

Deuteronomy Chapter 22 Commentary

1 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother. 2 And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. 3 In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself. 4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.

God is reminding Israel, and us, that we are to treat our brothers, our fellow citizens, with the respect due them. If someone loses something and you find it, if you know whose it is, return it to them. If you don't know, keep it until they seek for it, and then return it to them. It reminds us of what men call the "golden rule" as seen in: ***Mt 7:12 "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:*** The concept is in many places in scripture, such as:

- ***Le 19:18 "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD."***
- ***Mt 22:38-40; 38 "This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."***
- ***Lu 6:31 "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."***
- ***Ro 13:8-10; 8 "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."***

I had never noticed, until just now, that we "**owe**" our "**love to one another**." It is a debt that we have. Owe by definition means; *to be in debt to, to be under obligation, behove, be bound*. We are required to love our fellow man. We are to pray for their souls to be saved from eternal damnation. We should love one another enough; to treat one another, with the respect due to our fellow man. There are many lessons in this phrase.

5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

God is here reminding us, and Israel; I created mankind in two sexes, male and female. God is reminding us; keep the lines, which define the different sexes, clearly drawn; so that there is no mistaking one for the other. Some of the reasons for this are addressed below.

According to history, and many commentators, it was a custom of idolaters to cross dress as they presented themselves before their different gods. *British Family Bible Commentary*: "*It was an idolatrous custom, for men to wear the flowered garments of women, when they worshipped Venus; and for women to wear a coat of mail and armour, when they worshipped Mars; these dresses being*

accounted more pleasing to them, as better suiting their particular characters; for Venus was supposed to be the goddess of pleasure and love, and Mars the god of arms and war. The idolatrous notion of deities of different sexes was a great corruption of the knowledge of the true God; and gave great occasion for debauchery and impure rites, even in their religious worship. It was this custom which the present law was designed to discountenance. Lowman." Thus we see; it is another warning against idolatry.

It was a reminder to Israel, and us, that God had destroyed the earth with a flood because of the sinfulness, and debauchery, of: man lying with man, and woman lying with woman. We are reminded of this in New Testament scripture in: ***Ro 1:22-32; 22 "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."***

We have a comparable concept in the New Testament in: ***1Co 11:13-15; 13 "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."*** God has made a distinction in the two sexes and it is meant to be kept thus.

6 If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: 7 But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.

We reference back to a commandment given in: ***Le 22:26-28; 26 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 27 When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28 And whether it be cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.*** This may account for what God is here teaching. We find a principle of not destroying the dame, and their young, at the same time. Some thoughts:

- If you are taking the eggs of the bird for use; keep the bird alive that it may produce more eggs.
If you are taking the young birds for use; let the mother live so she can produce more young.

- There is the balance of nature to be considered, also. History teaches that the extinction of a species of animal has profound effects on the courses of nature. See this commentary from: *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*: "This is a beautiful instance of the humanizing spirit of the Mosaic law, in checking a tendency to wanton destructiveness and encouraging a spirit of kind and compassionate tenderness to the tiniest creatures. But there was wisdom as well as humanity in the precept; for, as birds are well known to serve important uses in the economy of nature, the extirpation of a species, whether of edible or ravenous birds, must in any country be productive of serious evils. But Palestine, in particular, was situated in a climate which produced poisonous snakes and scorpions; and the deserts and mountains would have been overrun with them as well as immense swarms of flies, locusts, mice, and vermin of various kinds if the birds which fed upon them were extirpated [MICHAELIS]. Accordingly, the counsel given in this passage was wise as well as humane, to leave the hen undisturbed for the propagation of the species, while the taking of the brood occasionally was permitted as a check to too rapid an increase."
- Finally, exercising care, in obedience to God's commandments, renders a blessing. Being tender, and affectionate, to God's creatures is rewarded by God's blessings.

8 When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

This is simply a law to keep from shedding innocent blood. How? What is a battlement? A battlement is by definition: *a parapet*, which is simply a railing, or low wall, to keep people from falling off. In this age, the roofs of the homes were flat, or nearly flat, and they were used for various reasons. The railing was to keep anyone from accidentally falling off the roof, and thereby causing injury or loss to them, and the necessary retribution of the owner.

The concept is; to live in a way, as to not tempt others to fall into sin, nor cause damage to yourself or others; seen in the New Testament:

- **1Co 8:13 "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."** You need to read the whole chapter to get the complete context.
- **1Jo 2:9 "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."**

By taking precautions to protect your neighbor, you are fulfilling God's commandment seen in: **Mt 22:39 "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."**

9 Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.

We reference back to an earlier scripture given by God: **Le 19:19 "Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee."** And see the same principle in each case. God intends that man not meddle with his creation; since God created it, and God said that it was good, just as he had created it, seen in: **Ge 1:11-12; 11 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth**

grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good."

We know that in the world today; man is mixing and meddling with genetics and cross breeding plants, and animals, in their attempts to do something better than God. It is the vanity of man to think thus, and it is an abomination to God. God is simply saying; don't think you are greater, bigger, smarter, wiser, more powerful, and more knowledgeable, than me.

