like the cult of Ishtar. Ancient religions, sometimes they practice that.

And so that might be one of the main reasons here. I think there's another reason, and that is that God doesn't want people to rebel against their own sex, their own gender. God has made a distinction between men and women, and he wants people to embrace their sexuality for what he's made them to be.

There's probably no greater violation of this particular law in spirit than a person who says, well, I'm a man, but I was born a woman in a man's body, or I'm a woman born, I'm a man in a woman's body. And therefore they go and they become transsexual. They change surgically their bodies.

And there's nothing more extremely a violation of this principle than to totally reject your sexuality and seek to be what God has not made you to be. And now when it comes to wearing pants today, it's a ridiculous thing to say that pants are a male style. Every woman in this room has pants on, and probably every woman you'll see in town today has pants on.

It's the female style as well as the male style. It's not cross-dressing. There may have been a time when it was, but you know, when men say that women shouldn't wear pants, I sometimes like to take them to the women's clothing department and show them some of the pants there and see if any man would wear those.

Obviously, there are styles of pants that are not masculine at all and that no man in his right mind would wear. Some styles no woman in her right mind would wear either. But the fact is that an issue might be an issue of modesty.

And with some church groups, that would be the issue. They consider that women wearing pants is an immodest thing, but that's again too generic because obviously there are dresses that are more immodest than some styles of pants are. And so really the issue here, I think there are people who like women in dresses more than in pants.

I personally like dresses on women more than pants, probably, but maybe not all the time. But I can appreciate the cultural taste, but it's wrong to use the Bible to try to impose a cultural preference on Christians and to judge them wrongly and to say that for women to wear pants is for them to put on a man's style. That simply isn't true any more than for a man who goes to Scotland and wears a kilt, which looks over here like what we call a skirt.

I mean, a man could wear one of those over here if he's Scottish and if it's very obvious that he's dressed up in a traditional Scotsman's clothing. But if that weren't so, a kilt would be regarded as a woman's kind of garment here. But in Scotland it would not be.

And so it's entirely a cultural thing. Even the hair length and the covering of the head that Paul refers to is a cultural matter. In Corinth, a Greek city, the women wore their hair long and covered their head when they were pious.

From what I've heard, prostitutes cut their hair in Corinth so that a woman who cut her hair was sort of sending a wrong message about what kind of woman she was. And Paul told the women not to do that. Likewise, men did not cover their head and they did not wear long hair.

In Corinth, that would have been considered to be effeminate. It would have been a woman's style. But in many cultures, including Paul's own culture, a man might have long hair, especially if he took a Nazarite style.

And it would not be considered to be effeminate at all. And so, you know, those matters of man wearing what pertains to woman and woman wearing what pertains to man. Well, what pertains as a clothing style to a man or woman varies from culture to culture.

And even Paul, in talking about the hair length issues and the covering of the head issues in 1 Corinthians 11, 16, said, if anyone seems contentious, we don't have any such customs, he said. Neither do the churches of God. That is to say that it's not a universal thing.

It's their local custom. He's advising the Corinthians to be sensitive to the cultural norms of dress and hairstyle. And people should be.

Because obviously what you wear and perhaps the way you wear your hair and other other ways that you adorn yourself can send a message. And a Christian should make sure they're not sending the wrong message by what they choose to do with their appearance. Now, verse six.

If a bird's nest happens to be before you along the way in any tree or on the ground with young ones or eggs with the mother sitting on the young or the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You should surely let the mother go and take the young for yourself that it may be well with you and that you may prolong your days. Now, obviously happening upon a bird's nest could be considered to be a, you know, an easy way to take home some food.

If there are eggs there, if they're young birds that have any meat on them, then you can take them, but you can't take them in the mother at the same time. Now, notice he didn't say you can take the mother and leave the babies because that babies would die without their mother. It's clear that the idea is to preserve the species and not to.

I mean, basically, it's kind of an environmental concern. It's a it's a concern that you don't wastefully exterminate a species of animals. And so you can take the babies or the eggs, but leave the mother free to go produce more babies than eggs.

