

Deuteronomy Lesson 57

Turn to the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 25. We'll start where we left off many months ago. We've had two Tuesday night reviews of the whole shebang; but this will be the new material. I think we'll be closing in - if you look at the outline from 12:1 to 26:19, we'll be on chapter 25 so we only have two more chapters for this long, long exhortation that Moses gives the nations on the implications of the Ten Commandments in the daily life of the nation.

So let's look to the Lord for insight into how He would have us think of Him as we look at the Word.

(Opening prayer.)

Looking at that outline that we had that's on your handout; we can see as we've gone through this thing we have tried to organize it by the Ten Commandments, basically by trying to organize each section as an exposition of the implications of the Ten Commandments.

So this section if you look at the bottom, chapter 25:5-19, this one I'm taking to be talking emphasis of the tenth commandment. When we look at the section you'll see things that don't look like the tenth commandment. So that's why on your handout I've put the table, which I'm showing here in the slide, where we have commandments that are clustered. In other words we have in each of these cases that I've listed, the infraction is not against just one commandment. That's why these same kind of situations appear again and again in the Scriptures. They appear multiply because the problem, the situation is one where it violates more than one commandment. I think that explains the confusion that exists from chapter 12 to 26. When we go through this progressively, it seems like we keep getting the same situation. It occurs again and again.

You wonder, "I thought Moses covered that once. Why is he doing it again?"

So if you look at the table, you'll see the false prophet. Look at the first row there and you'll see the false prophet - it's a violation. When he preaches the Word of God and when he claims to be the one who is commissioned by God; he is violating the first commandment and he's violating the second commandment; and he is also violating the 5th one because the 5th one deals with "honor your father and mother" and honoring your father and mother is where you learn authority. In the Old Testament all social authority figures (priests, prophets, elders) derive their right to have authority or be respected by the training the children have in the home to respect their mother and their father. It's a direct carryover.

I think that's one of the structures that's so interesting when you get into the details. You see people read the Bible - the people who do read the Old Testament (which is not too many) tend to read it because they have a Bible reading program and they want to read through the whole Bible or something. That's nice to go through the Bible that way because it gives you some acquaintance. The problem is a lot of these Old Testament passages don't come easily because we don't have the background. You have

to spend time trying to figure out what is going on here. Why did God record this? You don't sometimes see the structures. Tonight's passage is a good example of that.

You'll see then on the next to the last row "taking property of another." You would normally associate that with commandment 8, thou shall not steal. And yes, it's a violation of thou shall not steal but what does that have to do with the 7th commandment, thou shall not commit adultery? Remember when the 7th commandment was expounded in chapters 22 through 23 there were lots of things that didn't appear whatsoever to have anything to do...We're not talking about men and women. We are talking about boundaries. So we take it from Moses exposition of the 7th commandment that yes it's dealing with the boundaries of marriage; but it's also dealing with all the kinds of boundaries that God has put into His creation. Marriage is one of them. So again this is why we have this long section in the Law; I believe, so we don't get a trivialized, narrow interpretation of these Ten Commandments.

Finally, the last row on that diagram I just threw out because it's a contemporary political idea, modern socialism. It's being pitched to people.

"If you don't believe this way you have a hard heart and you're calloused. You don't care about people" and so forth...

It's a lot of hoopla and propoganda. But you need to understand that socialism is a very serious violation of three commandments - maybe more. In one sense it is a violation of the first and second because inevitably socialism, Marxism, Fascism (all these "isms") ultimately turn government into a messiah. It's a false messiah. It's denying Christ as the true Messiah so you could say it violates the first and second.

But it is easier to see the violation of the 8th commandment because ultimately socialism argues there is no such thing as private property. The government owns everything. Society owns everything. So society has the right to take property from those who are successful and give it to those who aren't successful, the redistribution of wealth. The corollary behind that is there is no such thing as property. Of course you can't steal if it isn't yours to own.

So the 8th commandment is clearly violated. But also the 9th commandment, remember the 9th commandment is thou shall not commit perjury. How does this run? Well any false misrepresentation of value is a perversion of the 9th commandment. What inevitably happens in almost every civilization where you have an empire building going on - nobody can afford it.

So the next thing that happens is the currency is devaluated. So that violates the weights and standards thing where in the ancient world the way they inflated currency was they coin clipped. So they loaded the coins up with lead instead of silver and gold. So they had their way of inflating the currency. So in our day of course we just print them. So that's the 9th commandment.

The 10th commandment should be the most obvious because the 10th commandment is thou shall not envy. Class warfare teaches envy. You see

this right in our contemporary political scene, the idea that because someone is wealthy unless they got their wealth by illegitimate means that's not right. But if somebody is wealthy because they've worked hard because they're successful - why is that bad? Yet to listen to a politician that's somehow bad. So it's teaching envy. That is a violation of the 10th commandment.

The next section we're going to deal - I put Deuteronomy 5:21 because this is the 10th commandment. Get this firmly in our mind because we get into something immediately in chapter 25; it doesn't sound at all related to the 10th commandment.

