

Clough Deuteronomy Session 49

Deuteronomy 23:1-18- Purity of the Assembly, Public Sanitation, Personal Freedom, Temple Worship

Fellowship Chapel; 29 March 2011

We've been working, as you can see on the outline, from chapter 22 through halfway chapter 23, a big chunk of material, and if you look up above this section, from chapter 12 all the way on down to 22, you'll see what I've tried to do here is to track a little bit with the Ten Commandments. Now some commentators try to rigidly force each section to be an exposition of a specific one of the Ten Commandments. I find it a little difficult to do that, honestly, so what I've tried to do is group it where I think it's clear. The problem is if you group it this way, you can see from chapter 19, verse 21, that was pretty much taking a life, which would obviously involve the sixth commandment. And then that would make this one, this section, something to do with the seventh commandment, so I've tried to grapple with this because it's true, generally speaking for this book that all this case law that we're dealing with, even tonight, some of the picky little case law that these are revelations of what those Ten Commandments look like in the details of life. And I think the Holy Spirit has done this, and obviously Moses in his speaking did this because we either drift in one direction or the other; either we grab the general principle but then we lose its specific applications and particulars or we look at all the trees and we miss the forest. So you have to connect two parts of the book, chapters 5-12 through 11:32, loving Yahweh with all your heart deals with that inner attitude, it's covered the generic Ten Commandments.

Now we come to this section and in this particular subsection, of 22-23:18 it seems to be that God is dealing with boundaries. So in the outline there you see the first blank, "This section deals with boundaries that protect life," that's the first blank, boundaries that protect life in all its dimensions. And I think that's the connection here with the seventh commandment, remember the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," it's talking about protecting marriage and family. And the family, as we've seen in incident after incident after incident, the way the text treats the family in the Old Testament is that it, the family, is the center of culture, the center of culture is not the government, the center of culture is in the family. So there's protections for that. And that includes personal freedom, personal property, public health, marriage, family, public testimony to Yahweh as the Creator and Lord of life.

And it's related to the seventh commandment, that's the second blank, the seventh commandment because the family is the womb of a society. And then finally, a summary sentence, the third sentence I have thee is: Each boundary is a feature of God's created design and plan for history. God's created design, in other words, God has structured things, "created design," and also His plan for history. And his plan for history, of course, is to bring in the Kingdom of God. And Israel, during this period of history, from 1400 on to 586 or 600, that eight century period was when God imbedded a model of the Kingdom of God so people could see it. And so for eight centuries God worked in a special way with Israel. That's why this is important and why... it's the only way you can kind of get it

together as to why God saved all this legislation with all these details in it.

And so in chapter 22, just to review, remember, verses 1-4 dealt with ownership, and it was the idea of the boundary between an owner of a piece of property and someone who did not own it. And the implication is of capitalism over socialism. There's a clear economic implication to ownership. And I point out that socialism, if you add it up, it's so interesting and fascinating to me because we have evangelical socialists coming in, Jim Wallace, Ron Snyder, the guy in New Jersey that's a psychologist, I can't think of his name, he was the guy that was with Clinton, Jim Wallace is now with Obama, and a lot of the young evangelicals are buying into the green thing and the socialist thing because it's, you know, it's what everybody is talking about. And of course, these people never read the Bible clearly, they haven't got time to do that, they're too busy beating the bongo drums or something so they don't, obviously, spend time in the Word of God. They don't know what they're talking about. But I went through the Ten Commandments and if you look at it socialism always professes to be so concerned with people's lives.

Isn't it interesting that of the Ten Commandments, which ones does socialism violate? It violates the fifth commandment because it does not honor parents; it is too busy having the State intrude the home and taking away the kids and assuming that the State is now the replacement for mom and dad. So it's obviously not honoring parents. So socialism is violating the fifth commandment. Socialism violates the seventh one for the same reason because it's interfering with the family. Socialism violates the eighth commandment because basically what it wants to do is steal from productive people and give it to unproductive people. The ninth commandment, it's deceitful, its perjury and misrepresents because in order to pay for the socialist state they have to inflate the currency which means that the face value on the currency is no longer the actual value of the currency, so that's a violation of the ninth commandment. And the tenth commandment is violated because they preach envy of the neighbor; if someone is worth more than you are you're supposed to envy them and you want to take away their superiority, which obviously they've gotten because they are more productive than you are so the idea there is to level everybody out, and that's envy. And it's so ironic that here the very people, the socialists, who are always so concerned about people, wind up violating the very commandments, if you look at the ten, which ones deal with loving your neighbor? The fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth and the ninth, and it's exactly those commandments that socialism violates. So it's interesting how this works out.

And then in chapter 22, verses 5-10, remember we had the boundaries, sexuality is to be respected and cultural customs, like clothing styles, because there's supposed to be an honoring of the sexual distinction. The Scriptures deal with sexuality as it should be dealt with. And so there's no embarrassment in the Scriptures about true sexuality, God made us male and female and that means there's differences. And it's to be respected. Man and nature are to be respected and we showed this particular slide last time, and again, all the green evangelicals... not that we have to abuse the environment, but we have this absolute fanaticism that it's somehow wrong to cultivate nature. That's a direct violation of the Word

of God. God directs people to do that, the garden was to be cultivated and protected.