And when you build a new house, then you should make a parapet or a railing around the roof on top that you may not bring blood guiltiness on your house if anyone falls from it. This would be what we call today criminal negligence. If you have a situation on your home that's dangerous and someone falls into it or gets hurt on it, then you're responsible.

You shouldn't have had such a dangerous situation for people unwittingly to succumb to. The roofs of the houses were flat. They were the extended living area of the house in a land like Israel.

In those days, a lot of people simply lived in one room houses or two room houses. And the roof provided additional living space, a place to expand to, to in the evenings when it was not too hot to go out and hang out on the roof. Peter was actually on the roof of a house in Joppa when he saw the vision of the sheep with the animals lowered down.

It's not uncommon for people to go up on the roof of a house. That was where people went. But the roof that was built, the house that was built had to have around the roof a, what's called here a parapet, some kind of a railing, something to prevent people from falling off the edge by accident.

Because it suggests if you don't provide something like that, then you may become blood guilty if somebody falls off the edge of your house. It should have been foreseen and prevented. Verse nine, you shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled.

You should not plow with an ox and a donkey together, and you should not wear a garment of different sorts, such as wool and linen mixed together. Now there's three laws in a row that have to do with not mixing things that are not properly mixed. And prometeers often try to find some practical reasons for this.

For example, if you mix different kinds of strains of grape in your vineyard, there may be some inadvertent hybridization that takes place. Now, a hybrid usually becomes sterile or does not produce the next generation. A hybrid grape might not produce any seed, and therefore you corrupt your vintage.

You do harm to your own prosperity if you allow a situation where there may be that kind of cross-pollinization and hybridization going on. Or the same thing with different kinds of seed of grain. Likewise, plowing with an ox and a donkey under one yoke is not really very practical.

A donkey is a more stubborn animal. An ox is a larger animal. They have a different kind

of gait.

They're not really going to pull well together. They're not going to be both equally willing to work. And so it's just not practical.

Now, as far as not mixing cloths, wool and linen, in one garment, I don't know if there's any practical issues there. I remember years ago hearing someone trying to say that they found that when you mix those fabrics together and wear them together, that it has some kind of adverse effect on your health or your energy or something like that. It's kind of a new-aging suggestion, I think.

But I don't think any of these laws that we just read, any of these three laws, have anything to do with practicality. I mean, anyone can see that it's impractical to plow with an ox and a donkey together, but why would it be forbidden? Why would it have to be forbidden? You'd think a person would see immediately that it's not a wise thing to do. The law is not there to keep you from doing things that are impractical.

It's there to keep you from doing things that are wrong. And likewise, hybridization, I guess that could be a problem that people wouldn't know about and God would know about, so he tells them not to mix seeds in there. But I think that all these laws have obviously something in common.

They both have to do with mixing things that are not alike. Putting things together, joining them together, though they don't belong together. And I think that Paul expressed the idea, the spiritual idea behind this, over in 2 Corinthians 6, verses 14 through 16.

In 2 Corinthians 6, 14, Paul said, don't be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has light with darkness? And so forth. The idea is that there are things that are spiritually unlike each other, and they should not be bound together and somehow made to work together as a team, like a donkey and an ox.

A donkey is an unclean animal. An ox is a clean animal. A Christian is a clean animal, as far as that imagery goes.

And a non-Christian is an unclean animal. And to bind them together in one task, to make them, to treat them as if they're the same as each other, to not recognize the distinction that exists, is a mistake. And I think that what these laws are all trying to say, although I don't think any of them are morally binding, in the sense that whether, I don't think there's a moral issue if you mix different, put different grains in your field or work, you know, some kind of a garment that's got wool and linen mixed together or other kinds of fabric mixed together.

I don't think that's a moral issue with God. I think there's a spiritual lesson intended here, as with most of the ceremonial law. Well, it's with all of the ceremonies.

And that is that there are things that are spiritually unlike, and to fail to make the distinction and to mix them together as if they're the same thing, is a mistake. When it comes to being yoked together from believers, that is a very good example of that very thing. If people marry each other, and one's a Christian, one's a non-Christian, it's like they're not noticing something very important, like they're not the same species.

One of them is born again. One of them is a child of God. The other is a child of Adam only.

