

## LESSON EIGHTEEN 23:15—24:22

### m. LAWS OF SOCIETY AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS

(23:15—26:19)

#### (1) TREATMENT OF ESCAPED SLAVES (23:15, 16)

Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant that is escaped from his master unto thee: 16 he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it pleaseth him best: thou shalt not oppress him.

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 23:15, 16

393. No such provision was made for a runaway Hebrew servant. Cf. 15:12-18. Why such a provision for outsiders?  
394. The motive for running away is at least suggested. What is it?

#### AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 23:15, 16

15 You shall not give up to his master a servant who has escaped from his master to you;

16 He shall dwell with you in your midst, where he chooses in one of your towns, where it pleases him best. You shall not defraud or oppress him.

#### COMMENT 23:15, 16

"The reference is to a foreign slave who had fled from the harsh treatment of his master to seek refuge in Israel, as is evident from the expression . . . 'in one of thy gates,' i.e. in any part of the land." (Pulpit) No such provision is made for runaway Hebrew servants, about which see 15:12-18 and notes; compare 22:1-3.

#### (2) MORALITY, ILLEGITIMATE PRACTICES AND WAGES (23:17, 18)

There shall be no prostitute of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite of the sons of Israel. 18 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot, or the wages of a dog, into the house of Jehovah thy God for any vow: for even both these are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 23:17, 18

395. Is a sodomite the masculine form of a prostitute?  
396. There seems to be a strong emphasis upon sex in both the heathen nations and in the life of Israel. Why?

397. Was the practice of such persons so common that some of them claimed a place in the worship of Jehovah? Discuss.
398. It is a sad day when a dog can be used to exploit the erotic desires of man. Cf. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15, 16. Or is this the meaning of the text?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 23:17, 18

17 There shall be no cult prostitute of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a cult prostitute (a sodomite) of the sons of Israel.

18 You shall not bring the hire of a harlot or the price of a dog [a sodomite] into the house of the Lord your God, in payment for a vow; for both of these—the gift and the giver—are an abomination to the Lord your God.

COMMENT 23:17, 18

PROSTITUTE . . . SODOMITE (v. 16)—These words represent the feminine and masculine of the same Hebrew root. The word is *Kedesbab* in the first instance, *Kabesh* in the second—a woman who devoted herself to immoral practices as a part of her heathen and idolatrous "worship," and a man who did the same. The root *kedesh* literally signifies *sanctuary*, a reference to the idolatrous houses where these practices were carried on. These persons were "sanctified" or "set aside for an (un)holy purpose" by the religions in and around Canaan.

Of the female member of the class, the I.S.B.E. states, "She was a *kedeshbab*, one of a consecrated class, and as such was a concrete expression and agent of the most insidious and powerful influence and system menacing the purity and permanence of the religion of Jehovah. This system defied the reproductive organs and forces of nature and its devotees worshipped their idol symbols in grossly licentious rites and orgies. The temple prostitute was invested with sanctity as a member of the religious caste . . . The Canaanite sanctuaries were gigantic brothels, legalized under the sanctions of religion."

The "wares" of these women, however, were not always sold in the sanctuaries. See Gen. 38:15-23, where Tamar poses as a "prostitute" (*kedeshbab*) as well as a "harlot" (*zanab*), a more general word (see below). Note Hosea 4:11-19, where both of these words again occur, aptly depicting both the *moral and spiritual* degredation of Israel.

The male prostitute (sodomite) was normally attached to one of these sanctuaries also, though, like his female counterpart, his practices were apparently not restricted to that area. (Gen. 19:5, etc.) Josiah had to break down their houses "that were in the house of Jehovah, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah" (II K. 23:7)—a passage which testifies of its great influence as a practice. In both ancient and modern societies, sodomites have frequently been transvestites—a fact to remember in the exhortation of 22:5. See also Lev. 18:22, 20:13.

HIRE OF A HARLOT (v. 18)—i.e. the wages or income she obtained by her practices. The Heb. word here rendered "harlot" (*Zanab*) is more general than "prostitute" (*kedeshab*) above, *including* her but also any others given over to illicit sexual relations (cf. its use in 22:21). This woman might not be "religious" even by heathen standards.