But what the Christian socialists and evangelical socialists are doing, they're taking the commandments of chapter 2 in Genesis and applying it to everything. And they're saying see, the garden is to be cultivated and protected but it doesn't talk about subduing the earth. Oh yes it does, if you read chapter 1. The subduing is what's outside of the garden, the garden is an example that God gave of what He meant when He said subdue the earth. It didn't mean {?} it, it meant to cultivate it, to bring it to its fruitfulness. Nature, by itself, is a wilderness and it's not an honorable thing to (quote) "preserve it" in the sense of keeping it a wilderness. There are natural resources there. A great example of this thing is the oil in northern Alaska. I happen to know some people in Alaska that live there, some scientists that I work with at Aberdeen, and they have a corresponding team in Alaska and you hear all these stories about the pipeline was messing around with the caribou, and he sent me pictures of it, the caribou in the wintertime, they're walking along the pipeline to keep warm. And the caribou herds have multiplied two or three times since the pipeline has been in there, it hasn't messed up the environment. And the little place where they want to drill oil is some little tiny place in this vast domain on the northern slope. So the point is that you hear all this environmental propaganda and it's actually a moral manipulation to make everybody feel guilty if you don't agree with these particular people's programs.

So this is the picture of real biblical ecology; again, it's to honor it and that was the bird's nest passage that we went through. Then we had the safety issues, the parapet on the roof, that human life is to be guarded from careless, but even then we have the way God dealt with safety issues. He did not deal with safety issues with administrative preventative law. He dealt with safety issues by holding people responsible that caused a problem; the criminal law is different from administrative law. Administrative law is what makes bureaucracies metastasize into these gigantic dollar consuming agencies that are always trying to prevent something. The way that God prevents something is to discipline the people that violate and cause the problem. He doesn't go to this massive expense of trying to administer through a multi-layered bureaucracy all this administrative regulation. Somebody was telling me that the average doctor today, if he were to read every single regulation that deals with the medical practice, it would take him six and a half years. Now you tell me... let's think about that, think of the voluminous regulations, six and a half years to read the regulations, eight hours of reading a day in order to understand all the regulations that control... it's baloney, nobody can live that way. Everybody violates the administrative law, it's impossible not to, it's so voluminous that you're inevitably going to violate it. So what does that do? It breeds disrespect for law. So that's why in the Scriptures here you want to pay attention to some of these details in the text because they're teaching big principles. That's why criminal law is used.

Then finally, in verses 13-30, chapter 22, we dealt with marriage issue, and if you'll follow me on this review I wanted to, in the light of the questions that came up last time, I want to... I have some blanks here and I'll go through these. There's a background to what marriage is under the

theocracy. God gave specifics. Point number one, no serious relationship exists without a contractual understanding, that's the blank, a contractual understanding, hence the marriage ceremony. The marriage ceremony is a public declaration of the formation of a covenant between the man and the woman. We don't just go shack up because we love each other for twenty-four hours. If you don't have a contract you cannot distinguish between marriage and fornication. I mean, think about it, two people living together, are they married or aren't they, is it fornication or not? You can tell the difference because there's a contract there; that's what separates the whole point. And that's in Malachi 2:14 if you want a reference, it specifically cites a marriage contract. And also, the code of Hammurabi which is a pagan law code says that a marriage is invalid unless there is a written record. So it's not true that in the ancient world people could just shack up and, you know, didn't pay attention to marriage ceremonies; marriage ceremonies were very important because they were establishing the contract, and even the pagans believed in a written, not just an informal, a written contract, otherwise the marriage was invalid. And you can check that out by going to the code of Hammurabi if you want an example of that.

And Deuteronomy 24, when a divorce happens it's a written agreement. So if you're going to have a written record of the divorce you obviously must have a written record of the marriage. So further research makes me very convinced that the biblical way is a written contract, signified by a formal marriage ceremony. And that's exactly what the culture today does not want, but that's exactly what we as Christians ought to insist we do want. We have to draw a line here.

Number two, divorce is a breach of that contract. Now the divorce was allowed in a very, you know, for different reasons under the Old Testament but that's because, as Jesus said, the people were sinners, there was hardness of heart. The Mosaic Law was given to a nation made up of believers and unbelievers, it was a mixed group. So the society was a mixture of believers and unbelievers, and that divorce under the theocracy, apparently allowed remarriage. But looking now at divorce and marriage through the theocratic 8th century period when this thing was functioning, God's contractual agreement with Israel was analogous to marriage, Ezekiel 16:8 is an example of how God treated His relationship. And that shows you why a marriage contract is important because that is a physical, easy to see, picture of the unseen contract between Yahweh and Israel. So there's an analogy here and we'll go through these analogies, every detail, in these kind of passages.

The marriage contract is necessary because of two things, at least two things. One is property, the romantic idea of marriage is new in history; it was not true in the ancient world. Now obviously the kids, the guys and gals loved one another, and the children... the marriages were arranged because the kids were very young then and you know, the parents would go back and forth. But it's also true, if you read, like for example, Samson, in the book of Judges, the kids put pressure on the parents, hey, you know, I like her, or he's kind of neat, so it wasn't that the kids didn't have some say in the whole thing, it was rather that the parents were involved because in those days there was no social security, there was no government welfare, there had to be provision for support. So it was property, number one, and the second thing was because

of progeny; property and progeny. Marriage creates babies, normally, and so that involves a family, so that immediately involves a business, it involves property, it involved education of children, it involves caring for the elderly. All that's involved in here.