That's like almost different species of human beings. It's mixing things that aren't the same. And failing to see the significant difference in them.

And so I think that this is really a ceremonial kind of a law, though it's not directly related with tabernacle worship. It does seem to have, in my opinion, a spiritual symbolism behind it. In verse 12, it says, you shall make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover yourself.

That's just a repetition of number 15, verses 37 through 41, who said they had to make a blue tassel or a blue border on their garment to remind them to keep the law. They're supposed to look down and see that there and remind themselves, oh yeah, I'm supposed to keep the laws of God. Sort of like kind of string around your finger to remind you that you're supposed to remember something.

Verse 13, if any man takes a wife and goes into her and detests her and charges her with shameful conduct and brings a bad name on her and says, I took this woman. And when I came to her, I found that she was not a virgin. Then the father and mother of the young woman shall take and bring out the evidence of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate.

And the young woman's father shall say to the elders, I gave my daughter to this man as a wife and he detests her. Now he is charged with shameful conduct saying, I found your daughter was not a virgin. And yet these are the evidences of my daughter's virginity.

And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. Then the elders of the city shall take that man and punish him. And they shall find him 100 shekels of silver and give them to the father of the young woman, because he has brought a bad name on a virgin of Israel and she shall be his wife.

And he cannot divorce her all his days. But if the thing is true and evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman, then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stone, because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel to play the harlot in her father's house. So you should put away the evil person from among you.

Now, here we have an issue of a woman who is accused of having given up her virginity

while she was a single girl living in her father's house. That is, before getting married. If she were found, in fact, to be truly guilty of this, she was stoned to death, which seems strange in one sense, because although the stoning of adulterers and adulterous, this was commonly ordained in the scripture, in fact, we're going to find it even just before us as we read on.

But yet, usually when a virgin who was not betrothed to anybody had sex with somebody, there was not a death penalty. But there was a requirement that they marry. Now, here's an instance where she apparently had sex with somebody, but they didn't marry.

In fact, the man who she had sex with is not even known. He's not made public in this. She concealed it and she went on with her life and then she presented herself to her husband as if she was a virgin, but she was not.

And therefore, it's a little different. You see what this suggests, I guess, is that she really committed adultery against her future husband, which is an interesting concept because we might think of extra marital sex among unmarried people as, you know, less of an issue than adultery. And in some cases, it was certainly treated as less than an issue, but only when the couple actually went ahead and got married.

So that the couple that had sex actually were the same couple that were later married. But if there was sex between a couple and they didn't marry and she married someone else, then she had committed adultery against her future actual husband. And the concept there seems to be that a woman who's not married, or maybe a man who's not married too, is possibly the future husband or wife of someone else and therefore needs to be treated that way by others.

And now if a woman is not betrothed and she slept with a man and they got married, then that was not only permissible, that was commanded, that they had to get married. Because God intended for sex only to be between married parties. But, and it was no adultery, because the person she married and the person she had sex with was the same person.

It was her, as it turns out, her future husband that she had sex with. That doesn't make sex before marriage okay, but it just means that it's not the same thing as adultery if the couple also gets married. But this is a case where a woman has had sex with someone who is not in the picture now, and yet she has a husband who's someone else later on.

And so her sex earlier, since she didn't end up marrying the man she had sex with, ended up being adultery against the man she did end up marrying. Now they had in those days what they called tokens of virginity, or evidences of virginity. You may have heard about these.

It's been sort of a Middle Eastern custom, and really an ancient custom, that other societies have practiced too. I think some African tribes have done it and others. But the idea is that on the wedding night the virgin girl, when she has sex for the first time, generally believes.

Now not always, and if she doesn't this could be a problem with this kind of a law. But generally when her hymen is broken she believes, and therefore she leaves blood on the sheets. Well the sheets would be preserved as proof that she had been a virgin.

If there was no blood on the sheets, then it was possible that she was not a virgin. I say possible because sometimes women, obviously, other things in life besides having sex, can break a woman's hymen. So sometimes a woman, though she is a virgin at marriage, she doesn't have that phenomenon.