So just to review, what is the 10th commandment?

NKJ Exodus 20:17 " You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

So clearly it's envy. The 10th commandment as we've looked at these commandments -remember the chiasm. The 10th commandment answers to the first and second. If we envy we are not satisfied with what God alone has given us. In other words, if we're dissatisfied up here and it shows up down here. So these two commandments are related. That's where the 10th kind of fits in.

Then we went on and we dealt with this chart and remember we said at the base of every society is heart allegiance - to God or to self. And then you have integrity of communication.

So now we've looked at heart allegiance. We've gone up to integrity of communication. We've through labor and property. We've gone through marriage and family. We've gone to life. Now we're coming back down and we're back down here where we started this whole section on heart allegiance. What is going on in the heart?

So Roman 2 to quote Sinatra, I'll Do it My Way. That's the motive behind Deuteronomy 25:5-19. So if you look at the text let's work our way down through the text, get acquainted with the text first. We'll look tonight at verses 5 through 10. So let's follow verses 5 to 10 and let's look at this chunk of Scripture.

NKJ Deuteronomy 25:5 " If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. 6 "And it shall be that 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.

7 "But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.'

8 "Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,'

9 "then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.'

10 "And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

So now what is this all about? You've heard the expression, spit in somebody's face. This was apparently in the law. So now we have some things to deal with here. So let's start carefully with verse 5 and look at the situation.

It's not any brothers. It says these brothers are characterized by something. It says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 25:5 " If brothers dwell together,

So these brothers are in business together. They're apparently working the land together. So they have a business and obviously it's the family property. So now the question is, if this is the family; they were both enjoying the land assets of their fathers. As you can see we're back to this inheritance issue. Remember we ran into that in chapter 21. That was that passage that critics of the Bible always like to point out where the parents bring their adult son who has proved himself incapable of carrying on the family name. They have a trial before the local government; and he's executed apparently because God did not want families to dump their social debris into society at large because that's how you get a criminal class developed in society. So you basically cut it off right at the family level. That was all about inheritance if you remember.

So now we've got to deal a little bit with this matter of inheritance. I thought it would be interesting to show you that this problem of inheritance and property didn't stop with the Bible.

This is a diagram that comes from an investment letter by two men who have done research on trying to forecast whether we have recession or inflation. These particular men are convinced we're not going to have hyperinflation; we going to have in fact going to have recession and depression in the long scale off until 2020.

Well, you say, "How can they forecast something like that?"

They're forecasting it because they are arguing on the basis of families.

You say, "Well, how can that be?"

They're arguing about population. I won't go into all their arguments; but this particular diagram shows you something interesting. What they're arguing here is from 1950 to 1970 you have a rise in inflation peaking in 1980. The interesting thing is during that whole period of time was when the baby boomer population was coming of age and being able to produce. The idea there was you had a surge of baby boomers, people born right after World War II and a chunk of our population. They're all the same age bracket so they go in as young people back here in the '50's. During

this period of time they don't affect the economy. Why don't they affect the economy? Because children don't produce. Children consume. Assets on children go as an investment in the future. But, the children themselves don't produce. They consume; and it takes a lot of money to feed, clothe, and educate young people.

When they come to business, a business has the same problem. The learning curve is costly. So before you can get people who are producing something, and therefore aiding the economy and growing it, they have to be trained. They have to enter the workforce. So this is an example of what happens when you have family growth rates change in a society like ours because now what happens is people who are the baby boomers here that went in and became very productive beginning now in about 1990 to 2010. What's happening is more and more of us are retiring. What happens to spending habits in the family when we retire? Does spending increase or does it decrease? It tends to decrease. If people are in debt they want to liquidate the debt and get out of debt. So in this case you have a break on the economy because now it's closing down.

The argument these men are making is it doesn't matter what the politicians are saying. This is endemic to the way the whole demographics of a society work. This harps back to God's admonition in Genesis 1, "be fruitful and multiply." A society that does not multiply eventually erodes and dies economically.

Their point is the next great surge of young people (nowhere near the baby boomers as far as numbers) won't come into the workforce until 2020 or 2030. So, you have a gap here where you have more and more people retired, more and more people are older; the young people are still learning to become producing so you can't grow the economy. No matter what the program is that is the way it works out because of birth rates and growth rates.

I think this is kind of an interesting argument. It goes back to the Bible and the fact is that societies that don't procreate don't grow. That's not saying that promiscuity is good because we know from our local city you can impregnate yourself into poverty. That's because you have children that aren't being prepared. The homes are dysfunctional. The educational function doesn't work. So yeah, you are producing people; but they are useless people because they don't do anything. They don't have skills. They don't grow. So the dynamics of family design are very important economically; and they can't be ignored. This is a force that wipes out even political policies. Governments can't change this. This is why governments who have advocated - like China one child, no female children, just the male children. Now they've got a problem, social distortion - silly political process. When you tamper with the family, when you tamper with the growth rates and you tamper with the normal production of families; all of society pays the price.