So what we want to do in our culture is we want to separate the casual relationship from all these other things. And it's a total messed up idea of the way God designed this thing to work, and that's why we have dysfunctional families by the carload all over the place. And this is why we're spending millions of dollars on problems, social problems that are a result of dysfunctional families. And no government program, the government program will spend millions and millions of dollars, pouring money, trying to resolve the problem of all these dysfunctional family products that have been produced out of society.

And the promiscuity prior to marriage, all of these you point out, these cases of adultery, the promiscuous fiancÄ, the rape of the fiancÄ, the rape of a virgin, notice the rules of evidence used; it wasn't hasty, there were procedures, judicial procedures which shows you how serious it was. And in two of those six cases, the one example, the rape of a virgin... permanent marital responsibilities. It's very interesting how the Mosaic Law put the responsibility on the male side of the house, that if some guy went out and got a girl pregnant, the result of that, the consequence of that was that he was economically responsible for that woman for the rest of his life. Thousands and thousands of dollars, it wasn't just get 'em pregnant and leave 'em, none of that stuff. If you got a woman pregnant you paid the price tag and you supported her for the rest of her life. Now think of what we do in our society.

So that's the evidence. Now the "more evidence" of this is the reason why God designed it this way is, and I point out this, in addition to what I did last week when I talked about the hormones and article on how our bodies are connected with chemicals in the brain and bonding, and when you have casual relationships where all of a sudden the body chemistries try to bond and then you break the relationship off and go to somebody else, and try to bond, and break the relationship, it gets to the point where the bonding doesn't happen any more because it's been ruptured so many times.

Well, here is another example, sexually transmitted diseases. In studying back history, because we had some other cases that are going to come up today about public health, many years ago 90% of the blind people in our institutions were from gonorrhoea. I'm looking at a medical history book here, it goes back to the late 1800s, so in the 19th century 90% of the blind people were blinded by gonorrhoea. And that statistic still holds in the third world today. Now think of the damage, just think of the damage and the suffering that has happened because of this, sexually transmitted diseases. And syphilis was a sexually transmitted disease, deformed babies, and it made them insane, and women suffered more than men.

S. I. McMillen, and by the way, I'm quoting him tonight; S. I. McMillen was an M.D., he was a Seventh Day Adventist, I don't know, it's on e-bay somewhere, if you kind of look for his book, it's out of print now, it's called None of These Diseases, and S. I. McMillen was a missionary doctor and he came to this conclusion after watching what he saw people involved

with, in different kind of tribal situations and so on, and he wrote this book about what God promised to the nation Israel. And he says: Women suffered more than men. McMillen noted that many years ago, and he's talking about the very early 1900s, that medical professors would tell their students, "Curse the day when a woman walks into your office with pelvic inflammatory disease." They didn't have the tools then to deal with it like they do now. And you know, 90% of the inflammatory diseases were from promiscuity.

So he has a quote, this is an interesting story that he points out here, one of the cases that he worked with where he was soberly reminded of why the Bible says these things. "A girl who had sexual relations with only one boyfriend thought she was safe. She was terribly shocked when her doctor told her she was infected. A "venereal tracer" revealed: the boy had consorted with only one other girl. This girl had had relations with five other men, who in turn had been with nineteen women, some of them prostitutes. The girl who thought her relationship had been limited to one person had had contact, through him, with at least ninety-two others." [S.I.McMillen, MD, None of These Diseases, p43.]

So again, this is the kind of stuff, it snowballs, and this is why God is saying hey, you know, I designed it to work a certain way and then you mess with My design you pay a price. Massachusetts, after the "homosexual marriage" law, experienced a budget increase, they had to increase the budget in the state of Massachusetts because after gay marriage was authorized, back three or four years ago, all of a sudden they have a problem, they had to deal with a rise in AIDS... gee, I wonder why? Because you've encouraged homosexuality, that's why, and homosexuality is a great conveyer of aids. So now we have more taxing to do because now we've got to have all the medical help for aids, because we now have gay marriage. That was a real smart move. And number two, and this surprised me, because I'm not that tuned in to what goes on in the homosexual community, they had to raise their budget to deal with the domestic violence of the homosexual couples. Their rate of domestic violence is far greater than heterosexual marital couples.

So now this is what happens because we think we've got a right to do it our way. Yeah, you have a right to experience the consequences and so here are the economic consequences of this kind of stuff. And we just have to think, how many millions of dollars does it take to teach us why God designed it the best way to go. Said another way in this economically stressful period of time, Godly living is cheaper. Now we come to chapter 23, this is a chapter that Carol reminded me, we're dealing with everything from nocturnal emissions to latrines tonight, and this is the passage that years and years ago, when I was a pastor I had gone through verse by verse Deuteronomy and we got to Christmas Eve or it was the Sunday before Christmas and here's the passage I wound up in. Now you figure out how you turn chapter 23 into a Christmas story.

So let's go through this, and again we want to think about why all these details are here, and that's why, under the purity of citizenship is the way I've tried to summarize this thing. Israel was chosen to be a physical revelation of the Kingdom of God, so their customs were installed and applied to outward appearance. And if you look at the customs, I hope I can communicate this tonight, these customs were ways... maybe think

about it this way, imagine you are an actor or an actress in a drama, and you have a role to play on the stage, and so you read through the script, and the script says you have to say this, you have to say this, and this is your character that you're going to do and here is how you dress on stage and here's the way you talk on stage.