But that would be a problem. I think maybe that's true in our society more because women are more active. You know, doing things like horseback riding and stuff can cause that to happen.

I think maybe in those days women being more domestic around the house and so forth, that you just didn't really have things happening to them other than their first night of sex to cause that bleeding to occur. In any case, generally speaking, there would be available proof of her virginity on her wedding night. You may have heard stories, I have heard stories of people in the Middle East or in some of what we call more primitive cultures who still practice this.

The family waits outside the tent of the new couple waiting for them to pass the sheets out and so they make a custom of killing a chicken in there and put the chicken's blood on it and pass the sheet out so that the family will go away and give them some privacy, you know. I don't know if that's really something that happens or just something I've been told. But in any case, the idea here is that the man thinks he's marrying a virgin.

She does not reveal that she is not a virgin to him. So she's lying to him. She's defrauding him.

And if she's guilty, she is stoned to death because she's an adulteress. Now, what's weird about this law and what I'm not even very comfortable with about it is that if it turns out that he is proven to be lying about her, he is not put to death when he should be. Because the law of Moses was that if a false witness bears witness against someone and his witness is proven false, then he should be punished with the punishment that his accused, falsely accused brother would have received.

So in this case, since if his accusation against the girl had proved to be true, she would have been put to death. Then if it proves this witness was false, then he should be put to death. It would seem instead he has to pay a steep fine, 100 shekels of silver to be like

over three months wages.

And he has to marry her and he has to stay with her for life. He can't divorce her. Now, there's a couple of situations that we read of in this chapter where a man cannot divorce his wife all his days instead of him being put to death.

I guess it's considered to be like a life sentence. And you might not think of marriage as a life sentence unless you're unhappily married. But this man, if he's making accusations against his wife that he hopes will have her put to death, it doesn't seem like he's very happy with her.

And therefore, his requirement to continue to support her and have family with her and do the things that a husband supposed to do for a wife is his sentence rather than death, perhaps because if he was put to death, she would be left a widow and that would be a bad situation for her. I don't know exactly why this is the one case in the law where a man, if he makes a false accusation, does not receive exactly the same penalty that would have come upon his accused. But there are perhaps mitigating circumstances.

The woman becoming a widow would doubly victimize her if she is in fact innocent. There's no sense in her losing her husband, too, even though he's a creep. Most women in those days would rather have had a husband who is a creep than no husband at all.

It was hard for a woman to get by without a husband. A widow had a hard lot in life and therefore a man who would stay with her and support her and be a father to her children, even if he wasn't a very loving guy, was still considered to be better than nothing. And so this is how that kind of situation was handled.

Verse 22. If a man is found lying with a woman married to a husband, that's a different subject, then both of them shall die. Both the man that lay with the woman and the woman.

So you should put away the evil person from Israel. So this is just adulterers should be put to death. But it also says if a young woman who is betrothed to a husband and a man finds her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them out both to the gate of the city and you shall stone them to death with stones.

The young woman, because she did not cry out in the city and the man, because he humbled his neighbor's wife. Now, she's called his neighbor's wife, although they're not married. Technically, they're betrothed.

But this illustrates something that was true in biblical times and helpful for us to understand as we read the Bible, that a betrothed woman is considered married. Generally speaking, the betrothed couple have not slept together yet, but they are bound together by an agreement between the families, which is as binding as a marriage vow. And therefore, for the most part, they can't really get out of betrothal, except for

the same reasons that they could get out of the marriage.

Now, in the Old Testament, that might be any number of reasons in the New Testament. You know, there were some dispute because there were some rabbis who said only adultery was sufficient grounds for divorce. Now, when Joseph found that Mary, his betrothed, was pregnant and assumed that she had been with a man, he sought to divorce her.

And that's what you would essentially do if you're if you're going to end the betrothal. It's just like ending a marriage. You divorce a betrothed spouse.

And so the woman is called the wife and her man is called her husband. Now, before we comment on this, we need to read the next verses. It says, but if a man finds a betrothed young woman in the countryside and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die.

But you shall do nothing to the young woman. There is in the young woman no sin worthy of death, for just as when a man rises against his neighbor and kills him, even so is it in this matter. You know, she's a victim of a crime, of a violent attack.

