

March 10: 22:1-30

Summary from Keil...

The Duty to Love One's Neighbour; And Warning Against a Violation of the Natural Order of Things. Instructions to Sanctify the Marriage State.—Ch. 22

Sections and titles:

Verses 1-8: various rules on preserving life

Verses 9-30: don't mix the sacred and the secular

I. Various rules on preserving life (verses 1-8)

You shall not see your countryman's ox or his sheep straying away, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly bring them back to your countryman. ² If your countryman is not near you, or if you do not know him, then you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall remain with you until your countryman looks for it; then you shall restore it to him. ³ Thus you shall do with his donkey, and you shall do the same with his garment, and you shall do likewise with anything lost by your countryman, which he has lost and you have found. You are not allowed to neglect them. ⁴ You shall not see your countryman's donkey or his ox fallen down on the way, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly help him to raise them up.

⁵ *"A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.*

⁶ *"If you happen to come upon a bird's nest along the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young; ⁷ you shall certainly let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, in order that it may be well with you and that you may prolong your days.*

⁸ *"When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you will not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone falls from it.*

- a. Some Bibles might say "sundry laws." Sundry just means various.
- b. This passage is showing that "finders keepers" is not a Christian saying.
- c. Verse 1: if you see your neighbor's ox or sheep going astray
- d. This is an example of loving your neighbor as yourself.
- e. Moody Bible Commentary
- f. *Chapter 22 seems like disparate material, but subtle clues indicate that it is a unit. Repeated words (such as ox [vv. 1, 4, 10], donkey [vv. 3, 10], garment/clothing [vv. 3, 5, 12], and house [vv. 2, 8]) stitch these laws together. This section also transitions from the taking of life (21:18–22:8) to purity, including sexual purity (22:9-30). New American Commentary*
- g. *The implication is that animals left to roam would eventually become prey to harm or death by the elements or at the hand of unscrupulous thieves. Besides this, the animals in question were a valuable resource whose loss would bring hardship and even impoverishment to the man who lost them. So much so was this the case that the one who found them had to keep them at his own expense until the owner, whether from a distance or not immediately identified, should come and claim them (v. 2). In fact, this principle applied to anything lost and found (v. 3).*
- a. Cross reference: Ex 23:4, 5; Prov 27:10; Zech 7:9¹

¹ [*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

- b. Verse 2: if your “countryman” or “neighbor” is not near them then you are to take care of it until the “countryman” comes near.
- c. Verse 3: this applies also to garments or anything lost.
- d. It says not to neglect them.
- e. Verse 4 applies to the ox or donkey that fallen down. Once again, they are to help. This envisions a case where the donkey or ox has fallen and the neighbor needs help getting it on its feet.
- f. Verse 5: This passage is about cross dressing. The NET Bible: *Cross-dressing in this covenant context may suggest homosexuality, fertility cult ritual, or some other forbidden practice.*²

g. *New American Commentary*

a. *Next follows a restriction on transvestism, a regulation that seems most intrusive in the overall passage (v. 5). Kaufman offers the suggestion that the theme of separation in this law (men’s and women’s clothing) finds parallels in the separation between a mother bird and its young in the next law (vv. 6–7).¹⁷⁴ Inasmuch as the latter at least indirectly touches on the subject of death (“You may take the young”), the law on transvestism may also do so by association. In fact, anyone who so blurs these divinely ordered distinctions is a tō’ābat the Lord, “an abomination of the Lord,” one who can expect most serious consequences for his deeds. Another linkage between the verse and its context is the chiasm connecting vv. 5–8 with 9–12: dress (v. 5), animals (vv. 6–7), house (v. 8), field (v. 9), animals (v. 10), dress (vv. 11–12). There is thus a strong tie-in between death and mixtures, that is, between the expositions of the sixth and seventh commandments. The sin in improper mixtures is brought out in the laws of purity that follow (22:9–23:18).*

- b. Verses 6-7: this concerns proper treatment of animals. They can take the young but not the mother.
- c. Verse 7 says “in order that your days may be long in the land. It will be best for them in the land if they treat wild life nicely.
- d. They will not live long in the land if they do not let the adults live to reproduce.

e. *New American Commentary*

a. *One notices here a descending order of value or significance in the animals listed. First was the ox or sheep (v. 1), clean animals useful for food or sacrifice. Then follows the donkey or ox (vv. 3–4), one of which (the donkey) was unclean but essential to one’s livelihood as a work animal. Finally there was the undomesticated bird (vv. 6–7), of little intrinsic value since it was not owned but of great worth as a source of food supply. Even within the last category the mother bird was more valuable than her eggs or chicks, for they were more vulnerable to accident or premature death than she.*

b. *ESV Study Bible: Like the treatment of trees in 20:19–20, this law preserves the means of life and seeks to prevent shortsightedness, requiring wise and respectful use of the creation.*

- c. Verse 8 deals with protecting your neighbor in how you build your house.
- d. It was common to relax on the roof and even nap on the roof. Most people would nap on the roof during the heat of the afternoon.