Israel was like that, think of this as actors and actresses that were historically playing a role that God could then use as illustrations of spiritual truths. This is why that donkey passage that we read, you know, back in chapter 22, you had a donkey and an ox, don't put them together in the same yoke, who picks that up but the Apostle Paul. And he's not talking about farm production when he picks that farm truth up; he is talking about a spiritual thing, a believer and an unbeliever locked into a contract where they're trying to produce labor. So what Paul does, he goes back into the Old Testament and he picks these things up. These metaphors are easy to see, a child can see some of these metaphors. So that's why they become vehicles to illustrate spiritual truth. We'll see a little bit of that tonight.

Okay, the first section, verses 1-8, if you follow me now, [1] "He who was emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD. [2] One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the LORD' even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD. [3] An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter the assembly of the LORD; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the LORD forever, [4] because they did not meet you with bread and water on the road when you came out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. [5] Nevertheless the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you. [6] You shall not seek their peace, nor their prosperity all your days forever. [7] You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your brother. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, because you were an alien in his land. [8] The children of the third generation to them may enter the assembly of the LORD."

Now what is all this about; obviously it's dealing with immigration in a nation. And so here we have immigration restrictions being put, but not in the sense that these people couldn't become gers, or foreigners, resident aliens. They could become resident aliens. You see the word "assembly of the LORD" here repeated, "assembly of the LORD, assembly of the LORD, assembly of the LORD, that's talking about coming together in a great convocation before the Lord at the temple. Remember, that was the core of the nation, that was the center, you had twelve tribes, all different guys and gals from different tribes, but what united them wasn't a strong central government, what united them was a strong central faith, and God's presence in the temple. That was the magnet that brought all these diverse elements together.

These people were excluded, they were not to be part of the assembly. So now we have to say well why? We're dealing in verse 1 with eunuchs. Now in the ancient world eunuchs had a role because in a polygamous royalty you had many women in a, sort of women's dormitory, paid for by the king and the guy that managed the harem were eunuchs, and the reason why they picked eunuchs to manage the harem, as you can understand because he's not going to be messing with the women. So the eunuchs, then, faced a ... it

was a job description for people but it was usually in a pagan environment, though Solomon obviously must have done it.

So what's wrong with these eunuchs? What's wrong with them is they can't reproduce. Now Isaiah 56:5 shows that believing eunuchs in the future kingdom are perfectly accepted. They're not going to be excluded. But in the days of the theocracy they were excluded because again, of the drama that God wanted His people to act out in history. He does not want unfruitfulness. And these people, the crushing or the mutilation, they're both prohibited in the Mosaic Law. So you have the cutting thing, that's what is going on here. And God says I don't want you cutting your body, you're mutilating My design, and therefore because you've mutilated My design, you're not going to... you can worship Me off in the village some place, but I don't want you near My temple, I don't want you part of the assembly. Talk about discrimination, this is hard-nosed discriminatory social legislation going on here.

Then it says, you "shall not enter the assembly of the LORD." And I have a caution in your notes, the handout here, I was shocked to find out that somehow in church history there have been Christians that pick up on this passage and say that handicapped people shouldn't be in the temple. I don't know how you get that out of this passage but I'll tell you how you might get it out of this passage, if you're one of those kind of people that wants to make Israel the church, and you've got replacement theology, now you've got a little problem. But we dispensationalists make a difference between the church and Israel. So this is not prohibiting handicapped people, I mean, think about the ministry that Joni Erickson Tada has had out in John MacArthur's church, bringing in all kinds of people that are handicapped, a wonderful ministry. So just a cautionary note if you happen to run across this sometime. I've never personally run into this but apparently it did happen

Verse 2 says, "Anyone of illegitimate birth," again excluded, it could be by incest, it could be marriage to foreigners, whatever, and they are excluded to the tenth generation, and it may be, as I point out in the notes, the tenth generation, because it occurs later in the same section where God says I don't want these people in my assembly ever, they're excluded permanently, so the tenth generation may be an idiomatic way of expressing everlasting exclusion from the assembly. And why is that? Again because God is looking... He's using physical reproduction and family propagation to be an example of the spiritual truth of believers reproducing themselves and bringing in the kingdom. So this is again a picture, a physical picture of lack of production or aberrant and perverted production.

So then verse 3, this creates another little issue, "An Ammonite or a Moabite," now what's going on here? Remember, this goes back to session 8, back a year ago, remember back when we did that section that Israel was coming out of Kadesh-Barnea, they wanted to cut across to Edom, couldn't do it, so then they had to wander around and they finally came up to the east, avoiding Edom and Moab. And I said during session 8 that the reason was that God gave Moab a land grant, and He said it's evil what they are doing but I don't want you to take away their land, don't want you to invade, I've given that land to them, back off, I'll take care of the problem. Well then later these people acted out their hostility and so

what we have going on here is an interesting thing, that nations and tribes seem in the Bible to have an identity that sticks with them down through the centuries. Can anybody think of the contract that addresses the issue for other nations and how they treat Israel. The Abrahamic contract, right? Ten 12:3, he that curses you I will curse, he that blesses you I will bless. Well, here you see an example of it. Let's look at it.

"An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter the assembly... the tenth generation...." The last of verse 6, "You shall not seek their peace, nor their prosperity all your days forever." They were just permanently excluded; Yahweh says I don't want you around here, you cursed My people and you're going to pay a price. Remember this book, choice and consequences. So they chose to be rebellious and not show grace and not help out the Jews, so okay, if you don't want to help out the Jews, fine, live by yourself. And then he concludes toward the end,[5] "the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because," there's the purpose clause, "because the LORD your God loves you." And the word "love" there is the word ahav, as you see on the outline, and it's called the election love of God; that's God's choice, it's not chesed, it's ahav, and ahav says I choose Abraham, I choose you, and that's what that word "love" means.