For he found her in the countryside and the betrothed young woman cried out, but there was no one to save her. Now, that is assuming that to be true. It's possible that she was consenting, but no one knows.

And therefore, she is given the benefit of the doubt. The law is different if the rape takes place in the city than in the countryside, because in the city, she could have cried out. She could have called for help.

And if this sex act took place in a place where she could have called out for help, but she didn't, the assumption is it was not a rape at all. It was consenting. Remember, silence is counted as consent.

That's a legal principle in the Jewish law and in modern law. And so the fact that she didn't cry out means she wasn't objecting to the relationship. And therefore, it's adultery on both sides.

They're both put to death. But in the case where it was out in the country, well, you know, it could have been consenting even then, but no one knows. If she says it was not, you're supposed to believe her.

And no one can prove her wrong because it was out where no one could have heard her if she cried. So in a sense, just as the previous law about the virgin who's falsely accused, you know, she's put to death if she's really guilty, but her husband is not put to death if he's falsely accused her. That law seems to kind of slant it on the side of the man against the woman.

Although, again, like I said, the woman might prefer to not have her husband killed. But this one slants more in favor of the woman. If it takes place out in the country, the man gets killed.

I mean, everyone knows he did it on purpose. As far as she's concerned, she might have done it on purpose too, but they don't know and they have to give her the doubt. She's presumed innocent because no one can prove her to be guilty.

That's a positive thing. It's very different than in Muslim law. As I understand it, in a Muslim country, if a woman is raped, she's pretty much put to death for it.

Unless she can prove, I think she needs like four witnesses who can prove that she was raped. Something like that. Yeah.

Is that right? Four men, four men have to bear witness that she was raped. Yeah. So, I mean, so, I mean, that's, I mean, there's a totally different standard here, a very anti-woman bent of the Muslim law.

But here the woman is treated actually fairly that she's, even though she could be guilty, she's assumed innocent since no one can prove that she's guilty. Verse 28. If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, okay, here's a different situation.

We had a married couple, that is to say a married woman who sleeps with some daughter husband. Well, they're both put to death. A betrothed woman who sleeps with a man, well, it's in the city, they'll both be put to death.

If it's in the country, only he will be put to death. Now we have a situation where the young woman is not betrothed and she's not owned by anybody. She's not claimed, so to speak.

Then if a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed and he seizes her and lies with her and they are found out, then the man who lay with her shall give the young woman's father 50 shekels of silver and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her. He shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days. Now, some have thought this is kind of an unkind law for the girl because here she's got to marry her rapist.

And rape is presumably what is in view here because it says he seizes her and lays with her. Although perhaps this is the kind of situation where it's in the city, which most of it would be. I mean, it's not that often this would happen out in the countryside.

And perhaps if she didn't cry out, maybe she didn't mind being seized and used this way. I don't know. It's hard to say what's presumed here.

But we do know that from another law that was given earlier in Exodus, that in such a

case, the girl's father could refuse to let the man have her in marriage. So it would not be absolutely necessary for this marriage to take place. And if the girl's father, you know, at her request, even refused to let the marriage take place, then she would not have to marry him.

But in both this case and the case of the man who had falsely accused his wife of not being a virgin, we're told in verse 19 and verse 29, he should not be permitted to divorce her all his days. And the fact that this is mentioned as a special circumstance means that divorce was permitted in many other cases, perhaps not every other case, but there were there were some cases where divorce was permitted. These were had to be mentioned because they were exceptions.

Divorce would not be permitted in these cases. I say that because the only real direct legislation about divorce we have in the Old Testament, we're going to be coming upon it in Chapter 24 of Deuteronomy. And it is unclear.

And some people have felt that it does not actually permit divorce. And some have said God never permitted divorce. But it seems to me by saying that these special cases are such that a man cannot ever divorce his wife would suggest that if it wasn't such a case, there would be circumstances which perhaps he could.

It's a special penalty added to this particular kind of crime. Now, verse 23, Chapter 23, he who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation should not enter the congregation of the Lord. One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the congregation of the Lord, even to the 10th generation.