THE WAGES OF A DOG (v. 18)—i.e. the wages some owner of a dog might charge for his relations with an Israelite. See Ex. 22:19, Lev. 18:23, 20:15, 16. Others believe "dog" is here used figuratively as a derisive term for the sodomite.

In either case, illicitly and illegally gained money was not to be contributed to *Jehovah God*. Money so gained was shrouded with sin and impurity. Using it for the sanctuary of God would be tantamount to robbing a bank so the money could be contributed to the church building fund!

### (3) INTEREST ON LOANS (23:19, 20)

19 Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother; interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of any thing that is lent upon interest: 20 unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest, that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all that thou puttest thy hand unto, in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 23:19, 20

399. Why not lend with interest to our brother? Does this relate to our day? Discuss.
400. How shall we connect the blessing of the Lord with lending without interest?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 23:19, 20

19 You shall not lend on interest to your brother, interest on money, on victuals, on anything that is lent for interest.

20 You may lend on interest to a foreigner; but to your brother you shall not lend on interest, that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land to which you go to possess it.

## COMMENT 23:19, 20

The amount of interest which could be charged to foreigners is not stated, but no interest was to be charged a fellow-Israelite. See also Ex. 22:25-27, Lev. 25:35-37, Neh. 5:6-10, Ezek, 18:5-9. If they were obedient, they would indeed lend as a *nation*, ch. 28:12.

## (4) MAKING AND KEEPING VOWS (23:21-23)

21 When thou shalt vows a vow unto Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. 22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. 23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 23:21-23

401. Jephthah was not the only man who "opened his mouth unto Jehovah" and could not go back. A promise to God is no light matter.
402. In what sense is a vow a "free-will offering"?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 23:21-23

21 When you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not be slack in paying it; for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and slackness would be sin in you.

22 But if you refrain from vowing, it will not be sin in you.

23 The vow which has passed your lips you shall be watchful to perform, a voluntary offering which you have made to the Lord your God, which you have promised with your mouth.

## COMMENT 23:21-23

See also Num. 30:1, 2, Ecc. 5:4, 5. This passage apparently applies to those freewill offerings and vows an Israelite could make to God. An Israelite was to be a "man of his word"—what he *said* he was to *do!*

A terrible example of a man who rashly vowed is found in the case of Jephthah, Judges 11:29-30.

## (5) PARTAKING OF A NEIGHBOR'S CROP (23:24, 25)

24 When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat of grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. 25 When thou comest into thy neighbor's standing grain, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing grain.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 23:24, 25

403. Why was this provision made? Consider two viewpoints.

404. Jesus' disciples made use of this law. Cf. Matt. 12:1ff.

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 23:24, 25

24 When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes as many as you please; but you shall not put any in your vessel.

25 When you come into the standing grain of your neighbor, you may pluck the ears with your hand; but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain.

## COMMENT 23:24, 25

In both the vineyard and the grain-field, the rule is based on the principle of providing for the *immediate needs* of the individual who passed through the field. They were not allowed to lay up a reserve of either crop.

Jesus' disciples used this law to their advantage, Matt. 12:1 ff. The Pharisees' rebuke in that instance was doubtless based on such passages as Ex. 31:12-17, Num. 15:32-36. But they forgot at least two considerations: 1. Preservation of *human life* is a principle over-shadowing sabbath-keeping, 2. Christ himself is Lord and Master of the sabbath.

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

*Neither eunuchs, bastards, Ammonites, nor Moabites, shall be incorporated with the genuine Israelites, 1-3. The reason why the Ammonites and Moabites were excluded, 4-6. Edomites and Egyptians to be respected, 7. Their descendants in the third generation may be incorporated with the Israelites, 8. Cautions against wickedness when they go forth against their enemies, 9. To keep the camp free from every defilement, and the reason why, 10-14. The slave who had taken refuge among them is not to be delivered up to his former master, 15, 16. There shall be no prostitutes nor sodomites in the land, 17. The hire of a prostitute or the price of a dog is not to be brought into the house of God, 18. The Israelites shall not lend on usury to each other, 19; but they may take usury from strangers, 20. Vows must be diligently paid, 21-23. In passing through a vineyard or field a man may eat of the grapes or corn, but must carry away none with him, 24, 25.*

## (6) DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE (24:1-4)

When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. 2 And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. 3 And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife; 4 her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Jehovah: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:1-4

405. Since this text has been variously used and abused, it should merit our most careful reading and thought.
406. Read through the fourth verse for the complete thought. What is it?
407. In this passage, as in many others, certain wrong practices of the people are assumed. Moses (and God) deal with life "as is." What is assumed in this passage?