Here we are dealing in verse 5, you have two brothers. They have a family business. They share their father's assets.

Now it says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 25:5 " If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son,

If he dies and he has no son, now we have a property problem. If he dies and has no son - let's say it's brother #2. Brother #2 dies and has no son. Brother #1 and brother #2 had shared the family inheritance. If brother #2 dies and has no son, who inherits? Brother #1. You have to see this because otherwise the rest of this passage isn't going to make any sense. This is where the problem of the 10th commandment comes in. The question is what is brother #1 going to do. Brother #1 - we go through this levirate marriage thing. If he marries his brother's wife and his brother's wife bears a son; who inherits? Brother 1 or the family of brother 2? This is an economic thing. This is why a lot of these commandments - where's the money? Trace the money. It explains a lot of the dynamics that are going on here. So keep inheritance in your fore view because we're going to go through two other passages tonight and you're going to see this pop up again and again in the so called levirate marriage thing.

the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family;

Now why do you suppose that's in there? Because if she marries outside the family, outside the tribe, then the property changes hands. God gave the property to the tribes.

So in order to keep this property thing clear you have to be careful about who marries who - who carries on the family name. We're talking money, inheritance.

You say, "So what? What has that got to do with the New Testament?"

Well if you look down under families and inheritance, I make three points. Inheritance was their economic survival, their life - no social security, no long-term health care. The economic societal phenomenon of Israel is analogous to spiritual realities. Israel was designed to play out the role a historic drama in the eyes of humanity. So some of these quirky things in ancient Israel's culture are put deliberately in there so that all humanity can watch these things so that in the New Testament when God goes to reveal truths that apply to us in the Church Age in Christ; He has something to use to illustrate. One of the things soteriologically in the Church Age is our inheritance in Christ, eternal security. So it's hard if you're trying to search for an illustration of eternal security an inheritance that lasts it's pretty hard to go to someplace where inheritance doesn't count. So we have all this Old Testament inheritance, inheritance, inheritance. The inheritance has to stay in the family. The inheritance has to stay in the family. So it continues, continues, continues. That lays the groundwork so that we have an illustration of what inheritance in Christ is going to be like.

That's why it pays off to go through these Old Testament passages. These are physical, observable things. View this if you want to as a great drama on a stage. Israel provides the actors and actresses in this drama. The purpose of the drama is to show spiritual truths. If you have that

picture of the Old Testament, it will help you have the patience to work through some of this stuff.

Okay, so she can't be married to a stranger outside her family.

her husband's brother shall go in to her

And this is debated among biblical scholars as to - would he go in if he was already married? Is this a polygamy thing? Polygamy was tolerated, but there are indications from various passages that this would be a single brother. So he's not married but now he has to marry his brother's wife. He doesn't have to. He has an option here. He can do without it. But if he doesn't do it, he only gets half the inheritance if she marries another kinsman. If she dies however without a son, he gets it all. So there's an economic incentive here.

It's a sacrifice for him to marry his brother's wife, to support her, to pay for the education and training and education of the son and he doesn't get anything for that because that property of that part of the inheritance is going to that other family. It's not going to him even though he steps into it and he does all this serving to keep the family name. It's not his family name; it's their family name. So you can see that this is not a minor thing in a guy's life here. This is talking about his whole life. So there is a problem here. It's easy to see that the 10th commandment where we are dissatisfied with what God wants us to do could come up right at this point.

"I don't like it. I don't want that obligation. I want to cop out. I want to do it my way."

So then it says:

her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

6 "And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother,."

So it's very clear that the inheritance now is going to go to that first born. If you look at your notes (handout) in chapter 25:6 where I quote this; the firstborn will bear the name of his brother. This is a picture of the spiritual inheritance in the Kingdom of God. Notice the son is the biological son of the kinsman redeemer.

As Gary North in his commentary (I am indebted to him to point this out.), the name of the non-biological father is imputed to him and becomes the true basis of inheritance. This leads to a New Testament truth so this is kind of neat.

Let me go through that again. Brother 2 is dead. Brother 1 comes over and marries brother 2's wife. Brother 2's wife and brother 1 together have a son. The son biologically is the son of brother 1. But the moment he comes into existence judicially and legally he isn't brother 1's son; he's brother 2's son. Now therefore the property legally acts as though he is not biologically brother 1's son; but is brother 2's.

So the two things start to unpack now into a New Testament truth. So follow me here. Distinguish between the biological relation having brother 1 coming over and having a son by brother 2's wife. That's biological. His genes are in that boy. But his name doesn't transfer. The boy gets his name from brother 2 and legally as far as inheritance goes, he is coming to brother 2 even though biologically he is not really the son of brother 2. He is only a half son.

Now what you notice in the handout is imputation which is the legal term; imputation is taking precedence over biological descent - very interesting principle here. The inheritance does not recognize the son's alien biology. The inheritance comes through that second brother who died. So now imputation - you begin to see you can start putting things together. You can see how this illustrates the New Testament truth here. Imputation trumps biological descent.