Now the background for what's going on here is Abraham's family tree. If you look at Abraham's family tree and look at the history that we already have in Genesis, Ammon and Moab came into existence through an incestuous relationship. Remember Lot, what happened to Lot's wife? She didn't want to evacuate, she turned around, so Lot, after Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot's left alone. His daughters figure out they can't have men around for some reason, no boyfriends, and so they get their father drunk or whatever and they get pregnant by their father, and that's the rise of Ammon and Moab. Now that's the kind of reproduction that's out of God's design. So it's interesting that it's not only was outside of God's design but it also led, historically, to a cursing upon those people. And so you can recognize this name from what today? What's the capital of Jordan? Amman. So the people that are in Jordan, what is now Jordan, basically are occupying the land of Ammon and Moab.

So let's go on further; verse 7 and 8, "You shall not abhor an Edomite," now an Edomite, looking on the family tree once again, Edom is from Esau, so he is coming out of Abraham and it's a progeny, although Isaac and Jacob are the ones who carry the name, but nevertheless, physically the Edomites are out of Abraham, and out of Isaac. So there's a historical way, a pattern that's being observed here. And then finally, "an Egyptian," because were hosted 400 years in his life, you were a ger in his land. And yes, the Egyptians were nasty towards the end of that four century period but for a long time they welcomed the Jews, I mean, after all, who did they promote as second to Pharaoh? Joseph, a Jew. So God remembers that.

I make this point because at the end of the Tribulation there's the sheep and goat judgments, where God decides... He judges among the nations, and the basis of that judgment of going into the Millennial Kingdom is the manifestation of faith, and the particular manifestation of faith at period of history coming up is how they handle the Jewish believers, the

persecuted Jewish believers. And nations, or groups of people that have been friendly, like Corrie Ten Boom and many of the Dutch and how they took care of the Jewish people against Adolf Hitler, they're honored. You can go to Israel today and you'll see trees that they plant for Jewish heroes, there's one there for Corrie Ten Boom. There are trees that the Jews have planted in honor of Gentiles, and the Gentiles are the ones who protected them. And even today in their unbelief they remember that, they don't forget; we're talking, you know, many, many years; they have a long memory.

So these first 8 verses deal with who is acceptable in the assembly, and God is simply saying, in one sense, that spiritually it's an analog to being born again, you don't have fellowship with God if you're not regenerated. And so this is the spiritual birth. So this physical picture here has an analog spiritually.

Now we come, verses 9-14, to public sanitation. And we get into all these details and it's interesting how this works out, but again, it's a case where we're dealing here with physical revelation of the Kingdom of God. Under Roman III, Israel was chosen to be a physical revelation of the Kingdom of God truths so there were customs installed that applied to physical cleanliness as a prerequisite of executing God's assigned tasks." Now some of these physical uncleanness in this passage, if you'll look at it, it's not getting your hands dirty. It's not having dust on your feet. It's something else. Now before we go too far in the text, just think of a quick, go over the New Testament in your mind, what was Jesus teaching when He washed the disciple's feet? It was dirt. So why did Jesus take His robe off and go ahead and wash the disciple's feet? It was a picture of sin and cleanliness. Now that's what this is, and what God is doing in this passage is He's dealing with things that... discharges from the human body, that's what all this uncleanness is. It's not dirt put on the body from labor.

It's interesting that you look at all this stuff in chapter 23, it's stuff that comes out of the body. Now why do you suppose that God makes this an issue? Is this a picture of something? What does the flesh produce? Sin. And so He picks up stuff that is intimate to us, because sin is intimate to us. So here we have again a picture of the fact that the most intimate personal thing can be an offense to God. So let's look at it. Verse 9, "When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing." And that's the word "evil" here. [10] If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. [11] But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp."

Now notice, what's the context here, what does it say is the condition, right at the front? This is war. So it's important that in spiritual battle that the warriors of Yahweh be in connection with Him, you don't go into battle disconnected from Yahweh. And so uncleanness would separate you from Yahweh. So He makes this rule that you think, gosh, he's going to lose some guys here that are needed in the squad tomorrow morning, they have to wait 24 hours, until the sun sets and they wash. And the idea there is... the Hebrew means a night happening, it could nocturnal emissions, it could be anything that's discharged from the body. The point is, it's considered to be an unclean thing. He is to wash, and

that's just like the John 15 passage, Jesus washing the feet, and it's just that the dirt and whatever, whether it's the dust in John 15 or excrement in Deuteronomy 23, it's all a picture that God wants us to see that if this offensive to us and the way we react to it, yuk, He says that's the way I react when I see you sin, yuk! So the emotional response we have to these things is an analog to God's response to our sin. And this is a neat way of teaching it.

So in verse 12, it says, the next section, "Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; [13] and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse." Now here in verse 14, obviously there's some sort of latrine outside the camp, but now in verse 14 here's the theology, and this is why God is going to make an issue out of these points. "For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away." When you're in battle you don't need God to turn away from you, so you keep tight with God and when you're tight with God then the Holy Spirit makes you conscious of thoughts and things in your heart, and so you have to watch that, the stuff that's coming out of you.

