DEUTERONOMY

Chapter 22

**If you see your brother’s ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it but be sure to take it back to him. 2 If the brother does not live near you or if you do not know who he is, take it home with you and keep it until he comes looking for it. Then give it back to him. 3 Do the same if you find your brother’s donkey or his cloak or anything he loses. Do not ignore it. 4 If you see your brother’s donkey or his ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it. Help him get it to its feet. 5 A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this. 6 If you come across a bird’s nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young. 7 You may take the young, but be sure to let the mother go, so that it may go well with you and you may have a long life. 8 When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof. 9 Do not plant two kinds of seed in your vineyard; if you do, not only the crops you plant but also the fruit of the vineyard will be defiled. 10 Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together. 11 Do not wear clothes of wool and linen woven together. 12 Make tassels on the four corners of the cloak you wear.**

**22:1–4** One’s brother is anyone in need, friend or enemy! (TLSB)

**22:1** Stray animals were a common problem in an agrarian society. The Lord requires positive action to restore a neighbor’s lost livestock. (TLSB)

*do not ignore it.* See vv. 3–4. The Biblical legislation was intended not only to punish criminal behavior but also to express concern for people and their possessions. See chart on “Major Social Concerns in the Covenant”. (CSB)

Lit, “hide oneself,” i.e., try to avoid the inconvenience or expense of helping. (TLSB)

**22:2** Obligation held, even if the brother was distant or unknown. (TLSB)

**22:4** The situation is different, but the mandate is the same. (TLSB)

**22:5** Probably intended to prohibit such perversions as transvestism and homosexuality, especially under religious auspices. The God-created differences between men and women are not to be disregarded (see Lev 18:22; 20:13). (CSB)

Male and female are visibly distinct. Wearing the other’s clothing gives the appearance of reversing God’s natural order. (Such practices likely involved homosexuality or foreign cults.) (TLSB)

**22:6–7** Legislation unique to Dt protects the potential future food source rather than allowing an immediate short-term gain. (TLSB)

**22:8** Roofs in ancient Near East were flat and used for drying and storing produce, socializing, and sleeping in warm weather. Negligence in providing a low restraining wall or railing around the edge of the roof would amount to homicide if someone fell from it and died. (TLSB)

**22:9–11** These three laws forbidding the mixing of dissimilar items served as object lessons reminding the people that they belonged to the Lord and were to be separate from the surrounding nations with their false gods and abominable practices. (TLSB)

**22:10** The ox was ritually clean, but the donkey was unclean (14:3–8). They are also of differing sizes and strengths, so this law protects the weaker. (TLSB)

**22:12** *tassels*. Characterized priestly clothing and reminded Israel that they are to strive to become “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex 19:6). Also a clear reminder to keep the Lord’s Law as a response to His saving them from bondage (Nu 15:39–40). (TLSB)

**22:1–12** God gives a variety of laws governing brotherly love, maintaining distinctions in the created order, and keeping Israel unto Himself. Love is the fulfilling of the Law in both our relationship to God and to one another. Our Savior, Jesus, did not come “to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28). It is in His serving us, atoning for all our sins, and opening for us the door to heaven that we are set free from concern for self and are enabled to turn our attention to serving others (cf Jn 13:34). • Praise be to You, O God, for setting us apart in this world as new creations in Christ. Strengthen us through Your means of grace to keep us ever in the faith and to be servants to our neighbors and witnesses of Your love in Christ to all. Amen. (TLSB)