None of his descendants shall enter the congregation of the Lord. An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter the congregation of the Lord, even to the 10th generation. None of his descendants shall enter the congregation of the Lord forever because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt.

And because they don't mean the Moabites hired against you, Balaam, the son of Baal from Pethor of Mesopotamia to curse you. Nevertheless, Yahweh, your God would not listen to Balaam, but the Lord, your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the Lord, your God loves you. You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever.

You shall not abhor an Edomite for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian because you were an alien in his land. The children of the third generation born to them may enter the congregation of the Lord.

So some of these are not, but not all of them. These rules in the first eight verses have come up earlier in Leviticus 21 verses 20 and 22, 5 and 6 and so forth. And it's just really a ceremonial thing.

If a person doesn't have the ability to procreate, if a person is emasculated, then he is unable to bear fruit. And I believe his condition corresponds spiritually with a person who's spiritually unfruitful. A person of illegitimate birth corresponds spiritually to one who is not a true son of God.

Remember, it says in Hebrews chapter 12, If you do not receive chastening from God, as all true sons do, then you're a bastard and not a legitimate son. And I think that these are ceremonial things, restrictions that have a counterpart in something spiritual. And there and remember, just because they couldn't enter the congregation of the Lord, it doesn't mean that they couldn't be saved.

It just means that in the rituals of the tabernacle, they would not they had a part and their part was to be excluded to convey these different messages that had spiritual counterparts. The Ammonites and the Moabites are treated as, you know, bad guys for up to 10 generations. That would mean that if you had an ancestor eight or nine generations back that was an Ammonite or a Moabite, you couldn't enter the tabernacle.

Now, David had a great grandmother who was a Moabite, Ruth, but probably because she was the female and not the male in the couple. You know, the offspring, Obed, was not considered to be a Moabite, was considered to be a Bethlehemite of Judea, even though it had a Moabite mother. I think that having a mother of one of these races would not necessarily corrupt your line.

Apparently not in David's case. Anyway, that's what if your father was a Moabite, then you would you be a Moabite. That's how it would be considered, I think.

Now, the Edomites and the Egyptians were not to be abhorred. I'm not sure why the Edomites were related to Israel about the same as were the Moabites and the Ammonites. And also the Edomites forbade Israel to go to their land, just like the Moabites did.

But special curses on the Moabites because they hired Balaam, whereas the Edomites didn't do something like that. So they're only excluded from the tabernacle for three generations, not 10. Likewise, Egyptians.

And you're not to abhor an Egyptian because you're an alien in his land. Now, of course, the truth is you were a slave in his land, but that's not what's underscored here. You were a guest in his land.

True. Eventually, you were made slaves. But there was a season where the Israelites lived under the favor of the Egyptians when Joseph was alive.

And when the Jews, the Israelites first went into Egypt, they were treated favorably. They were aliens hosted hospitably in the land of Egypt. Yes, things turned around, but they're to remember that they have something of a debt of gratitude to Egypt also for the

hospitality that had been shown to them.

And so three generations only excluded from the tabernacle. Now, verse nine, when an army goes out against your enemies. When your army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing.

If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, it means a wet dream. Then he shall go outside the camp. He shall not come inside the camp.

But he shall. It shall be when evening comes and he shall wash himself with water. And when the sun sets, he may come back into the camp again.

And I was having a wet dream just made a man unclean until evening. You'd have to do the normal things of washing with water. But this includes abuse of battle.

This is when they're at war in camp on the battleground. He has to kind of cut himself out of the out of the action and out of the camp until he's been made clean again from this. But it says in verse 12, also, you shall have a place outside the camp where you may go out and you shall have an implement among your equipment.

And when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. So when you defecate, this is for people, you know, in the camp, they're not going to be camping in the wilderness anymore. They're going to be living in houses.

But when they go out to war, when they're in camp against enemies, they have to have some means of, you know, getting rid of defecation and not just leaving it on the ground like animals do. And he says, because the Lord, your God walks in the midst of your camp. The imagery there almost sounds like God is saying, I'm walking around your camp.

I don't want to watch where I step. You know, you cover up your stuff to deliver you and to give your enemies over to you. Therefore, you can't.