Okay, now we have to explain the sandal and the spitting in the face.

In verse 7:

NKJ Deuteronomy 25:7 "But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife,

So clearly this is not an absolute legal demand on the man. This is one of those cases in the Mosaic Law where it's optional. He doesn't have to do this. Brother 1 doesn't have to fulfill the role of a levirate and redeem the property. He is encouraged to. It's the godly thing for him to do; but he can bailout if he wants to. But if he bails out of this responsibility here is the procedure that was done.

7 "But if the man does not want to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.'

So now it becomes recognized in the society all around. So what this is creating is not a legal punishment of brother 1 but sure is social peer pressure on brother 1. So here God sets up social pressure to push brother 1 to fulfill what he is supposed to do. He's not disciplined legally by the government. But the elders meet. So then they have this ceremony.

NKJ Deuteronomy 25:8 "Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, 'I do not want to take her,'

It has to do again with the inheritance of the money.

"I don't want to take it."

9 "then his brother's wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house.'

10 "And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'

Now what is the significance of the sandal? Look on your handout under 25:10 where I deal with sandal. The significance of the sandal is that it is an emblem of possession of land. You see this idiom again and again in the Old Testament, for example in the book of Joshua.

NKJ Joshua 1:3 "Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.

That was the way they had of walking across the property.

The other time you see it is on Mt. Sinai. What does God tell Moses to do with his sandals? Take them off. Why? This is holy ground.

What God is saying is, "It's My ground. You don't own this Moses. It's My ground."

So the sandal is somehow connected with the idea of possession of land property. Perhaps it's because in surveying the land they walked around with their sandals on. I don't know; but it's got that connotation.

So when the woman comes to the man and she takes off his sandals, she is saying publicly to the whole city that he doesn't care about possession. He is not assuming his possession responsibilities of this inheritance. Inheritance was largely land. It wasn't an asset thing. It was largely land.

Now we're going to look at two other places in the Bible where this levirate marriage thing comes up. An earlier example that occurred prior to Moses and the first and second generation of Israel - Genesis 38. Then we're also going to go to the book of Ruth. The book of Ruth comes after this. Both of these incidents are the same kind of thing as chapter 25. So let's look and see if we can get more incite.

Let's turn to Genesis 38. One of the things one of my profs used to say at Dallas Seminary - I've never forgotten it - Genesis 38 is a good example of this. When God paints a picture of a man, he paints it warts and all. Genesis 38 is not exactly a high note in the first family of Israel. Remember Israel is a person's name. It's not just a national thing. It is another name for Jacob and Jacob has a bunch of sons. They become the tribal leaders. Jacob is supposed to follow in the land of his father Isaac and Isaac following in the line of Abraham.

And what did they do? God called them out of Ur to come and set up another counter culture. They were supposed to be different than the Canaanites. But clearly by the 3rd generation they were completely consumed by their culture. There is no difference between how Jacob's sons act and how their neighbors act.

So in chapter 38 we have the story of what's going to happen here. So this is a story of sin. It's a story of man's fallenness; but it's a story of how God sovereignly pulled off a very neat thing in spite of all the sin and disobedience.

NKJ Genesis 38:1 It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and visited a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah.
2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and went in to her.

So now we're dealing with a family situation, Judah's family. And if you see the tension, culturally, Judah was supposed to be the righteous one in a polluted land. The guy Shua is a Canaanite. See what it says?

a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua

Notice in verse 1 the setting for this. What has Jacob already done in verse 1? He parted from his brothers. This suggests a kind of falling out of formation here. He knows a certain Adullamite and the Adullamite will come up again in the story. So keep in mind that his buddy; he's got buddies now who are basically pagan Canaanites. Adullamite is one of them. So he goes and he circulates inside the Canaanite society. He finds this man Shua and he married and went into the daughter of Shua. So they get married. Now we've got a marriage that is unlike. So now you've got this situation. You've got Judah, a Jewish man, covenant aligned with a gal who is a Canaanite - not exactly the kind of thing that God wanted for this first family or the nation.

By the way, this is in the middle of the Joseph narratives in Genesis. This chapter is all by itself. It's stuck in here.

You say, "What is Genesis 38 do..."

It's sort of interrupts the whole flow of the Joseph stories.

Well, Genesis 38 is tucked in here in the middle of the Joseph stories to give us incite into why God is going to work through Joseph to get the Jews out of the land and bring them down to Egypt. Genesis 38 is sort of an answer to set us up to understand what Joseph's role is going to be.

So he goes to her and she conceives and bears sons.

NKJ Genesis 38:3 So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er.

NKJ Genesis 38:4 She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan.

NKJ Genesis 38:5 And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name Shelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him.

So now the situation is we've got 3 sons. The firstborn - notice because the firstborn carries property - the firstborn is Er. Now let's see what happens.

NKJ Genesis 38:6 Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.

7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him.

... an example of physical discipline.

NKJ Genesis 38:8 And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother."