408. Read Matt. 19:3-9. Does our Lord approve of the prevalence and purposes for divorce as given in Deuteronomy? Cf. Matt. 5:31, 32.
409. How would the violations of the regulations specified here "cause the land to sin"? Cf. vs. 4.

### AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:1-4

When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce, puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house,

2 And when she departs out of his house, she goes and marries another man,

3 And if the latter husband dislikes her and writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house; or if the last husband dies, who took her as his wife,

4 Then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she is defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord; and you shall not bring guilt upon the land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.

### COMMENT 24:1-4

See also 22:13-21, 21:10-14, Matt. 5:31, 32, 19:3-9. The law of Jealousy (Num. ch. 5) should also be kept in mind.

A great deal of discussion she been occasioned by the phrase "some unseemly thing in her" (v. 1). Some critics insist that the phrase has a moral connotation: "Some indecency in her" (R.S.V., Amplified O.T., Smith.) ". . . he has found her immodest in some way" (Moffatt). But although the phrase is literally rendered "a thing or matter of nakedness," the reference is more general. "i.e. some shameful thing, something disgraceful" (Pulpit). Indeed, we have already seen that adultery was punishable by death under the Mosaic law (22:22, Lev. 20:10). The Pharisees substituted the phrase "for every cause" (Matt. 19:3) in their questioning of Jesus. And it does appear that this law, given by Moses because of the hardness of their hearts, enabled a man to divorce his wife on sometimes very flimsy grounds. But, as the Pulpit Commentary remarks, "This is not a law sanctioning or regulating divorce; that is simply assumed as what might occur and what is here regulated is the treatment by the first husband of a woman who has been divorced a second time."

Edwin C. Bissell, in *Bible-Work*, states, "This regulation is remarkable alike for its concessive and its restrictive character. It assumes the prevalence of divorce—a fact also recognized in a number of other laws of this and the Levitical code (Lev. 21:7 [13, 14] De. 22:19, 29). It assumes that it was carried on with some degree of formality. And such a custom, with the form it took of giving a 'bill of divorcement,' this law does not forbid; neither does it command it. Herein our Lord corrected the Pharisees' false quotation of the Pentateuch, chaging their 'Why did Moses command?' into 'Moses suffered.' In its restrictions, on the other hand, the law assumes the sacredness of the marital tie and provides against an obvious tendency to break and renew it at will. Its sole prohibition, however, is of the remarriage of divorced persons after a second marriage had been entered upon by the former wife."

Behrends continues in the same book, "The Mosaic legislation permitted a certain liberty of divorce; but our Lord only brought into clear relief, and made emphatic for all time, its determining ethical principle, when he declared that the Mosaic permission was an unwilling concession to the 'hardness' of the people's heart; that from the beginning' marriage was not so contemplated and constituted, that man may not 'put asunder what God hath joined together;' that divorce is permissible only 'for the cause of fornication;' that [permanent or prolonged] separation for any other cause is an incentive to adultery, and that whoever contracts marriage with the guilty party commits adultery."

#### (7) BRIDEGROOM EXEMPT FROM WARFARE (24:5)

5 When a man taketh a new wife, he shall not go out in the host, neither shall he be charged with any business: he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken.

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:5

410. Was there any advantage for the government in the above regulation?  
 411. How shall we compare this rule with the provision for divorce?

#### AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:5

5 When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer his wife who he has taken.



## COMMENT 24:5

See also 20:7, notes. As Matthew Henry remarks, this law would promote *love* and tend to *establish the bond* between this couple, and stands somewhat in contrast to the former law allowing divorce. He was neither to go to war, or be charged with "business" (Heb. *dabar*), literally word, thing; here, business, affair, or restricting labor of any kind. All this enabled him to "cheer his wife"—"Enjoy the wife he has married," (Benton), "to give happiness to the woman he has married" (Torah). As we are repeatedly seeing in this book, the feminine half of the marriage had privileges and blessings which represent only a foretaste of what was to come under Christ.

