

THY BROTHER SHOULD SEEM VILE UNTO THEE >>>

DEUTERONOMY CHAPTERS TWENTY-FIVE AND TWENTY-SIX

~ The Bible is truly a remarkable book when considered sincerely, and in an educated manner. It is undeniably ageless and timeless. If you have yours available, open it to this section of Scripture and pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment before you read any further. Honestly, adherence to the commands of the True and Living God would literally solve all of the problems and end all atrocities in this world. We are told how to prevent crime completely, protect the rights of women and widows, deal with the poor, protect the environment and be kind to animals and, of course, how to raise a clean, educated and right-thinking child and family. Well, the world is highly likely to continue to reject the Word of God; but we're going to learn all about all of those things in this report on the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth chapters of Deuteronomy. The legal definition for most of these commands would be "misdemeanors." Certain crimes that arose because of difficulties between individuals over property and money. These are not the serious crimes worthy of death as we have been considering previously. Nonetheless, punishment will have to be carried out in response to these infractions, in order to prevent these wrongs from occurring habitually and becoming an acceptable norm in the camp....

XXV

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 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.

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.

~ Exceeding forty stripes can easily result in death. It's what is known as "beating a man half to death." Any number of stripes, from one up, could be carried out at the discretion of the punisher. I'm sure every number was used throughout the long history of the nation Israel for the same crime; and I'm also sure some vile brothers didn't make it through the beating. Of course, this method of punishment has gone totally out of style today; however, most Christian lawyers agree that we could literally empty our jails if we incorporated public flogging. Putting people in an air-conditioned jail and feeding them for a few days, which the offender just sleeps away anyways, doesn't do anything except encourage crime. If someone were publicly whipped or placed into stocks the crime rate would drop ninety percent overnight – you can just write that statistic down. See, this is God's answer to crime, and it just happens to work. I doubt Israel had a serious crime problem; and we hear very little about criminals in the historical books of the Old Testament....

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

~ We've all seen the pictures of the Arab with the ox walking in a circle; they still do it today. Well, the ox is working for you and doing your hard labor. God has concern for the animals, and God says, "let the animal eat."

1 Corinthians 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? ~

~ **Alright – that means pay your preacher, friends.** It also reveals that Paul wasn't teaching them to tithe. Are these reports a blessing to your heart?

Do these Bible studies mean anything to you? The man who brings you SOUND doctrine - God says, "you are to feed that man by providing material provisions." That is Paul's application of this. Well, I'm probably just an old ox anyways; maybe I don't plow enough or well enough. Maybe I just deserve a muzzle on? Some people seem to just think I am going around in circles and not getting anywhere anyways. I have to wonder if they really care about the cause of Christ and furthering the Gospel. Well, okay, let's keep going then....

5 If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, 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 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.

~ God has a method for taking care of His people. This is a good law, but it's almost humorous. This law happens to protect womanhood. Women seem to want rights today and God, obviously, thought women should have those rights also - a long time ago. Most of those living under this law made their living in agriculture, raising oxen or sheep. Well, suppose a man dies who has a huge farm and the widow can't possibly take care of it. This translates into an instance where the woman would do the proposing for marriage. She is permitted under law to claim one of her husband's brothers, cousins – or any near relative; although she can't marry from another tribe, and she cannot marry a foreigner. Well, once she makes the claim to that man it would be a disgrace for the man to refuse her. She could take him into court and charge him accordingly....

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 call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her;

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.

~ It doesn't sound so bad in black in white, but this would have made you the disgrace of the entire tribe. Neglect or an unwillingness to perform that which is commanded according to the law revealed the fact that there was no loyalty to his brother or nation and, therefore, exposes the utter lack of love for either. Rejecting a woman making claim to him under the Mosaic Law showed that the man was not concerned in any way about anything except himself. It also told everyone that the man did not obey God. We are going to see this law in a very effectual application and operation when we get to the book of Ruth. The Lord protects women, and He protects the family – every time....

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

~ If you had a brother that fell in love, you might need to have a talk with that brother before things got too far along. Maybe that girl was one you wouldn't want if something were to happen to him, you know? Well, this certainly drew the family together and made the family business a REAL family business. That's the way God works as He brings togetherness and protection to families. This would also protect the land because the land would remain in the same family. If your family was called the "house of him that hath his shoe loosed" – that designated that your family walked loose with God. This is a very good – very spiritually applicable law. Again, we'll develop the entire theme on this Spiritual Safari in the little book of Ruth....