Your camp should be holy that he may see no unclean thing among you and turn away from you. You should not give back to his master, the slave who has escaped from his master to you. He may dwell with you in your midst in a place which he chooses within one of your gates where it seems best to him.

You should not oppress him now. That's an interesting law and view the fact that slave was considered property. And we were told that an animal of a neighbor wanders off.

You're supposed to return the animal to him or anything else that is his garment or anything else is mentioned. His office is asked his garment. Anything you find of your neighbors is supposed to return to him.

But that apparently did not apply to slaves. So under the law, even though slavery was permitted, if a slave managed to get away from his master. He was considered to have gotten away and he's free and you're not supposed to send him back to his master.

Now, you might think this. What impact does this have on, say, the book of Philemon, for a slave named Onesimus had fled from a master named Philemon and had come to Paul and Paul had converted him and Paul had him go back to his master. Well, Paul did tell him to go back to his master, though Paul did not take him to his master.

Paul was in prison at the time. And so Paul didn't make him go back. He couldn't make him go back.

Paul had no power to do that. He counseled him to go back because there was a broken relationship there. Both the slave and the master were Christians and there was there was a grievance there between them because of this.

And there appears to be evidence in Philemon that that Onesimus had, when running away from Philemon, had stolen stuff from him, too. And so things had to be made right. And so Paul urged Philemon to receive Onesimus back and then by implication, perhaps even to set him free.

He urged Onesimus to go back, but that would still be a voluntary act on Onesimus. As far as a free man to go where he wanted to. And so Paul didn't really return him to his master.

He simply counseled him to go back to his master, which he did. There should be no ritual harlot or daughters of Israel or the daughters of Israel or a perverted one of the sons of Israel, meaning, of course, a male prostitute, really, which both of those were parts of pagan religious practices. You should not bring the hire of a harlot nor the price of a dog to the house of the Lord your God.

A dog was a term they used for a male prostitute. Again, this is simply an application on the previous verse in Israel. They're not supposed to employ.

Money from such be used to support the worship of God. The pagan religions would generate money for the support of their religious cult from the prostitutes in their temple. But you should not bring the hire of a harlot or the price of a dog into the house of the Lord your God for any valid offering for both of these are abominations to the Lord your God.

So you don't bring dirty money to the temple. You don't support the ministry of God with ill-gotten gains in this case, the proceeds of prostitution. And perhaps the main issue here is that they not begin to employ the pagan forms of worship, which which saw prostitution as a means of helping to support.

But I think that in general, if the church knows that some gift is being offered to it was gotten through criminal action or through some other means, it's not good money. I think the church should probably turn down such a gift. Verse 19, you should not charge interest to your brother, interest on money or food or anything that is lent out on interest to 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 which all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess. We've talked about interest before. That subject has come up previously.

When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you should not delay to pay it. For your way, your God will surely required of you and it would be a sin to you. But if you abstain from bowing, it should not be a sin to you.

But that which has gone from your lips, you shall keep and perform for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God. What you promised with your mouth that is, there is no law that requires you to make vows. But if you do vow, you definitely have to keep your vow.

And because you've made a commitment voluntarily, God expects you to be an honest person who keeps your promises over any cleavage. There's a Solomon talks about this subject to talk about vows. Chapter five, verse one.

What prudently when you go into the house of God and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools for they do not know what they that they do evil, do not be rash with your mouth. Meaning don't make rash vows and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore, let your words be few for a dream comes through much activity and a fool's voice is known by as many words when you make a vow to God.

Do not delay to pay it for. He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed.

It is better not to vow than to vow and not to pay. Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger of God that it was an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? So the idea is don't make a vow and later say, well, I made a mistake.

It was really not something I should have said. I don't want to give that now. That's not going to be an excuse that God allows.

You make a promise to God, you should keep it. Now, I was asked just the other day about Christians who make vows. Many times a young Christian will make a foolish vow, which really is not realistic for them to keep like about it.

I will always forever all my life do such a thing. I'm going to get up at three in the

morning every day for the rest of my life and pray for 40 hours. Well, a young Christian in their zeal may feel like that's something that they can do and find that that's really something that can't be done.