## (8) MILLSTONES NOT TO BE TAKEN IN PLEDGE (24:6)

6 No man shall take the mill or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh *a man's* life to pledge.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:6

412. What would be a synonym for the word "pledge"?
413. Why would anyone be willing to give a millstone as a pledge? Approximate a circumstance (imaginary) where this would be true.

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:6

6 No man shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for he would be taking a life in pledge.

## COMMENT 24:6

The A.V. has "the nether or the upper millstone". J.F.B. remarks, "The 'upper' stone being concave, covers the 'nether' like a lid; and it has a small aperture, through which the corn [grain] is poured, as well as a handle by which it is turned. The propriety of the law was founded on the custom of grinding corn [grain] every morning for daily consumption. If either of the stones, therefore, which composed the hand-mill was wanting, a person would be deprived of his necessary provision."

## (9) KIDNAPPING A FELLOW-ISRAELITE (24:7)

7 If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and he deal with him as a slave, or sell him; then that thief shall die: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:7

414. What is the "Lindberg law" on kidnapping? How does it relate here?
415. Cf. Exodus 21:16 and notice how all encompassing was this law.

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:7

7 If a man be found kidnapping any of his brethren of the Israelites, and treats him as a slave or a servant, or sells him, then that thief shall die. So you shall put evil from among you.

## COMMENT 24:7

Compare Ex. 21:16 The thief was to die regardless as to what he had done with his "loot"—whether he had made him a slave, sold him, or whatever.

## (10) LAWS OF LEPROSY TO BE OBSERVED (24:8, 9)

8 Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do. 9 Remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Miriam, by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:8, 9

416. Read Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 to understand what the priests and Levites would teach concerning leprosy.
417. What possible two-fold reason could there be in mentioning Miriam in these verses?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:8, 9

8 Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that you watch diligently, and do according to all that the Levitical priests shall teach you, As I commanded them, so you shall be watchful and do. [Lev. 13:14, 15.]

9 Remember [earnestly] what the Lord your God did to Miriam by the way, after you had come out of Egypt. [Num. 12:10.]

## COMMENT 24:8, 9

Laws concerning leprosy are found in Lev. 13 and 14. Note there that the priests are again and again involved in testing for leprosy and the cleansing process. Cf. Matt. 8:4. Moses *here* simply exhorts them to *heed* the priests instructions—instructions which *God* had given them.

The case of Miriam is probably cited not only because Miriam became leprous (Num. ch. 12), but because she became such as a result of her disobedience and disrespect for Moses' authority. As disobedience had *caused* her leprosy, disobedience could *prevent the healing* of leprosy. And as God, being merciful, healed Miriam, so could he heal them if they would "do according to all that the Levites shall teach you".

## (11) PLEDGE FOR A LOAN (24:10-13)

10 When thou dost lend thy neighbor any manner of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. 11 Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou does lend shall bring forth the pledge without unto thee. 12 And if he be a poor man, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; 13 thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before Jehovah thy God.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:10-13

418. Please read the following references for a complete understanding of this circumstance: 15:7-11; 23:19, 20; Ex. 22:25-27.  
 419. List the qualities of character necessary to fulfill this injunction; such as: (1) compassion, (2) patience, (3) kindness.  
 420. What type of "righteousness" is involved in vs. 13?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:10-13

10 When you lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge.

11 You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you.

12 And if the man is poor, you shall not keep his pledge over night.

13 You shall surely restore to him the pledge at sunset that he may sleep in his garment and bless you; and it shall be credited to you as righteousness (rightness and justice) before the Lord your God.

## COMMENT 24:10-13

See also 15:7-11, 23:19, 20, and especially Ex. 22:25-27. The creditor was to be considerate of the comfort and warmth of the borrower, and he was not to invade the personal property rights of this

poor man. It is proverbial that "The rich ruleth over the poor; And the borrower is servant to the lender" (Prov. 22:7) but such despotism was not to characterize Israelites' financial dealings with one another.