By the way, obviously Onan is single here. This is not going into polygamy.

"So you are to marry her and raise up an heir."

Notice the word heir because who was the firstborn? It was Er. This is an heir - h -e-i-r- to your brother. So Onan goes in and has a son with Er's wife. Whose property is it? That son's. Onan is not going to get it. It's a duty he has to the family. But Onan knew that the heir would not be his. This is not talking about a sex thing. This is talking about a money thing. It's talking about an inheritance thing. He knew that the heir would not be his.

NKJ Genesis 38:9 But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother.
10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also.

This passage is often used by the Roman Catholic Church by the way to say that all birth control is wrong. This is a classic passage of Rome. In the context, yeah, birth control was wrong here; but it was wrong because of the situation. The situation was that he was to go in there and produce a son to carry on the family existence economically. That's the background here.

Now we've got a problem. The heir is dead. Onan is dead. There is only one son left so Judah is sitting here.

"Wait a minute. What is going on with things?"

So he comes to Tamar (verse 11) and he has a plan. Now this also shows you the moral lapse of duty.

NKJ Genesis 38:11 Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Now look at that last sentence. Whose responsibility should it have been to take care of Tamar? Her father? Or, Judah? Judah. Right? Judah is supposed to be helping. Tamar has lost her husband. Judah is supposed to provide a levirate for her so she will be economically protected. He blows her off and tells her to go stay with daddy meaning that daddy had to pay for food, clothing, and so on to take care of Tamar. Judah doesn't have to do it. Judah is a traitor economically. So obviously this is the wrong dynamic right here in the text. Something's not working right here.

And then it says:

." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers."

That phrase may not have been spoken to Tamar. What that phrase may be is that it's sort of the writer of the text telling us what goes on in Judah's head. Judah figures out and Judah's thinking every time my sons marry this gal or a suggestion of it they die. It suggests that Judah did not understand that those two guys did not die not because of Tamar. They died because of their spiritual disobedience to the Lord. That's why they died. Tamar doesn't have some venereal disease that's killing these guys. So what's the problem? Well obviously this sets us up for the next narrative. He's going to die like his brothers. It's just telling us that we've got a situation here where Judah does not really get it.

Now the text goes on and becomes even more interesting. This would make a great movie. It would make the perfect you know - you can imagine the trailer for this movie. But as this unfolds keep in mind that at the end of it something interesting is going to happen. So all this back and forth and up and down and chaos and immorality - yet at the end watch the neat thing. So Judah is proposing go to daddy; stay there; he'll take care of you.

NKJ Genesis 38:12 Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died;

So now Judah has lost his wife as well as his sons.

and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

So he goes to his business. But now he's single. So now he can be sexually tempted and so forth. So now watch what happens. He goes up. Remember we were introduced to the Hirah the Adullamite. He's his Canaanite buddy. He's in business with the guy apparently.

NKJ Genesis 38:13 And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."

14 So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife.

So she sees that she has been double-crossed by Judah. So she is going to double-cross him. This is tit for tat. So she hatches this plot.

NKJ Genesis 38:15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face.

By the way this is opposite to the Muslim habit today. A woman covering her face is supposed to be holy. In the ancient world a woman covering her face meant she was a whore. So customs have changed here.

But there are two words that are translated in this text "harlot." I want to point out that there is a word play going on here. You have to track it. At least the English translation I'm following doesn't make a distinction. The word for harlot in verse 15 is the normal word for

harlot. It is the normal word for a whore or prostitute. But the next one isn't and that's going to show us more about what's going on here.

NKJ Genesis 38:16 Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"

So she starts negotiating the price.

NKJ Genesis 38:17 And he said, "I will send a young goat from the flock."

...one of his business assets.

Now Tamar is a sharp cookie. She's going to wheel and deal this thing. She's a Canaanite. She knows she's been double crossed by this Jewish guy and she's going to get back and him and she's going to get property.

So she said, "Will you give me a pledge till you send it?"

She says, "I want the cash now. The transaction is going down now; I want the cash now."

So he said:

NKJ Genesis 38:18 Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?"

Now she is really shrewd. She says three things.

So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand."

Now I'm not sure about the staff but the signet and the cord is the way he signed. In the ancient world if you had wet clay and signed it; you rolled your name around your neck. It was like a little cylinder. You would roll it in wet clay and it would produce an image of your name in the clay. So what she's got is his credit card. This gal had it all together.

So she says, "Yeah, you give me your credit card and that will be good for the goat when you give me the goat."

Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him.

NKJ Genesis 38:19 So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.

NKJ Genesis 38:20 And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.

So here comes the Canaanite buddy again. Now watch what happens here. The Canaanite guy is going on a search mission to find this harlot. But the word for harlot is going to change and the word changes is zedekah which is the Hebrew word for a temple prostitute meaning a religious temple prostitute.

So what this shows you is the Adullamite when he was told to go search for this woman, he thought that Judah had gone to a Canaanite temple prostitute. Now if this guy's in business with Judah and he thinks that of his buddy in business and he knows Judah. He works with him all the time. If he thinks that about Judah, what does that tell you about Judah's religious testimony? It's nonexistent, right? I mean here is his buddy in business .