*Marriage Violations*

**13 If a man takes a wife and, after lying with her, dislikes her 14 and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, “I married this woman, but when I approached her, I did not find proof of her virginity,” 15 then the girl’s father and mother shall bring proof that she was a virgin to the town elders at the gate. 16 The girl’s father will say to the elders, “I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. 17 Now he has slandered her and said, ‘I did not find your daughter to be a virgin.’ But here is the proof of my daughter’s virginity.” Then her parents shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, 18 and the elders shall take the man and punish him. 19 They shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the girl’s father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She shall continue to be his wife; he must not divorce her as long as he lives. 20 If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the girl’s virginity can be found, 21 she shall be brought to the door of her father’s house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done a disgraceful thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from among you. 22 If a man is found sleeping with another man’s wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel. 23 If a man happens to meet in a town a virgin pledged to be married and he sleeps with her, 24 you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death—the girl because she was in a town and did not scream for help, and the man because he violated another man’s wife. You must purge the evil from among you. 25 But if out in the country a man happens to meet a girl pledged to be married and rapes her, only the man who has done this shall die. 26 Do nothing to the girl; she has committed no sin deserving death. This case is like that of someone who attacks and murders his neighbor, 27 for the man found the girl out in the country, and though the betrothed girl screamed, there was no one to rescue her. 28 If a man happens to meet a virgin who is not pledged to be married and rapes her and they are discovered, 29 he shall pay the girl’s father fifty shekels of silver. He must marry the girl, for he has violated her. He can never divorce her as long as he lives. 30 A man is not to marry his father’s wife; he must not dishonor his father’s bed.**

**22:13–30** Cf Lv 18; 20:10–21. (TLSB)

**22:13–15** *hates her*. Rejects her, accusing her of premarital unfaithfulness. (TLSB)

*evidence*. Sheet or garment marked with blood from the night the marriage was consummated. (TLSB)

**22:14** *proof of her virginity.* A blood-stained cloth or garment (see vv. 15, 17, 20). (CSB)

**22:15** *elders at the gate.* See 25:7; see also notes on Ge 19:1; Ru 4:1. (CSB)

**22:18** He is degraded by whipping for defaming the girl and her family. (TLSB)

**22:19** *hundred shekels of silver.* A heavy fine—several times what Hosea paid to buy Gomer back (Hos 3:2) or what Jeremiah paid for the field at Anathoth (Jer 32:9). It may have been about twice the average bride-price (see note on v. 29). The high fine, in addition to the no-divorce rule, was intended to restrain not only a husband’s charges against his wife but also easy divorce. (CSB)

**22:19** *fine him*. Levied because the man’s accusation would have forced his bride’s father to return the bride-price. Severe and public punishments would prevent slanderous charges. (TLSB)

*she shall be his wife*. The man loses his right to ever divorce the woman, which is really a protection for her. (TLSB)

**Major Social Concerns in the Covenant**

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| **1. Personhood**  Everyone’s person is to be secure (Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17; Ex 21:16–21, 26–31; Lev 19:14; Dt 24:7; 27:18 | **9. Fruit of the Ground**  Everyone is to share the fruit of the ground (Ex 23:10–11; Lev 19:9–10; 23:22; 25:3–55; Dt 14:28–29; 24:19–21). |
| **2. False Accusation**  Everyone is to be secure against slander and false acusation (Ex 20:16; Dt 5:20; Ex 23:1–3; Lev 19:16; Dt 19:15–21). | **10. Rest on Sabbath**  Everyone, down to the humblest servant and the resident alien, is to share in the weekly rest of God’s sabbath (Ex 20:8–11; Dt 5:12, 15; Ex 23:12) |
| **3. Woman**  No woman is to be taken advantage of within her subordinate status in society (Ex 21:7–11, 20, 26–32; 22:16–17; Dt 21:10–14; 22:13–30; 24:1–5). | **11. Marriage**  The marriage relationship is to be kept inviolate (Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18; see also Lev 18:6–23; 20:10–21; Dt 22:13–30). |
| **4. Punishment**  Punishment of wrongdoing shall not be excessive so that the culprit is dehumanized (Dt 25:1–5). | **12. Exploitation**  No one, however disabled, impoverished or powerless, is to be oppressed or exploited (Ex 22:21–27; Lev 19:14, 33–34; 25:35–36; Dt 23:19; 24:6, 12–15, 17; 27:18). |
| **5. Dignity**  Every Israelite’s dignity and right to be God’s freedman and servant are to be honored and safeguarded (Ex 21:2, 5–6; Lev 25; Dt 15:12–18). | **13. Fair Trial**  Everyone is to have free access to the courts and is to be afforded a fair trial (Ex 23:6, 8; Lev 19:15; Dt 1:17; 10:17–18; 16:18–20; 17:8–13; 19:15–21). |
| **6. Inheritance**  Every Israilite’s inheritance in the promised land is to be secure (Lev 25; Nu 27:5–7; 36:1–9; Dt 25:5–10). | **14. Social Order**  Every person’s God-given place in the social order is to be honored (Ex 20:12; Dt 5:16; Ex 21:15, 17; 22:28; Lev 19:3, 32; 20:9; Dt 17:8–13; 21:15–21; 27:16). |
| **7. Property**  Everyone’s property is to be secure (Ex 20:15; Dt 5:19; Ex 21:33–36; 22:1–15; 23:4–5; Lev 19:35–36; Dt 22:1–4; 25:13–15 | **15. Law**  No one shall be above the law, not even the king (Dt 17:18–20). |
| **8. Fruit of Labor**  Everyone is to receive the fruit of his labors (Lev 19:13; Dt 24:14; 25:4). | **16. Animals**  Concern for the welfare of other creatures is to be extended to the animal world (Ex 23:5, 11; Lev 25:7; Dt 22:4, 6–7; 25:4). |

