

Deut. 22:1 ¶ 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.

Deut. 22:2 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.

Deut. 22:3 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.

Deut. 22:4 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.

In reading through this chapter several times in preparation to beginning, I got the feeling that Moses was covering things at random as thoughts popped into his head. It's sort of how I feel like my prayers must sound before the Lord sometimes.

This chapter begins with an instruction to watch out for your fellow Jew. If you see a stray ox, sheep or ass, you are supposed to go out of your way to take the animal back to its owner. If the owner doesn't live near you or you don't know who the owner is, you are to take the animal home with you and take care of it until the owner comes looking for it. In fact, if you run across anything that doesn't belong to you, you are to do your best to return it to whom it belongs or take it into safe keeping until the owner comes looking for it. If you run across a fellow Jew whose livestock has fallen (under a heavy load would be implied), you are to try to help him get the animal up on its feet again. You should always have a servant's heart in these situations. It is wrong to choose not to get involved in helping your brother.

Again, that is so different from the culture that is being fostered today. I think one of the saddest stories of my lifetime reflecting that attitude was that of the murder of Kitty Genovese in New York City in 1964. She died because 38 witnesses chose not even to call the police for help for their own personal reasons. Even more amazing from more current headlines is a story about a Good Samaritan being sued for trying to save a friend. In December 2008 a woman in California who pulled a friend from a wrecked car that she thought was on fire is being sued because she caused injury in the process. That will quickly breed an attitude in this country of "I'm not getting involved." God makes it clear to His people that He expects us to watch out for our fellowman.

Deut. 22:5 ¶ 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.

Boy has this verse caused a lot of controversy in the church. I think the problem comes in trying to apply the verse out of context. If you look at historical description of dress even in bible times, I think the context becomes clear. In those times both men and women wore garments that were described as tunics; they were very similar, but had obvious differences; just as today in America there are similar types of clothing for men and women that have distinct differences. I think the point being made is that men should dress to look like

men and women to look like women according to the culturally established guidelines. Though many may not like to hear it; I believe God is declaring it wrong to dress like a transvestite or to present oneself different from one's gender as determined by God at birth. Anyone choosing to disobey this instruction is considered disgusting by the LORD God.

Deut. 22:6 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:

Deut. 22:7 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.

These verses declare it wrong to take a mother bird away from her young chicks or eggs. You are, however, allowed to take the young chicks or eggs away from the mother bird. I guess the rationale is that the mother bird can fend for herself, but the baby chicks or eggs cannot. It also leaves the mother free to have more chicks and ensure the survival of the species.

Obedience to this command will result in a longer, healthier life. I think this is said in part because to obey this command shows a respect for God's concerns for even the smallest of His creation. One who treats the small animals with respect according to God's guidelines is probably reflective of the heart of one who will respect God's laws concerning bigger issues.

Deut. 22:8 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 law addresses personal responsibility for ensuring the safety of family and guests in one's home. In bible times the roof of the home was a useful part of the home, and common sense would require that a guardrail be placed around the perimeter. As a resident of South Florida, my mind immediately connected to people ensuring that there are gates and fences surrounding pool areas. We are to exercise caution and care in making our homes safe havens for both family and friends. Obedience to this command is another way we show the value we place on human life. God is saying that negligence that results in injury to another makes one guilty; it does not serve to excuse one from responsibility.

Deut. 22:9 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.

This verse forbids that a vineyard or garden be planted without separating the areas for the different types of seeds. I remember being enlightened about the instruction not to boil a kid in its mother's milk in Exodus. Nehemiah Gordon, a Karaite Jew, was being interviewed by Zola Levitt and shared that this was a practice associated with idolatry; and scripture is clear that we are to avoid all appearance of evil.

1Thessalonians 5:22 "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

I would assume that to be the case with this verse and the next two. Maybe this connection finds some support in the fact that Leviticus groups the instructions of verse 9-11 in one verse.

Leviticus 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."

David Guzik stated that it was common for those in pagan cultures to try to achieve "magical" combinations of things; JFB made reference to a particular group known as the Zabians or fire-worshippers in this regard. JFB also gave a more scientific explanation.

"...those who have studied the diseases of land and vegetables tell us, that the practice of mingling seeds is injurious both to flowers and to grains. 'If the various genera of the natural order Gramineae, which includes the grains and the grasses, should be sown in the same field, and flower at the same time, so that the pollen of the two flowers mix, a spurious seed will be the consequence, called by the farmers *chess*. It is always inferior and unlike either of the two grains that produced it, in size, flavor, and nutritious principles. Independently of contributing to disease the soil, they never fail to produce the same in animals and men that feed on them' [WHITLAW]."

Deut. 22:10 Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

Again, the straightforward reading forbids yoking these different animals to work together. There is a type in this instruction regarding the teaching that people of faith should not yoke themselves in marriage or business with people who are unbelievers.

2Corinthians 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 ox and ass are creatures with different character traits, and to yoke them together I would think would make the task that much harder. The ox is a work animal with a servant spirit so to speak; the ass, however, is stubborn and headstrong. The same would be true regarding the joining together in marriage or business of believer with unbeliever. Those who choose to do so are just asking for trouble.

In doing some research on the internet I found an interesting application made by one man at <http://www.cmaark.org/Donkeys.htm>.

Yoking the ox and donkey together could have represented the war that we face each day between the flesh and the spirit. Perhaps the ox represents the spirit, and the donkey represents the rebellious flesh. Romans eight tells us that there is enmity, or warfare between the flesh and the spirit. This is because the flesh, like the wild donkey, is not under the control of the Spirit of God. The flesh is not subject to the will of God, and like the wild donkey, has to be driven in order to make it do what the Spirit wants. The flesh is headstrong and wants it's own way. It is difficult to break the will of the flesh.