He says, " He wants me to find this gal he had sex with. That must be one of the temple prostitutes," because he thinks people went to worship in the pagan temple."

Everyone was doing it so Judah was probably doing it. So he saw no difference in Judah's life. Same thing... But he couldn't find her.

NKJ Genesis 38:21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the "temple prostitute" who was openly by the roadside?"

So he replaces that vocabulary word that he was told by Judah.

And they said, "There was no harlot in this place."

So again hypocrisy.

NKJ Genesis 38:22 So he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place."

23 Then Judah said, "Let her take them for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her."

24 And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry."

So Judah said in his hypocrisy:

So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"

So again hypocrisy.

NKJ Genesis 38:25 When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are -- the signet and cord, and staff."

NKJ Genesis 38:26 So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again.

So this is this drama in Genesis 38. It concerns the again levirate marriage. You'll notice that it's just totally chaotic here. I mean you've got temple prostitutes; you have Jewish culture mixing with Canaanite culture. The whole thing is a big mess. Yet out of this is going to come Perez at the end of chapter 38

NKJ Genesis 38:29 ...Therefore his name was called Perez.

And Perez is listed in Matthew 1:3 as part of the Messianic line of Jesus Christ. So this is how these characters got into the Messianic line.

In spite of all this God sovereignly worked because Jesus had to be descended from what tribe? Judah. Judah, his two sons died. Shelah does something. He disappears from history. So you have the Messianic seed comes through Judah through Perez by means of incest basically. Okay, it shows you what God uses.

Let's turn to Ruth. You all know the story of Ruth so I won't spend a lot of time here. But, I will point out some of the negotiations that go on. Let's start with Ruth 1. Remember the story. Get some of the family background. Verses 1 to 5 set you up with the families.

NKJ Ruth 1:1 Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab,

Moab was half Jew, half Gentile - not a friendly place.

he and his wife and his two sons.

2 The name of the man was Elimelech,

Eli is God and melech is melek. king - God is king.

Here is the family situation. He marries Naomi. They have two children. We are not told which one here in this section Ruth marries; but she's married to one of these guys and they both die.

So that's why it says:

NKJ Ruth 1:3 Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons.

4 Now they took wives of the women of Moab:

Now keep in mind as we went through other passages in Deuteronomy the Moabites could not join - the Moabite men could not participate in the worship for ten generations. It was because of the way they treated the Jews. Now we are going to see a woman of the Moabite and she is accepted immediately into the community.

the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.

5 Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband.

So now she comes back. She comes back to the people. In chapter 2, verse 1 they are back in the land; and she is going to seek out. See economic survival? They seek out their nearest of kin. There is no Social Security. Government isn't doing the handout here. Welfare is family and tribal centered.

NKJ Ruth 2:1 There was a relative of Naomi's husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech. His name was Boaz.

2 So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I might find favor.

So Ruth isn't passive here. She's a Moabite lady; but she's picked up on a lot of the Jewish customs. Smart gal!

KJV Ruth 2:3 And she went, and came, and gleaned

She meets Boaz and Boaz notices that she is working hard.

He tells the guys in the field, "Don't mess with this gal."

And also there is a touching sentence in here where he tells his workers in the field - see what gleaning was? Gleaning was the poor people would come into the field after the harvest. The harvest wasn't 100 percent. The people would harvest part of the crop and leave along the edges of the field for the poor people. So the poor people would come in and harvest these things.

Other societies by the way have had gleaning. In one sense we still have it in some of the clothing issues that we have in relief.

But she was a gleaner. She came in and obviously she had to be protected. What Boaz sees is that she is there and that he protects her.

Then he gives a tip to the workers.

He says, "When you see her go on by where she is gleaning, let some of the grain fall so she can glean it."

So it's a touching story of this wealthy Jewish man who is very sensitive and he picks up on this Moabitess. And the story goes on. You'll have to read the book of Ruth to get the whole story.

But let's go to chapter 4 because in chapter 4 they've met. The issue has come up whether Boaz can be the one who marries Ruth (Naomi) and if he marries her and she has a son, who gets the property? Boaz or the son? The son. So here you have this man Boaz. He is going to undertake the cost of marriage, the cost of support, the cost of raising a son and never reap the result. So this is part of the institution and how it works.

So they come and they have to negotiate. Look at the negotiation. Marriage isn't the first thing on the discussion. It's the land that's the issue.

NKJ Ruth 4:1 Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. So Boaz said, "Come aside, friend, sit down here." So he came aside and sat down.

NKJ Ruth 4:2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down.

So this is going to be a transaction of business. Here is where you have witnesses to a business agreement.

3 Then he said to the close relative, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech.

Why would she sell the land, by the way? She needed cash. She's got to live. So she is selling the land in order to live.

NKJ Ruth 4:4 "And I thought to inform you, saying, 'Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' " And he said, "I will redeem it."