A poor man might only have one or two items of clothing—he very often slept in the same clothes he wore. The normal garments for the poor were "long, loose garments . . . still used among the Arabs, and called *bykes*, which is a kind of blanket, something resembling a highland plaid, in which they often carry their provision, wrap themselves by day and sleep at night." (Clarke, writing about 1830). Thus the holder of this pledge was to return it by nightfall.

#### (12) PAYING THE POOR HIRED SERVANT (24:14, 15)

14 Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates: 15 in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee.

#### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:14, 15

421. If Jehovah loved all His children with an equal love, why are some poor and others rich?
422. What is suggested in the word "oppress" as here used?
423. Nothing is said of the "pay scale." Why not? Are all servants to be paid every day? Discuss.

#### AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:14, 15

14 You shall not oppress or extort from a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is of your brethren, or of your strangers and sojourners who are in your land inside your towns.

15 You shall give him his hire on the day he earns it, before the sun goes down; for he is poor, and sets his heart upon it; lest he cry against you to the Lord, and it be sin to you.

#### COMMENT 24:14, 15

See also Lev. 19:13. As in the previous case the pledged garment was to be *returned* on the same day before the sun set, so here he was to be *paid* the same day and for the same reason—he *needed* it! And when a man is truly "down and out" he naturally "setteth his heart upon it".

In Jas. 5:1-6 the wicked and oppressive rich are described as holding back the needed wages of the poor. Their wages were "kept back by fraud" and therefore "crieth out" against the hoarding masters. Jesus taught "the laborer is worthy of his hire," Luke 10:7. See also Matt. 10:10, I Tim. 5:18.

"The righteous taketh knowledge of the cause of the poor" (Prov. 29:7a).

### (13) TRANSGRESSORS TO BEAR OWN GUILT (24:16)

16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:16

414. Is the case of Achan a violation of this law?
425. What about Korah and his company or the wholesale slaughter of the Canaanite tribes?
426. Read II Kings 14:1-6; Jer. 31:27-30 for a fulfillment of this law.
427. How does Deuteronomy 5:8-10 relate?

### AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:16

16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; only for his own sin shall anyone be put to death.

### COMMENT 24:16

God's law laid the punishment of death only upon the person or persons who had committed crimes worthy of death. The fathers, judges, or congregation had no right to punish any member of the family but the guilty party.

The case of Achan and his family (see especially Josh. 7:20-25)\* is sometimes cited as a "violation" of this law by God himself—as is also the punishment of Korah, his company, and their families (Num. 16:31-35) and the wholesale slaughter of the Canaanite tribes (Deut. 7:1-5, 20:16).

\*But were the other members of his family accomplices in the crimes? His "loot" was hidden in the family tent—it was not concealed from the eyes of wife and children!

But our present passage is not primarily a law regulating the dealings of *God*. Further, the cases cited above do not deal with God's *final* or *eternal* judgment (as administered by the Son, Jn. 5:22). Here, we have the judgments *Israel* was to make as a congregation—particularly through the priests and judges (13:6-11, 17:2-7, etc.) God *did* sometimes punish groups with death, whether directly or through human instrumentality. His reasons (as in the case of the Canaanites, above) are discussed elsewhere in this volume.

When *Israel* was a happy, prosperous, and obedient nation, this law was observed. Note II K. 14:1-6, Jer. 31:27-30. Vv. 31-34 of Jer. 31 have *special* reference to the situation under the New Covenant of Christ, Heb. 8:6-13.

But the principle of the passage before us also shall characterize God's final dealings with man, and the dealings of the righteous with their fellow-man. Note Ezek. 18 carefully. As in Jer. 31:29, 30, the proverb then in vogue about children suffering because of the parent's sin *is not upheld by the prophet of God*. Rather, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," and the righteous "shall surely live . . . the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." A careful study of Ezek. 18 and Jer. 31 will cause one to see the present passage in a larger context.

*Israel* knew the justice of this verse. That is why, under the yoke of Babylonian captivity, the cry is heard.

"Our fathers sinned, and we are not;  
And we have borne their iniquities"

—Lam. 5:7

Note also Deut. 5:8-10. The children would suffer punishment as a result of their parent's sin. But their personal guilt and destination is reckoned only from their own lives.

In the final day of reckoning, we have been assured of impartial and individual judgment, Matt. 16:27, Rom. 15:10-12, II Cor. 5:10, Eph. 5:7, 8, Col. 3:22—4:1, I Pet. 1:17.