The spirit, on the other hand, is breathed by God into man and is designed to be obedient to the will of God. The spirit is born to be obedient to a life of service to God. The spirit has been trained to follow the leading of the Lord, and is disciplined to the things of God.

Deut. 22:11 Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.

The instruction seems obvious; don't wear a garment made of different fabrics. Again, research on the internet produced some interesting information from a Jewish perspective at www.aish.com.

In Hebrew, this forbidden mixture is called "shatnez" (pronounced shot-nezz). Shatnez is an acronym for "combed, spun and woven," which describes the stages in processing fabric: combing the raw fiber, spinning fibers into a thread, and weaving the threads into cloth.... Interestingly, "holy garments" are exempt from the prohibition of shatnez. For example, the special garments worn by a Kohen while serving in the Holy Temple contained both wool and linen.... The Torah does not explain the reason for shatnez, and it is categorized as a *chok* -- a law whose logic is not evident.... The power of a chok is as follows: If the reasons for all the mitzvot were as obvious as "don't murder" or "don't steal," then a person could go through life without developing a relationship with God. How so? Just as there are many fine, upstanding people who don't murder -- not because they believe in God, but simply because they understand that it's wrong -- we might likewise observe mitzvot simply because they "make sense." Leaving God out of the picture would be missing the point entirely. That would be humanism, not Judaism.... The Midrash suggests that the reason stems from the story of Cain and Abel, as recorded in Genesis chapter 4. Cain brought God an offering of flax (the source of linen) and Abel brought a sheep (wool). The incident resulted in Cain killing Abel, and it was thus decreed that never again shall the two substances mix.

Deut. 22:12 Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.

In reading through the scripture again, I just recently finished reading the reason for this instruction in Numbers.

Numbers 15:38-40 "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: 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: That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."

The fringes were to serve as a constant reminder of God's commandments and the importance of obeying them.

Deut. 22:13 ¶ If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

Deut. 22:14 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:

Deut. 22:15 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:

Deut. 22:16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

Deut. 22:17 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.

Deut. 22:18 And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him;

Deut. 22:19 And they shall amerce 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.

This section of verses addresses the situation in which a new husband feels he has been betrayed by his new wife through unfaithfulness prior to the consummation of their marriage or just decides for some reason that he doesn't want to be her husband and makes false accusation against her. Evidently, it was the custom of the parents to take the blood-stained sheet from the marriage bed and keep it as proof of their daughter's virginity at marriage. They would then take the evidence and present it to the elders to clear their daughter's name. If the husband is proven a liar by the evidence, he is to be *chastised* (the Hebrew makes reference to beating) and then required to give the virgin's father the equivalent of 2.5 pounds of silver shekels (according to the CJB), a substantial sum of money. Though I'm not sure how beneficial it is to the woman, she remains married to the man; and he is not allowed to ever divorce her.

Deut. 22:20 But if this thing be true, *and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel*:

Deut. 22:21 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.

If, however, the woman can provide no evidence to the refute his accusation, she is to be taken to the door of her father's house and stoned to death by the men of the city.

This would serve as a pretty effective means of being careful to maintain one's virginity. According to the commentators, the judgment against a husband making false accusation also provided a strong deterrent against attempting to do so.

As is often the case, there seems to be no instruction holding the man to the same standard as the woman except as provided in the specific instructions in the following verses.

Well, it is obvious in connection with this instruction that moral standards in our nation and much of the world are far inferior to the moral standards God established for His people.

Deut. 22:22 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.

The instruction from this verse is pretty cut and dried. If a man is caught “in the act” with a married woman, they are both to be killed. As with many of the instructions given by Moses, emphasis is given to the importance of not allowing evil to prosper in Israel. David Guzik pointed out that this penalty was seldom enforced due to the improbability of more than one person witnessing such action.

One can't help but think of the woman who was “caught in adultery” that was brought before Jesus by the Pharisees (John 8). Since they stipulated that the law required that she be stoned, it would seem from reading through the rest of this chapter that the woman was married to another man. That is what makes the fact that they didn't bring the man stand out all the more. If she had not been betrothed or married, he would have been required to marry her (v28-29). It makes one think there was a definite set up for the man to have been allowed to go free.

Deut. 22:23 If a damsel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;

Deut. 22:24 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.

In this scenario a man is found in the city lying with a woman betrothed to be married. Being in the city indicates that a scream for help would have been heard. Again, in this instance both man and woman were to be stoned to death. Also again emphasized is the importance of not allowing evil to prosper in the land.

Deut. 22:25 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:

Deut. 22:26 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:

Deut. 22:27 For he found her in the field, *and* the betrothed damsel cried, and *there was* none to save her.

The next situation describes a man who finds a woman away from the city where a cry for help cannot be heard and he forces himself upon her. In this instance only the man is to be put to death. The girl is determined innocent of any sin. It would seem that the testimony of the girl alone is sufficient to determining guilt. I would assume that such accusation would testify to truth since it probably would affect her future prospects for marriage.

Deut. 22:28 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;

Deut. 22:29 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.

In the last scenario a man is found with a girl that is not betrothed or married; it is not significant where they are found. In this instance the girl is to become the man's wife, and he is to pay the girl's father 1.25 pounds of silver shekels; neither is he allowed to ever divorce her.

Deut. 22:30 A man shall not take his father's wife, nor discover his father's skirt.

Another self-explanatory verse. It is forbidden for a man to take his father's wife in dishonor of his father. This was the very sin for which Reuben lost his birthright.

1Chronicles 5:1 "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright."

In Leviticus the punishment for this act of disobedience also calls for both man and woman to die.

Leviticus 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."