Now this has repercussions down in history and we can only point out some of the things, but on your outline I point out that it raises the issue of public health. And one of the slides I have here is, this is from S. I. McMillen's book, the Hebrews, because of these kinds of teaching, early on in history had a way of dealing with public health issues that was unique in the world. And to give you a sense of contrast, here's the papyrus EBER, now this is what Egyptian medicine looked like, and this date, 1552 places the papyrus EBER before Moses. So Moses and the Jews lived in Egypt while this was going on. This is what would be conventional medicine that they would have learned. Moses probably learned it, he was raised inside of Pharaoh's palace. And so we have: "To prevent hair from turning gray, anoint it with the blood of a black calf which has been boiled in oil or with the fat of a rattlesnake.... An extra-special hair dressing for the Egyptian Queen Schesch consisted of equal parts of a heel of an Abyssinian greyhound, date blossoms, and asses hoofs, boiled in oil. [It] was intended to make the royal hair grow." Wouldn't you love that ladies, for your hair, wonderful hair conditioner. But this is what was going on in 1552 B.C.

Now that's the background, so now when you come to the rules here, and we don't have time, if you really want to see all of the restrictions, Deuteronomy, remember, is written to laymen and it gives you quick summaries, but if you really want the scoop, Leviticus 15 and it goes through every single discharge of the human body, it goes through the male discharge and it goes through the female discharge, it's all one big long gory list in Leviticus 15. But all of that is subsumed in this passing remark of Moses.

Now one of the worst medical disasters in human history was the black plague and it's interesting that had the people known about some of the sanitary precautions that are in the Bible, some of the plagues of history would probably have at least been less. George Rosen, Columbia University of Public Health cited this, he's talking about leprosy: "Fear of all

other diseases taken together can hardly be compared to the terror that was spread by leprosy. Not even the Black Death in the fourteenth century or the appearance of syphilis toward the end of the fifteenth century produced a similar state of fright." And during these times, leprosy and the breakout of the plague, "Leadership was taken by the church, as the physicians had nothing to offer. The church took as its guiding principle the concept of contagion as embodied in the Old Testament," the hygienic laws, and you see, what they would do in leprosy in the Old Testament, what did they do? They excluded them from the camp. Today we call that quarantine. "Once the condition of leprosy had been established, the patient was to be segregated and excluded from the community. Following the precepts laid down in Leviticus the church undertook the task of combating leprosy ... it accomplished the first great feat... in methodical eradication of disease."

Out there in the culture today people demean the Old Testament, ah, it's a useless document, written by an angry God... wait a minute, try reading it before you shoot off your mouth. Think about what it is you're reading. And here's an example of some of the contributions of this neglected section of the Bible. And had it been read a little bit it would have probably helped out. It's just amazing the terror of some of these contagions that happened. I have a book here and in the interest of time I have to be careful about reading it, but this is a book called Disease in History, and it's an eye opener to what disease has caused, how history has been influenced by disease. He says, "There's a modern tendency to underestimate the severity of the Black Plague, for various reasons put forward, but the underlying thought is it just could not have happened. Many people assume that the visitation was little worse than the later epidemic. Petrarch appears to have foreseen this attitude. He lived at Avignon, in the south of France, his beloved Lord died of the plague in April, 1348. The Petrarch wrote that the "future generations would be incredulous, would be unable to imagine the empty houses, the abandoned towns, the squalid countryside, the fields littered with dead, the dreadful silent solitude which seemed to hang over the whole world. No one could advise in a time of pestilence such as this. Physicians were useless, historians knew of no such visitations; philosophers could only shrug their shoulders and look wise. Petrarch questioned and it turned out rightly questioned, whether posterity could possibly believe that such things, when those who had actually seen them could hardly believe them for themselves. The Black Plague was not just another incident in the long life of epidemics which have smitten the world; It was probably the greatest European catastrophe in history."

And he goes on to describe how many people died in this and he cites evidence to show that at one time England, at this particular time, appeared to have 3.5 million people, when the plague was done they had less than 2 million. That means one million, five hundred thousand people out of a population of three million five hundred thousand died. You can imagine how this was. And he concludes with this; "The immediate effect of the Black Death was a general paralysis, trade largely ceased," he's talking about international trade, "trade largely ceased. The war between England and France was halted by a truce on the 2 May, 1349 and did not break out again until September of 1355. In 1350 with the death of so many able-bodied men the defense of the realm became a matter of grave

concern; towns were required to supply men at arms, ships and sailors from the depleted resources."

And this book goes on to show that in the early three or four hundred years of Christianity in the Roman Empire, there plagues, I never really knew about it, and plagues where in certain cities they were dying at the rate of two to ten thousand people a day. And they had so many bodies they just shoveled them and put them in boats and dumped the boat out in the Mediterranean. So this is the sullied side of history in a fallen world. It's not all, you know, glamour. So we come, then, beyond this section that deals with cleanliness and the fact that God doesn't want uncleanness.