**22:21, 24** *You must purge the evil from among you.* See v. 22; see also note on 13:5. (CSB)

**22:21** *her father’s house*. Where she was under his authority. (TLSB)

**22:22** See Lev 20:10. (CSB)

**22:22** Adultery (consensual intercourse between a married person and someone other than that person’s spouse) was a crime (5:18) and punishable by death. It was destructive to the social order, defiled the land, and had to be purged (cf Lv 18:20, 24–30). The Code of Hammurabi (c 1728–1686 BC) ruled that adulterers were to be bound and thrown into a river. (TLSB)

**22:23–29** These laws do not always clearly cover the difference between consent and force (rape). (TLSB)

**22:23–24** Betrothal makes this woman another man’s wife (a ruling also found in the Code of Hammurabi). The crime is thus adultery and punishable by death. With no evidence that she cried out for help, it is presumed to be consensual sex, and both are guilty of a capital crime. (TLSB)

**22:25–27** Differs from vv 23–24 in that the man seizes the woman and her cries cannot be heard. (TLSB)

**22:25** *seizes her*. Implies rape. (TLSB)

**22:28–29** See note, vv 25–27. Since the woman is not betrothed, there is no adultery and hence no death penalty. The man is punished by a bride-price. (TLSB)

*not divorce her*. Thus providing for the woman and any child from this union. (TLSB)

**22:29** *fifty shekels of silver.* Probably equaled the average bride-price, which must have varied with the economic status of the participants (see note on Ex 22:16). (CSB)

**22:30** *his father’s wife.* Refers to a wife other than his mother (see 27:20). (CSB)

*dishonor his father’s bed.* Lit. “uncover the corner of his father’s garment” (see notes on Ru 3:9; Eze 16:8).

**22:30** Cf Lv 20:11. *uncover his father’s nakedness*. Adultery with a stepmother. To “cover” was a metaphor for taking a woman in marriage, thus this man uncovers his stepmother’s nakedness and invades the marital relationship. Occasionally, sons tried to take the headship role by having sexual relations with their father’s concubines (cf Gn 35:22; 2Sm 16:22; 1Ki 2:21).

**22:13–30** Laws are given concerning marriage, promiscuity, adultery, rape, and incestuous adultery. These laws protect individuals, the integrity of the family unit, and the social stability and purity of the nation. Our God has blessed us with the institution of marriage to provide family, companionship, and a God-pleasing outlet for sexual desire. Such an intimate union is in fact a reflection of the oneness God establishes with us through faith in the relationship of the Church (the Bride) with Christ (the Bridegroom who “gave Himself up for her” (Eph 5:25). • Lord Jesus Christ, keep us faithful and pure that our lives and marriages may honor You. Where we have fallen, forgive us our sins, enable us to forgive one another, and restore us by Your grace to wholeness. Amen. (TLSB)