

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**10-5-22**

**Deuteronomy 25**

**A Limit On Corporal Punishment – Verses 1-3**

**<sup>1</sup> When people have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty. <sup>2</sup> If the guilty person deserves to be beaten, the judge shall make them lie down and have them flogged in his presence with the number of lashes the crime deserves, <sup>3</sup> but the judge must not impose more than forty lashes. If the guilty party is flogged more than that, your fellow Israelite will be degraded in your eyes.**

**25:1-3** At first glance these verses appear irrelevant today. But a closer look reveals some important principles about discipline. Are you responsible for the discipline of a child, a student, or an employee? Three important points will help you carry out your responsibility: (1) Let the punishment follow quickly after the offense; (2) let the degree of punishment reflect the seriousness of the offense; and (3) don't overdo the punishment. Discipline that is swift, just, and restrained makes its point while preserving the dignity of the offender.

**The Command To Not Muzzle The Ox – Verse 4**

**<sup>4</sup> Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.**

**25:4** What is the point of this Old Testament regulation? Oxen were often used to tread out the grain on a threshing floor. The animal was attached by poles to a large millstone. As it walked around the millstone, its hooves trampled the grain, separating the kernels from the chaff. At the same time, the millstone ground the grain into flour. To muzzle the ox would prevent it from eating while it was working. Paul used this illustration in the New Testament to argue that people productive in Christian work should not be denied its benefits—they should receive financial support (1 Corinthians 9:9-12; 1 Timothy 5:17-18). The fact that a person is in Christian ministry doesn't mean he or she should be unfairly paid. There is also a broader application: Don't be stingy with those who work for you.

**The Marriage Obligation Of Surviving Brothers – Verses 5-6**

**<sup>5</sup> If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband's brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. <sup>6</sup> The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel. <sup>7</sup> However, if a man does not want to marry his brother's wife, she shall go to the elders at the town gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to carry on his brother's name in Israel. He will not fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to me." <sup>8</sup> Then the elders of his town shall summon him and talk to him. If he persists in saying, "I do not want to marry her," <sup>9</sup> his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, take off one of his sandals, spit in his face and say, "This is what is done to the man who will not build up his brother's family line." <sup>10</sup> That man's line shall be known in Israel as The Family of the Unsandaled.**

**25:5** One of them dies and has no son: In ancient Israel it was seen as a great tragedy for a man to die without leaving descendants to carry on his name, and to give his family inheritance to. Therefore, if a man dies and has no son, it was the responsibility of one of his brothers to take the deceased brother's widow as a wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

**25:6** The firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel: When a son was born to this union, it would not be counted as the son of the surviving brother, but as son to the deceased brother.

**25:7** He will not perform the duty of my husband's brother: If the brothers of the deceased man refused to take this responsibility, they were to be called to open shame by the widow. The shame was compounded as they would remove his sandal and the widow would spit in his face.

**25:5-10** This law describes a "levirate" marriage, the marriage of a widow to the brother of her dead husband. The purpose of such a marriage was to carry on the dead man's name and inheritance. Family ties were an important aspect of Israelite culture. The best way to be remembered was through your line of descendants. If a widow married someone outside the family, her first husband's line would come to an end. Tamar fought for this right in Genesis 38.

### **Wives Forbidden To Interfere In Their Husband's Fights – Verses 11-12**

**11 If two men are fighting and the wife of one of them comes to rescue her husband from his assailant, and she reaches out and seizes him by his private parts, <sup>12</sup>you shall cut off her hand. Show her no pity.**

**25:11** Then you shall cut off her hand: In this difficult passage, various suggestions have been made as to why such a severe punishment was commanded. "Possibly it was representative of similar offences and provided a standard for judgment in all such cases. Perhaps also, the law arose from the desire to protect the reproductive organs and thus obviate anything that might prevent a man leaving descendants."

### **God Commands Weights And Measures Be Just – Verses 13-16**

**13 Do not have two differing weights in your bag—one heavy, one light. <sup>14</sup>Do not have two differing measures in your house—one large, one small. <sup>15</sup>You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>16</sup>For the LORD your God detests anyone who does these things, anyone who deals dishonestly.**

**25:13** People were to not have in your bag differing weights, a large and a small. This prohibited the Israelites from defrauding an unsuspecting person by using differing sets of weights, depending on whether they thought they could get away with it. The word translated as weights here is literally "stones." In the ancient world, stones were used to designate weight values, since coined money was not available. Moses prohibited the Israelites from using large weights when purchasing and small weights when selling, for doing so would be to steal from other people. It would be abusing the trust of others for selfish gain.

**25:14** Moses forbade the Israelites to have in their house differing measures, a large and a small. The term used for measure is literally ephah in the Hebrew language, a dry measure equivalent to three-fifths of a bushel used for the trading of dry and liquid products such as wine and olive oil. They were to have one weight, such that all transactions are done with justice and fairness.

**25:15** Moses commanded the Israelites not to practice trickery when engaging in trade. Instead, they were to have a full and just weight, a full and just measure. Obeying this principle would ensure that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you. It was by being honest with one another that the Israelites would live a long life and be able to enjoy the fruits of their hard labor. This is, in part, a Divine promise. But it is also a practical matter. Honest societies thrive economically, as trade creates mutual benefit. Dishonesty ultimately deteriorates the society into strong men exploiting the weak. With economic strength comes military strength. By advancing a culture of honesty, Israel would prosper, and the people would be able to dwell in the land, and resist being overthrown.

**25:16** Failure to be honest and transparent in business dealings would be to commit an act that was abominable and deserving of God's judgment. Thus, anyone cheating others using inaccurate weights and measures would deserve God's punishment because this would be an abomination, a detestable act. This teaching is echoed in the book of Proverbs which says, "A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight" (Proverbs 11:1; 20:23).

### **God Commands Israel To Justly Destroy Amalek – Verses 17-19**

**<sup>17</sup>Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. <sup>18</sup>When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. <sup>19</sup>When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!**

**25:17** Remember what Amalek did: The Amalekite attack on the Israelites is recorded in Exodus 17. In response, Joshua led the armies of Israel in victory over the Amalekites as Moses prayed for them, assisted by Aaron and Hur.

**25:19** When the LORD your God has given you rest: Israel was to make this war against the Amalekites later, when they were at rest in the land. Some 400 years later, God directed Saul to make war against the Amalekites, and his failure to completely destroy them was the primary act of disobedience which cost Saul the throne (1 Samuel 15:2-9; 28:18).

**25:19** Blot out the remembrance of Amalek under heaven: Because of God's strong command to battle against Amalek until they were completely conquered, many see the Amalekites as a picture of our flesh — which constantly battles against the spirit and must be struggled against until completely conquered (Galatians 5:17).