Now we come to the section on 15-16. It says here, "You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. [16] He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place where he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you will not oppress him." Now what is this passage, how do we tie this passage in. I believe we tie it in because we're dealing with boundaries and things in God's design. Israel, in its boundaries, spoke of freedom. That's what "redeemed" means. Now the slave that has escaped here is not an Israelite slave. We know that because in Exodus, I give you the verse there, 21:2, the slaves inside Israel were debtors; it was an economic thing; you had to work off your debt. That's the only source of slavery, he was not captured. It was considered a capital offense to kidnap someone. So what modern man calls slavery did not exist here. Inside Israel there was no such thing as slavery in the modern sense of the word. It was what we are involved with, we're debt slaves. If you owe a mortgage on your house you're a debt slave, if you owe the bank, same with the car, any debt, so in that sense we're still slaves. These are economic issues. But here this is talking about a slave of a pagan or outside the land, and we're dealing with extradition; extradition is the right that if one nation has a criminal escape from nation A to go nation B, nation B generally has an international treaty that they return escaping criminals back to the site of the escape. So that is extradition.

Well, in the case of an escaped slave from a pagan nation, most pagan nations then had extradition written into the treaties. And this forbade Israel for having extraditions. Israel could not deal, and would not return an escaping slave. This, of course, was the source of why in the Civil War, pre Civil War period, why the underground railroad started, where a slave escaped from their southern owners and the northern people would help them escape, they wouldn't return them. They were just simply following the text here. An example in the New Testament is Philemon. Paul actually, literally, was in violation of Roman law when he wrote Philemon because Roman law was you're supposed to return the slave and Paul did not return the slave under the Roman law, he wrote a letter trying to get the slave back to his owner, but as a Christian now the slave{?} changed. And the fact that Paul, evidently had a long time with the slave, because in the epistle he tells about, he taught this guy. Well, all the time he's teaching this guy he is in violation of Roman law which said he is supposed to return a slave to his owner and Paul said no, wrong, I'm not going to return the slave to his owner, in due time I will but I'm going to lead him to the Lord and I'm going to train him and then

I'm going to send him back and see if we can work a deal. So Philemon is an example of how in the New Testament this same kind of thing worked.

So we have a case where inside the boundaries of Israel there was to be freedom. And that's why at the end of this section it says, "you will not oppress him." And that's a prohibition against creating a legislation that would treat the slave, the escaped slave, differently than the free person in the land. There was to be one law, remember, we said what is justice in the Old Testament? Impartiality, you couldn't have one law applying only to some people; it was the same law that applied to everything. That's why I quote here Exodus 12:49, one law shall be for the native born and one for the stranger who dwells among you. In this case the stranger that dwells among them would have been a slave that had escaped from a pagan master in a pagan nation. And Israel would absolutely, was commanded, do not return this slave, he is now a free man, he made it across the boundary.

Finally, in verses 17-18 we have an address that deals with basically temple worship. I've suggested you compare the outline tonight with the outline previously for verses 17-18. "There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel. [18] You will not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the LORD your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the LORD your God."

So now again we have a boundary of sorts here, and that deals with that assembly; when you come together to assemble in the presence of the Lord, there are certain things, certain people that are excluded and certain money that is excluded. Verse 17, if you will look at the outline, in verse 18 there's a word for "harlot" but it's a different word in the Hebrew and you want to pay attention to this because this shows you the meaning here. The first verse, 17 deals with qedeshah and qedesh, now QDH in the Hebrew is the word for holy, so why do you think this Hebrew word is used of a female prostitute and a male prostitute when it's a root of the Hebrews word for righteousness and justice? It's because they were part and parcel of a religious protocol. In other words, among the pagans, the pagan priesthods and the pagan temples involved prostitution. And the prostitutes were both male prostitutes and female prostitutes. So that's why the italicized thing in your notes in verse 17 is qedeshah, see the female ending on the noun, and then quedesh, there's the male, and the males were mostly homosexuals.

So you have this prohibition that these people were not to be... get them out of here, I don't want them around My temple. You know, it's behavior, they're not born this way. That's one of the fallacies today, homosexuals are convincing CEO's of big corporations that they can't help it, that's just the way that God made them, blah, blah, blah, and it's a fundamental difference. We believe no, it's chosen. Yes, it's a tough time if you have a propensity in this direction and your sexual identity is difficult and you have a problem with that, you know, I might have a problem with theft, but I don't go around saying let's legitimize thievery, I just have to deal with it, that's m problem, I have to deal with my sin nature, and I'd really be thankful if the homosexuals would just deal with their own sin nature's and stop trying to make me and everyone else accept their low

class morality. So this is the case and God is excluding these people, He says I don't want them there.

Then in the next verse he's talking about money, "You will not bring the wages of a harlot, or the price of a dog," now you'll see in your notes a different word is used here. This word, zonah, was an ordinary prostitute. And the word for a male ordinary prostitute was celev, like Kaleb, we have Kaleb, v and b are kind of the same in Hebrew, so Kaleb was simply the name of a dog, and it was a reference to a male prostitute that would be just out on the streets, again, probably a homosexual. So if you were in the business you couldn't even bring your money as a result of the business, or you pimped these people, you could not use that money in any service of the Lord, it's prohibited, don't want it, it's not an offering to me.

So I think you see in all these sections of this chapter that we've been working on a summary, a distinct culture of life protecting boundaries, emphasis upon purity of national life, the context of the 7th commandment, personal freedom, personal property, public health, marriage and family, public testimony to Yahweh. And that seems to be what ties this section together. When we deal with it next week we'll go into a whole new section and we move on to the 8th commandment which is "Thou shalt not steal," and economic issues.

So that concludes talking about leprosy and that concludes my Christmas lesson.