#### (14) JUSTICE TO THE INDIGENT (24:17, 18)

17 Thou shalt not wrest the justice *due* to the sojourner, *or* to the fatherless, nor take the widow's raiment to pledge; 18 but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:17, 18

428. Who was to enforce these various laws? Cf. 1:16, 17; 16:18-20.  
 429. Who would be classified as a "sojourner"? What justice was due him?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:17, 18

17 You shall not pervert justice due to the stranger or the sojourner or the fatherless, or take a widow's garments in pledge;

18 But you shall [earnestly] remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this:

## COMMENT 24:17, 18

The principles were to be observed by all, and enforced by the judges (1:16, 17; 16:18-20). As we saw above (vv. 10-13) a poor person often had only one or two garments—and the same garment often served as a nightgown and blanket. Thus the widow's was not to be taken as a pledge.

On v. 18, see also 10:17-19, Lev. 19:33, 34.

## (15) NEEDY TO BE CONSIDERED AT HARVEST TIME (24:19-22)

19 When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands. 20 When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the sojourners, for the fatherless, and for the widow. 21 When thou gatherest *the grapes of* thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow. 22 And thou shalt remember that thou was a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

## THOUGHT QUESTIONS 24:19-22

430. Are some people "naturally" more generous than others? Is generosity a quality controlled by law?

## AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 24:19-22

19 When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the

stranger and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow; that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

20 When you beat your olive tree, do not go over the boughs again; the leavings shall be for the stranger and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.

21 When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.

22 You shall [earnestly] remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

### COMMENT 24:19-22

Compare 23:24-25, Lev. 19:9, 10; 23:22. The poor and the sojourner were to be considered whether grain, olives, or grapes were being harvested. It is not difficult to see how the basic quality of *generosity* would be developed in the faithful Israelite who kept these laws.

### SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

*The case of a divorced wife, 1-4. No man shall be obliged to undertake any public service for the first year of his marriage, 5. The mill-stones shall not be taken as a pledge, 6. The man-stealer shall be put to death, 7. Concerning cases of leprosy, 8, 9. Of receiving pledges, and returning those of the poor before bed-time, 10-13. Of servants and their hire, 14, 15. Parents and children shall not be put to death for each other, 16. Of humanity to the stranger, fatherless, widow, and bondman, 17, 18. Gleanings of the harvest, &c., to be left for the poor, stranger, widow, fatherless, &c., 19-22.*

### QUESTIONS, LESSON EIGHTEEN (23:15—24:22)

#### CHAPTER 23

1. Note 23:15, 16. We have said this escaped slave was *not* an Israelite. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. It is a fact that prostitution and sodomy were frequently connected with heathen religious rites in ancient times. Do you know of modern examples of religion upholding or encouraging immoral practices?



## DEUTERONOMY

3. Why *not* bring the wages of a harlot into the house of God? Isn't money all the same? Do you think the church of the Lord should be supported by solicitations from non-Christians?
4. When loaning, whom could an Israelite charge interest? Whom could he not?
5. What was the rule concerning making and breaking vows?
6. If you ate grapes or plucked grain as you passed through your neighbor's field, what one cardinal rule was to be observed?

## CHAPTER 24

7. Upon what grounds could a man obtain a divorce under the Old Covenant?
8. Why did Jesus say this law was given?
9. Do you think it was practiced by Israelites before Deuteronomy was written?
10. What prohibition is laid down here for divorced persons?
11. How long was a newly married man exempt from military service? What reason is given for this?
12. How did the millstones involved in grinding grain represent "a man's life"?
13. What happened to an Israelite who kidnapped an Israelite?
14. Specifically, whose instructions were to be heeded by the leper?
15. Why should the leper remember Miriam?
16. How long could a creditor keep a poor man's pledged garment? Why?
17. When was a poor laborer to be paid? Why?
18. Note 24:16. This statement deals with Israel's judgment toward transgressors. How do you "reconcile" it with the judgment of *God* in 5:8-10?
19. Do you think 25:16 would aptly describe God's judgment in the final day? Scripture(s) please!
20. How would the poor be provided for as a generous Israelite harvested his crops?