Now, let's make some spiritual application to our lives today. God has given us his word of truth, the King James Bible is the purest translation, from the original text that we know of. It has a history that can be traced back to the original writers and has been confirmed and stood the test of time. Yet, man, in his vanity of mind, is producing many "translations" of the bible, which are only the opinions of man, not God's unadulterated truths. Under the guise of making it easier to understand, man is bending God's word, and work, of truth; fixing it to suit his own will; not sticking with "***thus saith the Lord.***"

We also see this principle in organized church bodies and religions. Christ established the church of Salvation by Grace, and its foundation is laid upon Christ, and God's word of truth. From the original church set up by Christ, and his Apostles, man has made many changes to suit his own wants. This same thing happened under the ceremonial and sacrificial law. Men added to, and took from, God's laws to suit themselves, and to satisfy their own fleshly lust, and abominated the sacrificial and ceremonial law. We see organized religion today, changing God's true laws and commandments to satisfy their own prideful lust. They are taking worldly principles, and making them applicable to organized churches, and organized religions. They are introducing principles, of acceptance of ungodly things, into churches, and religions, that are an abomination to God.

All, of these things, are the created standing up in defiance of the Creator. It is, simply put, man saying to God; we are smarter than you, and we don't need you telling us what to do.

10 Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

Why? Because, the ox has a different walking speed, and gait, than that of the ass. Yoking them together creates an uneven distribution of the load. We are told the same thing in: ***2Co 6:14 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"*** The principle being: sin and ungodliness, do not mix with sinlessness and purity.

11 Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.

This verse has the same principle as above. Different types of cloth have different properties. When mixed together, the different properties will create inconsistencies in the whole of the garment. It could refer to; two different pieces of clothing, made from different materials, being worn together, or, two different types of material being used to make a garment.

There are many commentators that say this is in reference to idolatrous customs that other people had of the mixing of garments of different natures to appease, or please, their idols and false gods. It would thus be a teaching against idolatry. An application to our lives today, as Christians, is to not mix "**thus saith the Lord**" with "thus saith the world" or "thus saith the flesh". Do not mix; godliness and sinfulness.

My thoughts go to the vestments of the priest, and their linen garments. They put them on to do their priests duties. They put off their daily attire to do their priests duties. So it should be with us. In our service to Christian duty, we should not mingle our daily, worldly, affairs, but keep them separate. We should not mingle our worship to God, with worldliness or sinfulness.

12 Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.

We have a couple of references here in:

- *Nu 15:38-41; 38 "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: 39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: 40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. 41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God."*
- *Mt 23:2-7; 2 "Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."*

Considering the context of the chapter so far and the setting of contrast between good and evil; we believe the same is expressed here in the fringes on the garments. In Numbers the fringes were to remind Israel of God's commandments. In Matthew, it is representative of the misuse of God's word of truth, and a warning to remember to do exactly what God says, not what men would have you to believe. In Matthew, we see men walking in hypocritical faith, and God is warning against this principle. Don't mix the worship of God with worship of men. Worship of man is a principle taught by the devil.

13 If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, 14 And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: 15 Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: 16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; 17 And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. 18 And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; 19 And they shall amerce

(amerce means: *to inflict a penalty*) him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days. 20 But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: 21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

God is here setting up a judgement standard for marriage and the penalties associated therewith. For the man, if he marry a woman, and she be not the virgin he expected to marry, or if he hates her for no reason, they are to try the woman; and if found guilty of being unvirtuous, she is to be put to death for whoredom. However, if the woman is proved to have been a virgin, the man shall pay the penalty of an hundred shekels of silver, and he may never divorce her. This accomplished two things:

- It would lessen the chance that the man slander his wife;
- It would increase the maiden's desire to keep her virginity. The loss, of her virginity, was penalized by death by stoning; unless she has married, or she has been raped. In both of these cases she wore different clothing that reflected she has lain with a man before.

God is making us understand that he expects men and women to be virtuous to one another. God is telling us he hates sexual sin and perversion.

22 If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

You see the penalty for whoredom in Israel was death for both of the guilty parties. God is serious about sexual purity.

23 If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; 24 Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you. 25 But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her: then the man only that lay with her shall die: 26 But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter: 27 For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.

A difference is here set for a damsel in the city or in the field. The reason is if she was in the city there would be someone close enough to hear her if she called for help. Whereas, in the field; it would be likely that none would be close enough to hear when she cried out. The penalty for rape in the city was the death of both. The penalty of rape in the field was death of the man only.

How would the thing be made known in both cases. The damsel (virgin) should immediately; put off the garments of her virginity, and all would know that something was wrong. Inquiry and judgment would be made and the appropriate penalty assigned.

28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; 29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

If a man lay with a virgin that is not already given to another; the man shall pay the penalty, for his sin, to her parents, and she is to be his wife forever. He may not divorce her.

30 A man shall not take his father's wife, nor discover his father's skirt.

A man shall not have conjugal relations with his father's wife, whether his father is alive or dead. Nor shall a man look upon the nakedness of his father's wife, whether his father is dead or alive. Several commentators give this example: A man's father dies, who had in his older age married a younger woman. The son may desire to marry the wife, who would most likely be his stepmother, but God has forbidden this to happen, as seen in: ***Le 20:11 "And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."***

This concept is carried through into these New Testament times as seen in: ***1Co 5:1-2; 1 "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you."*** God, in this text, makes it clear that there is to be no church membership, or affiliation with such people. It is the same penalty; as putting the guilty party to death in the Old Testament.

This chapter has reminded us of many of God's commandments to Israel, and their application to our lives today. These commandments were for the purpose of the Israelites living a pure and holy life; both in nature and spirit. We see in this chapter that God expects his people to be morally clean and to live morally acceptable lives. New Testament scripture teaches us the same thing. God help us to be true Christians, both; in our natural walks and talks, our lives; and in our spiritual walks and talks.