So he offers to do that to provide the land from Naomi.

But then in verse 5 Boaz in the negotiation brings up another little issue that he hadn't thought about.

NKJ Ruth 4:5 Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess,

..meaning that Ruth carries the business name from the family.

the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance."

So now it's a bigger deal for this fellow; and you'll see what happens.

NKJ Ruth 4:6 And the close relative said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

What he is really arguing here is the 10th commandment in the background.

"I don't want to mess with this. Now you're talking about I have to marry this girl. I have to have a son and have to take care of all that and have the added responsibility and I don't get anything out of this."

This is the I'll Do It My Way thing.

So now he says, "I can't do it."

So then Boaz does it. He redeems it.

What we have here - this is a commentary that Dr. North points out. Again I'm not quoting Dr North because I'm a post millennialist; but because he is a post millennialist he is a pretty good student of the text of the Scriptures. So I want you to see this. He has a neat incite here.

Boaz became the biggest covenantal somebody in his generation only because he was willing to become a covenantal nobody in the extension of Elimelech's line. The land that he presumably bought from Naomi became the family inheritance in another man's line. Any improvements he made on this land became another family line's property. By abandoning his own name covenantally he thereby became the greatest name of his generation, a

name that is listed in both of the Messianic genealogies in the New Testament.

Now the amazing thing here is Boaz financially doesn't get anything out of this because imputation comes through the family line of Ruth - Naomi to Ruth and to the son they will have. So that's the judicial imputational line. But biologically the son is the son biologically of Boaz. Boaz is in the Messianic line. So it's as though God pays back Boaz. Here Boaz has gone to this financial sacrifice graciously offering this to take care of this gal Ruth and that whole line knowing in advance that he can't touch the property. It's theirs. He's helping them with their property. God unbeknownst to Boaz has a greater plan. He has the plan that is going to bring a Messiah in the line. So by graciously taking this plan, Boaz's genes go into this boy who later becomes the seed of Messiah. So here we have an example of a gracious guy Boaz who now comes into the Messianic line only because on his part he chose compassion toward this gal Ruth. It's a neat story.

So let's conclude. It says in verse 7 of this passage:

NKJ Ruth 4:7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel.

By the way, that kind of a verse that you read in verse 7, that kind of verse is evidence that this book was written by the prophets, later, after the fact. Verse 7 is a prophetic editorial comment put into the text to explain it. It's as if we were in ancient Israel the prophets would be teaching the Word of God.

And if we were to listen to them orally they'd say, "Here's the story. Let me tell you the story of Ruth. Let me tell you the story of Boaz. There is a part of the story you won't understand because we don't do this anymore. But this is what we used to do in the Land."

This kind of a verse is very personal to show you how the Holy Spirit takes it. He wants us to understand it and an editorial remark is put in here.

NKJ Ruth 4:8 Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself."

Now here come the sandals again. Notice this. So he took off his sandal.

The reason is verse 7 explains, to confirm anything, one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other because the sandals are tied up somehow with real estate transactions. We don't know all the details but the sandal I think comes about as I said earlier the Joshua quote, the quote at Mt. Sinai has something to do with property.

So we have the situation now with Boaz. We have a situation with this. Now the text ends as it says in verse 11. See what the town's people say. All the people who saw this transaction know the history biblically.

NKJ Ruth 4:11 And all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who is coming to your house like Rachel and Leah,

Now they don't know why they're saying this. Of course Rachel and Leah came in Jacob's house and they produced the tribes of the nation. But here we're going to have something else.

They say, "May the woman who are coming to your house build the house of Israel."

And oh is she going to build the house of Israel because out of this is going to come the Messiah. So this verse is going to turn out to be a lot truer than they ever intended in their wildest dreams.

Then notice this as it continues and ends this section.

the two who built the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.

And then it says:

NKJ Ruth 4:12 "May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring which the LORD will give you from this young woman."

See how these stories all tie together? They tie together because of levirate marriage. The levirate marriage as strange as it seems to our eyes and ears, this was a way that God had of illustrating and keeping inheritance protected so that it would become an historical illustration of eternal security. It also shows you the fact that imputation as I conclude there in the handout levirate marriage reveals the primacy of imputation over biological, genealogy and family lineage. It pictures our adoption into Christ by imputation over our biological descent from Adam. Here are all the biological sons and daughters by Adam and Eve. Yet by imputation - thankfully by imputation we are adopted into the family. That's not because of our genes; it's because of imputation - exactly the same process that this levirate marriage pictures. a

So I know it's confusing. I know it sounds strange to our ears. It is a weird kind of social thing that God had them do but if you look carefully enough at it you'll see it pictures spiritual truths.

(Closing prayer)

Probably have quite a few questions this evening a lot to weave through but we have a few minutes. If any of you have questions we can talk about.

