

Deut. 25:1 ¶ 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.

Deut. 25:2 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.

Deut. 25:3 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.

This section gives instruction as to judicial procedures. In any case that is brought before the judges, they are to ensure that the righteous is given justice and the wicked condemned. (You wouldn't find that kind of terminology used today.)

The condemned person, if worthy of beating, is to have judgment carried out on the spot in front of the judge. He is to lie down and receive the number of stripes determined by the judge to be appropriate to the offense. In no case was the number of stripes to exceed 40. That number seems to represent the limit so as not to provoke vengeance. This seems to be defining the difference between appropriate punishment and malicious torture.

I think the significant principles in this passage are:

- Judgment should be rendered fairly without partiality.
- Sentence should be carried out immediately with the proper supervision.

Deut. 25:4 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the corn*.

In other words, you aren't to forbid the ox to eat while it works. You shouldn't be cruel to the animal that is serving you.

Deut. 25:5 ¶ 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.

Deut. 25:6 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.

My, Moses' mind seems to work more randomly than my does sometimes.

These verses provide for a man's family line to be maintained if he were to die before having children. If he has brothers, the brother (I would assume the next oldest) is to take his sister-in-law as his wife and "perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her." In other words, he is to get her pregnant and produce a male heir for his brother. This is known as a "levirate marriage." I would assume that future children would take the new husband's name.

Wonder what happened if the first child was a girl? I wonder if she became like the daughters of Zelophehad and had to marry into the family tribe. (Numbers 36:6-8) Maybe it just means that the firstborn male would take the dead brother's name.

Deut. 25:7 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.

Deut. 25:8 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;

Deut. 25:9 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.

Deut. 25:10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

This section of verses gives instruction regarding the dead man's brother not wanting to take his dead brother's wife as his own. She is to go to the elders and inform them of the brother's refusal to marry her. The elders are to call the brother to appear before them and confirm the truth of the accusation. If he still refuses, his brother's wife is to take his shoe off his foot and spit in his face and state, "So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house." The context implies that these were very shameful acts to endure and would cause stigma to the man's reputation.

This scenario seems almost laughable to us today. Not the part of providing for an heir for the deceased brother, but the thought that publicly taking off his shoe, spitting in his face and speaking a few spiteful words would be a deterrent to refusing to comply with this arrangement. Not so in the culture of that day.

Though not handled exactly as explained here, this was the law that resulted in the marriage of Boaz to Ruth.

Deut. 25:11 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:

Deut. 25:12 Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity *her*.

I had to think about this section for a bit. The instruction pertains to a woman who is interceding to protect her husband from being beaten up. In doing so she grabs him by the "secrets," his private parts. Instead of being justified for helping her husband, she is to have her hand cut off.

After thinking about it for a while, I think it is because of the potential for human life that can be affected through such an action. We argue today about when life begins. (As far as I am concerned, there is no argument; it begins at inception.) It would seem that God values even the source of potential for new life.

Deut. 25:13 ¶ Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.

Deut. 25:14 Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small.

Deut. 25:15 *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.*

These verses forbid the use of rigged weights and measures in order to make an unfair profit. You are only to use “perfect and just” weights and measures. Obedience to this command will ensure that their days in the land will continue—in other words, that God doesn’t judge them by having them taken captive by another nation.

Deut. 25:16 *For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the LORD thy God.*

I think the principle being expressed is much broader than just involving weights and measures. I think the principle being addressed is unfair business practices in general. God detests people who take advantage of other people through dishonest business practices.

Deut. 25:17 *Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt;*

Deut. 25:18 *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.*

Deut. 25:19 *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.*

The last section in this chapter is a special reminder to completely destroy the Amalekites. This was in direct reference to the words of God recorded in Exodus 17.

Exodus 17:14-16 “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. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi: For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”

When Israel pitched camp at Rephidim, the Amalekites attacked them without provocation. It was at a time that they were weak and vulnerable and the Lord provided His people water from the rock. It was during this battle that Aaron and Hur had to stand by Moses and hold his hands up as he held up the rod of God until the battle was won.

As I looked at a couple of commentaries, I was reminded that Amalek is a type of the flesh, and it is always to our benefit to completely destroy the desires of the flesh in our lives. The Israelites did not heed this command; Saul did not destroy Agag, the Amalekite king; and the evil Hamaan from the book of Esther, who tried to destroy the Jewish nation, was one of his descendants.

1Samuel 15:8-9 “And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly

destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

Esther 3:1 "After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him."

If you don't destroy the flesh, it will destroy you.