For them. Now, some people would say, well, you should do it anyway. And frankly, if you keep your mouth, keep your mouth.

But I think there are times when God recognizes that immature people. Don't know what they're saying, you know, if Jesus could forgive the people who crucified him because they don't know what they do, then I would think that there's lesser things that people don't know what they're doing that God would forgive also, though there is something to be said for keeping your vow, no matter how difficult it is to keep. Sometimes it's just you made the wrong vow.

You were ill informed. It was brought up in conversation the other day. What about a Christian girl who gets saved and she says, oh, God, I'll never marry.

You know, I'm going to just stay single for you. Well, you know, that's a hard call. But I personally think that a person who later realized that I spoke foolishly, I was rash.

God forgive me for that, because I think I did the wrong thing. I think I think you can be forgiven for that. Remember, in Numbers chapter 30, if a girl made a vow, her father could nullify it and there be no guilt to her for not keeping it.

Her father could nullify it the day he heard of it or a woman's husband could. Now, when a man made a vow, he had to keep it. But again, the violation of a vow, once it's viewed to be, let's say, it'd be wrong to keep it.

It's contrary to the will of God, because you vowed something not knowing enough about the situation. To my mind, I think a person can repent of a vow like that and just say, God, I made a mistake and forgive me. It's a sin.

The vow itself was a sin because it was presumptuous. But it's a hard call, because there's nothing in the Bible that specifically says what I just said. But it was mentioned to me, you know, it's sort of like when a little child says to their father or their mother, you know, I'm going to, Mommy, I'm never getting married.

I'm just going to stay here and take care of you all my life, you know. Well, the mother knows that the little child isn't really making a responsible promise. The child doesn't even know what they're promising.

And obviously, a parent would release a child from that because they don't, they recognize it was not a knowledgeable person who made the vow. And so I think that God is no less gracious than that. But it's fairly common.

I mean, it's not universal, but lots of times, zealous young Christians make vows to God, which they later, just after they grow up a little bit in the Lord, they realize that was stupid and maybe even wrong. I had a caller who said that when she had gotten first faith, she vowed that she was going to go to church every Sunday. And now she felt bound to it.

And the church she was in was the Roman Catholic Church. And she was starting to feel, you know, like that wasn't even the right church for her to be in. And yet that's where she vowed to be.

What do you do? I personally think that there are times when breaking a vow of that sort, because it was a wrong vow to make would be all right. But that's not the same with a wedding vow. That's a covenant.

A wedding vow is not just a vow. That's a covenant you enter into. And that's a different thing.

Now, breaking wedding vows is going to come up in Chapter 24. We're only a couple verses from there, but we won't get to it in a session. But in in verses 24 and 25, it says, when you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of the grapes at your pleasure, but you should not put in any into a container.

When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you should not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain. In other words, it'd be kind of hard to starve in Israel if you're poor. You could go into somebody's grain field or vineyard, assuming it's the right time of the year, and pick some food and eat it.

You're welcome to it. But you can't harvest it. You can't take in a bushel basket and take home, you know, a month's worth of grain.

Or grapes or whatever. That's not yours. You can eat what you need to eat going through.

You can sample it. You can eat what you need to eat as you're passing through on the road, but you can't go in and act like it's your own place. And this was made, of course, for the sake of travelers and for the sake of the poor, that they would not go hungry.

And Jesus' disciples, you remember, were going through some grain fields in Matthew chapter 12, verse 1. And they began to pluck the heads of grain and rub them in their hands and eat them. It wasn't their field, but they were eating somebody else's grain. Well, that was legal.

That was okay to do it. They got criticized because they were doing it on the Sabbath day. And that was considered to be, by their Pharisees, considered to be too much work to do on the Sabbath day.

But it was not wrong to take somebody else's grain. That was permitted right here in the law. And so, that way, I guess the assumption would be also if you had a farm or a vineyard, that you freely expected strangers to be able to eat of it.

As long as they weren't going to take a significant portion. All right, we should stop there for lack of further time, and we will pick up chapter 24 and the law concerning divorce when we come back. Thank you for watching.