Question:

Answer: The issue here is how close marriages were. I didn't have time tonight; but actually they were prohibited to marry closest kin. This is what has given commentators difficulty with this passage in Deuteronomy 25 because Deuteronomy 25 the passage we just went through almost collides

with Numbers where Numbers and Leviticus give clear indications that you are not to marry close of kin. The reason for that obviously is that clearly in Adam and Eve's case that's why you had brothers marrying sisters. But keep in mind again this goes back to why if you would just relax and take the Scriptures at face value and stop trying to ram it, cram it and jam it into our own theories of understanding.

From creation, the genetic pool didn't have the DNA mess-ups so that you could have brothers and sisters marry. In fact they had to. That's all they had from Adam forward. After the flood, if you chart it, something physiologically happened to decrease life span from 930 years down to 70. Something was going on radically, radically different. So our bodies, our genetic structures, changed. So by the time you get to Israel God is actually giving warnings not to marry close of kin.

What we saw tonight is an exception. The exception only occurred under these unique circumstances because the issue of inherited property trumped the danger of close marriage of kin. But normally they did not marry close. In fact they might not even have known why.

Here is another example. He mentioned that in history we've seen the results. I can give you two examples. The royal families of Europe in the 19th century intermarried. Largely that was due to society. The Russian royal family intermarried with the French I think it was - the French and the English and the Germans. The royal families got together; and they'd trade around. The reason they had probably for doing it was to improve national relations. It's like Solomon marrying all the women of Egypt.

We have a very romantic view of marriage in our land that we've all been raised in. But if you study history our view of marriage is peculiar to our age. It's not the view of marriage in the ancient world for example. They had marriages of love, yes. Remember the story of Sampson. He comes to his mother. He sees a gal.

He says, "Go get her for me."

The parents don't like her. But nevertheless they kind of work it out. Parents were sensitive to their children's needs for a mate. But marriage was a lot more involved. It involved politics; it involved land; it involved all kinds of things.

So in the 19th century you had - finally it led to the revolution in Russia because you had the czar's son with hemophilia, which was a genetic problem of the intermarriage of the royal family. This demonic monk assumed such power over the czar. That led to the collapse of the czar's reign. So the royal families of Europe in the 19th century...

Then my own son went to a little island in the Caribbean to teach for a year called Saba. It's a small little island. It's a Dutch colony. David had to teach in the elementary school. He was warned when he went to the elementary school that "we have a lot of kids with learning disabilities." It came because they had such a small population on the island they had intermarried. They were producing children that had various disabilities because of the closeness of the intermarriage. So

it's a danger. This passage trumps that danger in the rare circumstance of what you saw.

Question:

If he doesn't marry her he doesn't lose his share. The problem is that if he doesn't marry her, she dies, she has no male son -all the property goes to him versus putting up with being told he had to marry this...he might have another gal in mind. Now he has to do this. So his whole life now is taken up basically salvaging this woman. You know a lot of guys wouldn't do that.

Question:

No, there is no incentive for him to do the right thing as far as society goes except what you saw with the sandal and the spit. God created a social stigma to push pressure back on him. It's interesting there is no judicial punishment for this boy if he didn't do this. But it was a hassle for him and that's why I think it's in this section on the 10th commandment about, "I just can't get involved in this. I'm sorry. It butts into my life too much."

Question

Okay, good question. The question is - is this a custom that was pre-Mosaic in the land. I think we have to argue that it wasn't a custom that Moses casually adopted. I would argue backwards and say because God put it in His Torah that it probably flowed out of the design of God known by Noah and his sons. It might be propagated from Noah. Remember between Noah and the rise of Abraham you had the colonization of planet earth. Scholars have thought that the sons of Noah actually went out and mapped what we call the globe today and probably claimed lands. We have traces of that in the language. Somebody did a work and I can't think of their name - a guy by the name of Cohen wrote a book years and years ago called Patit (?). What he observed was if you go into Ireland and you go into Spain and you go into some areas of the Western hemisphere you keep coming up with H. Sometimes it's H; sometimes it's E-B-R; those letters. You have it in Ireland, you have it in Spain. I forget where in the Western hemisphere you have it. This is a Hebrew word. How come it is found all over the world? It apparently traces to ebr. So something happened with claiming land and property. We don't know. It may have been a custom. But like you say, Tamar doesn't blow her mind to be told this. It's something that the pagans of that day sort of realized. I don't know. I don't think we have enough data to explain where it came from.

One more question.

Question

We don't have much about that comment in Ruth about Perez except Matthew 1:3, he's in the line. When you see those kinds of things our curiosity wonder more about these people I guess we have to wait to heaven when we meet them and ask them because the Scriptures only give what the Holy Spirit thought we'd need. There are a lot of areas - I'd love to dig into some of this stuff and figure out what is going on. Wouldn't it be

exciting to think about heaven? We will actually meet these people. I think Christians who have problems believing the Scriptures are going to be profoundly embarrassed when they meet these people.

"What do you mean you didn't believe I did this? What does the Bible say? Didn't you guys read it?"

So I don't know. There's lots and lots of stuff. Remember how John concludes his gospel? At the end, what does John say?

NKJ John 21:25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.