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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.

~ We've encountered Amalek several times so far. They attacked the children of Israel when they first came out of Egypt. The Amalekites were nomads on the desert. We saw the battle between the nation Israel and Amalek in Exodus; when Moses went to the top of the mountain and Aaron and Hur held Moses arms up in prayer to God. When the hands were up, Joshua prevailed; and when they let Moses hands down, the Amalekites

prevailed. God said, at that time, that He would “utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven” - Exodus chapter seventeen verse fourteen.

Well, Amalek also represents the flesh, as we have also seen before. God plans to, eventually, get rid of our flesh. Our old nature isn't going to Heaven, friends. Our old nature can never be obedient unto God, and we can never get rid of it down here. Have you sensed that you still have yours? Paul, in Romans, will develop this thoroughly when we get there; but this is an introductory matter to this subject. We saw the Lord say, in the reference to Exodus we had in the last paragraph, that He would “have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

We also considered in our previous report that the flesh is not to be despised. So, another paradox presents itself. There are places where the Bible appears to be contradictory; however, a close examination will always reveal that those two things, which can seem diametrically opposed to each other, just happen to BOTH be true. If you do not know your Bible completely, properly and correctly, then you will never discern these truths - and many people are turned away from the faith altogether by them. That's how God works, my friends. We learned that we cannot overcome the flesh by becoming ascetic or by trying to beat it down or starve it out. That religious piosity will not get us anywhere with God. There is, however, a war being waged at all times between the spirit and the flesh and visa versa. Paul said the spirit and the flesh are contrary to each other in the epistle to the Galatians. Fighting will never overcome the flesh; we can ONLY have victory over the flesh when we are in the Spirit of God. Only God can produce the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. Well, I'm glad God intends to rid me of my flesh soon enough....

XXVI

1 And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein;

2 That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

3 And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us.

4 And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God.

5 And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous:

6 And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

7 And when we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

8 And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders:

9 And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.

10 And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God:

11 And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

12 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them:

14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

15 Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

16 This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

17 Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice:

18 And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;

19 And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made , in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

~ I feel we should have had chapter twenty-six a long, long time ago. This could be considered the first Thanksgiving. When we give in thanksgiving, we should do so with the FIRST fruits. Most givers pay the preacher IF there's something left over to make a thanksgiving offering with. It's never much. Most people never give anything. God wouldn't have given this chapter if it had not been a problem amongst the children of Israel. Well, it's STILL a problem today, because most people do not follow this command. In fact, most do not even know this section of Scripture exists.

Moses tells us – very definitely – in verse five that Abraham was a Syrian. The word “Hebrew” literally means “he came from the other side.” Well, Abraham came from the other side of the Jordan River is what that means. Abraham was no more an Israelite than he was an Ishmaelite. Of course, Abraham was the father of them both. Well, the way those very different nations and people developed make this section of Scripture very interesting to me.

The traditional Thanksgiving observance, according to the pilgrims, was a day to bring an offering of such to God. Anyone who wants to argue with that historical fact is simply not worthy of thoughtful consideration. It's a good tradition, too. However, most of us – certainly me – maybe not you – but most of us just gorge on a ridiculous turkey dinner. It doesn't really mean much more than that. Maybe your family is remarkably different? I don't believe so. How many TRULY made an offering unto God this last Thanksgiving?

Well, this is where all that began – even for the pilgrims that came over on the Mayflower from England – this is what it was and is all about. The Puritans kept it each year and, after that era, Thanksgiving pretty much devolved into “turkey day” and became a day of self-absorption and gluttony for Americans. When the entire community was required to labor together to build the schoolhouses and churches in a town, it took a

tremendous group effort to accomplish those things. They consumed a huge percentage of the available resources from the little they had. They still made their offerings unto God, though. That's one reason this country has been around as long as it has - which isn't long. It's wonderful to make an offering of praise with our mouth; but do you back that up with your money? Praise and purse are inextricably intertwined in the Word of God, my friends ~

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