

## Deuteronomy Chapter 25 Commentary

**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.

We see this same principle taught in New Testament scripture in: *Mt 18:15-17; 15 "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."*

We understand in both Deuteronomy and Matthew; first the offender and offended must try to resolve their issues. Next, they are to seek help from others in resolution. Finally, if no resolution can be found, they are to come before the judges, or the church, for resolution. When the truth is established; the offending person is to be punished, according to the magnitude of the offence.

*"that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face"* Not only is the judge to give the proper sentence; he is also required to watch, and see that the sentence is carried out in the proper manner. This would ensure that there would be equitable punishment in each case.

*"3 Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed:"* God explains; the one receiving punishment is not to receive an inequitable amount of punishment, or he will despise his brother with whom he had disputed. In other words; even in dealing out punishment, we should have a proper balance of justice and compassion, so that we don't make the sinner a worse, and a more hardened criminal.

Secondarily, this limit of beating was to keep them from beating a man to death, or crippling him so that he becomes an unproductive person, unable to care for himself, and he would become a burden to the rest of Israel to bear. We just studied in the previous chapter of each man being punished for his own sin. If you cripple a man by beating him to much and crippling him, then the burden of his life is placed upon those around him. This is not God's intent. If there is to be a continuing consequence upon the man's family or those around him, it would come by a judicial judgment from God, not by the hand of man.

This is why; we are not to put a stumbling block in the path of those, who are put out of the church for refusing to live a godly life. Should they have a change of heart and return with full confession, they can be received back into the church body. They would have received their just punishment and the church would have done the right thing. This lines up with the text above, for once the dispute is settled, and the punishment is meted out, the guilty person would return to life, and continue to be productive in life.

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

God tells Israel; do not put a muzzle on the ox that you are plowing with. He is doing the work and is worthy of what he may eat while working. This very same text is quoted twice, in the New Testament, with the application of; the church taking care to provide for the ministers of the gospel.

- **1Co 9:1-14; 1 "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord? 2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. 3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, 4 Have we not power to eat and to drink? 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 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? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."**
- **1Ti 5:17-18; 17 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward."**

This is one area in which, I believe, the Primitive Baptist have missed the mark. What do you mean? Most Primitive Baptist do not pay their ministers, other than the free will offerings of the congregations to them. What I am saying is, as this scripture teaches, that the workman, minister, should receive enough regular offerings, to make provision for his life, without having to have another job. For a minister to do what he is called to do, he must devote many hours of time in study of the word of God, and in prayer to God for the revelation of the truths and mysteries of God's word of truth. He should be free from mortal obligations, to be free to answer the calls of the sick, to go and visit them when called for, and pray for them when called upon. It is wrong, of the people, to require the ministers of the gospel to work full time, to provide for themselves and their families, and then cut out the time they should be spending with their own families, to read, study, and pray with them. They should have time to be a husband to their wife, and to be a father to their children.

We know that Paul did not accept pay from some of the churches he established, simply because there were false teachers that were there teaching for the money only, present in these places. Paul worked and supplied his own physical needs to disassociate himself from these false teachers. Later in scripture Paul confesses that he did wrong in doing that. How was it wrong? Paul should have taken the money realizing; God would take his true teaching, and preaching, and separate him from the false teachers.

We understand that there are some congregations that are too poor, or too small, and do not have the resources to provide a full time salary for their ministers. In these cases, the minister will understand, and will do what is necessary to provide for his family. However, with God's blessing the church will grow. As the church body grows, they should increase their giving to the point, that the minister will no longer need to provide for himself, which will enable the minister to devote himself fully to ministering to the saints of God.

**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.**

This text does not tell us if dwelling together means in the same house, city, country, or nation, thus we believe, if there was an unmarried brother to the dead man, he would be called upon to marry the widow of his brother. If there were no unmarried brethren of the same family, we presume that the nearest one of them would be called upon to raise up seed to his brother. We know from other scriptures; if there were no brothers of the deceased that were alive, then the duty fell to the man who was nearest of kin to the deceased. We find proof of this in the book of Ruth.

God is making provision for the family lineages to be preserved, and that the inheritances, given to the various tribes of Israel, are kept in the proper families, as given originally.

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

God, knowing that men would decide not to follow God's law and do as he was instructed; made provision for the disobedient to be publicly reprov'd for his disobedience. This was a serious consequence for disobedience. It was a public dishonoring, and continuing disgrace, upon the brother that refused to raise up his brother's seed. He, and his family, would be known as one who chose to be in the class with the slaves, rather than the class of upright men. It is understood from history; that the removal of the shoe was to be demoted to the slave class, who did not wear shoes in that day.

**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.**

With these verses we see; God is very serious, about keeping sexual purity at the highest premium. Here, the woman's hand is cut off, who touched the privacy of a man who was not her husband, even though she did it in defense of her own husband's life.

Why would there be so severe a punishment for the woman who was trying to protect her husband? Do you remember earlier in our studies about the man with mutilated private parts? **De 23:1** **"He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD."** The woman's action may wound the man's private parts. This could make him unfruitful and unable to sustain the family name, and thus extinguish a family from Israel. It could also cause him to be excluded from the "**congregation of the Lord**" and thus take away his ability to attend worship of God. This would cause a breach in a family's worship of God, and God deserves all our praise and worship.

**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.**

Having unjust weights was an act of covetousness, which God has declared to be sin. We notice also; those who would do this are an abomination to the Lord. We would certainly rather be among those who were in the favor of God, and to be an abomination to him.

What lessons of application can we make of these verses today? We notice; not having divers weights applied to both, at home and away. "**Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights,**" is an indication, you are going away from your home, and need the weights to do the measuring abroad. This is indicative of being the same at home and abroad. It points us to dealing with worldly people, the same way we deal with our brothers in Christ. But you object; the worldly people are different than our brothers in Christ. This is true, but to have just and perfect weight, we must at all times put on Christ, and show forth Christ. In other words, we are to exhibit to the world as well as to our brethren, that we are a child of God. We can't have one standard at home and another abroad, which would be unequitable measures, or double standards.

**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 see here; God is directing his judicial wrath to be executed upon the Amalekites, for their previous actions, and for not fearing God. It is a great warning to us to not forget who, and what, God is; a reminder that God is almighty, and he doeth as he will, in heaven and upon earth.

We see; God has directed Israel destroy Amalek, when they have conquered and occupy the land of promise, and God has given them rest from their enemies. We are reminded, this was a sentence already set by God, seen in: **Ex 17:14 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."** This sentence was re-announced by Balaam in: **Nu 24:20 "And when he looked on**

***Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish forever."***

This was finally accomplished by King Saul and Samuel, seen in:

- ***1Sa 15:7 "And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. 8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword."*** Saul saved King Agag alive but destroyed the rest of the people.
- ***1Sa 15:33 "And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal."*** Samuel slew King Agag.

God's sentence upon Amalek is a reminder to us that your sins will find you out, and reminds us that God does not forget. We understand; our struggle in life, as a Christian, is against ungodliness, and the temptations of disobedience to God and Christ. The parallel we see is the continual struggle against Amalek until God's sentence is finally carried out. When we breathe out our last breath in life; our struggle against Amalek (a picture of; sin and satan) will have been fulfilled, and they will no more be a remembrance to us, because the soul and spirit going directly to God; and the body going to the grave.

We see a prophetic picture of the eternal separation of the saved and lost in the end of time. At that time; God's people will have rest from satan and all his minions; and they shall be blotted out from the memory of God's people forever. What a glorious expectation, the great hope, that God's people have in Jesus, the Christ, in salvation and eternal life.