Father, we thank

She was just bringing up the fact, you know, Philip and the eunuch in the book of Acts, Philip evangelized and talks to him because he knows the guy can be born again, he probably, that eunuch probably, if the rabbis in Jesus' day were very strict with these chapters, we don't know how strict they were because we don't have all the information, he probably would have been restricted. But you see, that didn't restrict him from a relationship with the Lord. It was just in the drama of Israel that was not a role that he was supposed to play. He was not qualified to play that role.

Jeek brings up a very important point, Ammon and Moab in that passage, you notice how strict they were to be excluded, but what do you read about in the book of Ruth? You see, when it gets right down to faith, I mean think of Rahab, I mean there you have a prostitute, she's not only a prostitute, she ran the business, and yet she is one who eventually winds up marrying into the line and then you have Ruth, the Moabitess and she's in the Messianic line and isn't it interesting in the Messianic line of the kind of women that we have in the Messianic line. And yes, they came out of those backgrounds, but they became believers, they straightened their lives out and they moved on. So there's always the hope. We're not, through these passages, trying to diminish the ability of individuals to come into a relationship with the Lord, by His grace. It's rather that God was setting out a picture that He wanted painted in history, so that He could use that picture to teach truths still.

Any other questions. [someone asks something] yes, he's raising the question of 1 Kings 18 where the prophets of Baal are sitting there and

cutting themselves, it's probably they weren't emasculating themselves, probably it was slashing. "Cutting" which is in Deuteronomy 14, it was often... cutting was a way of emotional release, of sorrow, anger, and that's why there had to be a prohibition against cutting when someone died that you loved and you were depressed. And today we have cutting going on, among young people that are depressed. For some reason there's something inside our fallen natures that when we're depressed and kind of just real down we want to mutilate ourselves. I don't understand it but that's apparently it's always been there.

[more said] Well, you raise the issue of circumcision; it's interesting, there are only two mutilations in the Mosaic Law Code, there's circumcision, which is God's design and we went into the background of circumcision, the background of circumcision is that it's basically male oriented, obviously, and what it's saying is there's something wrong with the seed of men, that we can't reproduce a godly line, and that's why it's related to the Abrahamic Covenant because think about Abraham's first child, his first real child, Isaac. What was true about that conception? It was miraculous. I mean, both he and his wife were both far beyond child bearing age and yet they get pregnant with Isaac, and he was the first one after Abraham to start carrying the Messianic seed. Now it seems to me that very story of the miraculous conception of Isaac is telling you that normal human reproduction doesn't produce the seed, it has to be supernaturally produced. And so circumcision is a reminder that we have the ability to naturally reproduce but there's something lacking.

The woman, on the other hand, she, from the very beginning has no mutilation whatsoever. She is called the "mother of all living," and Canadian physiologist, Arthur Custance has argued that the ovum in the female is really immortal because what it does, I mean, girls inherit it, you go from mother to daughter, mother to daughter, mother to daughter, it's like the womb is waiting, in this sense, for the Messiah. This is why Jewish women would always hope that they would be the one that would give birth to the Messiah. So the female isn't treated that way, it's the male that's treated that way. Again, there's more depth to this, these are not just trivial customs that somebody just thought about last Tuesday or something, these are things that are imbedded, and that's why when you study these kind of things there's some hard passages in here. Now I don't profess to have grabbed all of this law but I've studied enough to know that every time I study it I realize wait a minute, last time I read this I read it trivially; there's a deeper meaning to this thing. So there's a lot of foundational material. Don't dismiss the significance of some of the stuff if you do not understand it, just tell the Lord I don't understand it and leave it there, but don't try to dismiss it. Any other questions... not a very spiritual lesson tonight but it deals with the details of life.

[someone says something about the youth that would serve the king would be eunuchs, something about in ancient times, the youth that served the king would be eunuchs and Medo-Persia probably had that from Babylonia, then Daniel and everybody else that walked from Israel, they were also, because they were serving the king of Babylon, they were young people, that happened to them as well, can't hear rest....] Jeek points out how they, in the Diaspora, in the exile, probably a lot of the young Jewish boys were basically turned out to be eunuchs, but the justification on the

pagan side appeared to be linked to the harem, the royal harem, from what we know; it might have been other things but that seems to be one of the things that keeps coming up in the pagan literature.

[someone asks a question] Yeah, she brings up that the promise of no miscarriages in Israel, and those are conditioned on obedience and it didn't work out because of the disobedience of the nation. But the other promise there, back in Exodus is when they come out of the Exodus, out of Egypt, you've got the promise that S. I. McMillen used for a title of his book, I Will Put None of these Diseases upon You. so they had the promise in theory of perfect health. It didn't give them eternal life, I mean, you know, they would die, but the point was that they could have been very blessed. And what I think those promises show you is how God, when you read these horrible things that have gone on in history, these plagues, you just think holy mackerel, boy, we're so fortunate that we have never had to live through something like the Black Plague, but I guess our great grandparents, my grandparents, some of you younger people your great grandparents, they lived through the great flu epidemic right after World War I, in New York City they had so many people dying that they had to have trucks come by to pick up the corpses, they didn't have enough places to bury them. In Japan they have, what, 10,000 bodies they've found now, and in Japan they don't bury people because there's no land to bury people on they usually cremate people; well, they can't cremate them all because the crematoriums are full, so they just bulldozed a big hole and dump all the bodies in a hole, and for the Japanese people do to that, that's very emotionally disconcerting because it destroys their identity. So we just are so fortunate that we have not ye had to live through something like that.

Our time is up.