II. Don’t mix the sacred and the secular (verses 9-30)

² Biblical Studies Press, [The NET Bible First Edition Notes](#) (Biblical Studies Press, 2006), Dt 22:5.

⁹ “You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, or all the produce of the seed which you have sown and the increase of the vineyard will become defiled.

¹⁰ “You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.

¹¹ “You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together.

¹² “You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of your garment with which you cover yourself.

Laws on Morality

¹³ “If any man takes a wife and goes in to her and then turns against her, ¹⁴ and charges her with shameful deeds and publicly defames her, and says, ‘I took this woman, but when I came near her, I did not find her a virgin,’ ¹⁵ then the girl’s father and her mother shall take and bring out the evidence of the girl’s virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. ¹⁶ The girl’s father shall say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter to this man for a wife, but he turned against her; ¹⁷ and behold, he has charged her with shameful deeds, saying, “I did not find your daughter a virgin.” But this is the evidence of my daughter’s virginity.’ And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city. ¹⁸ So the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him, ¹⁹ and they shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give it to the girl’s father, because he publicly defamed a virgin of Israel. And she shall remain his wife; he cannot divorce her all his days.

²⁰ “But if this charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin, ²¹ then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father’s house; thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

²² “If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.

²³ “If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴ then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor’s wife. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

²⁵ “But if in the field the man finds the girl who is engaged, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her shall die. ²⁶ But you shall do nothing to the girl; there is no sin in the girl worthy of death, for just as a man rises against his neighbor and murders him, so is this case. ²⁷ When he found her in the field, the engaged girl cried out, but there was no one to save her.

²⁸ “If a man finds a girl who is a virgin, who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her and they are discovered, ²⁹ then the man who lay with her shall give to the girl’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall become his wife because he has violated her; he cannot divorce her all his days.

³⁰ “A man shall not take his father’s wife so that he will not uncover his father’s skirt.

a. **ESV Study Bible:**

b. These laws prohibit mixing various items, reflecting God’s ordering of creation “according to its kind” (e.g., [Gen. 1:25](#)). They also reminded Israelites that God had separated them from other peoples to be distinct and holy ([Deut. 14:2](#)).

c. **Moody: Moody Bible Commentary**

d. Moses now listed injunctions against the mixing of different materials. Israelites were prohibited from mixing two kinds of seed while sowing, or plowing with two different kinds of animals, or wearing garments with mixed fabrics. There is nothing physically harmful in any of those mixtures, but since the outward demonstration of purity in these matters symbolized an internal spiritual

purity that was to characterize the Israelites, anything that did not conform to a high standard of purity was forbidden.

- e. Dr. Constable: *Adultery involves mixing people in a way that they should not mix, so the antithesis is keeping things properly apart separate. The prohibitions against mixing seed, animals in yoke, and fibers in clothing (vv. 9–11) seem to have had a double significance. They taught the Israelites the importance of purity and keeping things distinct “. . . because the order of the world must not be endangered.”*²⁴⁷ *They also illustrated the importance of remaining separate from the Canaanites. God had told the Israelites not to mix their human seed with the seed of the Canaanites. The Israelites regarded the ox as a symbol of themselves and the ass as a symbol of the Canaanites. Wool was the fiber from which the Israelites made their clothing. However the Canaanites, especially the Canaanite priests, dressed in linen.*²⁴⁸ *Tassels (v. 12) were also visual aids (cf. Num. 15:37–41).*³
- f. Lev. 19:19 is a cross reference.
- g. If they mix seeds it defiles all the seeds.
- h. Verse 10: do not plow with an ox and donkey together. This just makes sense.
- i. Verse 11: this verse about mixing wool does not make as much sense. I think what is most helpful is: *Wool was the fiber from which the Israelites made their clothing. However the Canaanites, especially the Canaanite priests, dressed in linen.*⁴
- j. Tassels is another one that is different to us. This is written more about in Number 15:37-41.
- k. The ESV Study Bible shares: *In the ancient world, tassels were worn by nobles and other high-class people. In Israel they are to be worn by everyone as a mark of their status as the chosen people. Blue was used in the tabernacle curtains and in the priests’ vestments (Ex. 26:31; 28:31). So the blue threads reminded the Israelites that they were “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6).*
- l. Verses 13-30 deal with adultery. This is dealing with the 7th commandment: you shall not commit adultery.
- m. There are 7 cases written about. 1) Husband accuses the wife of not being a virgin and she is innocent. 2) Husband accuses the wife of not being a virgin and she is guilty. 3) a man and married woman commit adultery and they both die. 4) a man has intercourse with an engaged woman in the city and they both die. 5) similar to previous case but they are in the wilderness and only the man dies because it is assumed the woman screamed but no one could hear her. 6) a man and virgin have intercourse before being engaged. They are to marry and cannot divorce. The man must pay a penalty to her father. 7) no incest.
- n. Dr Constable shares: *These verses reveal that sex before marriage was sinful and serious in God’s sight (cf. 1 Cor. 7:1–2). Premarital sex presumes to seize the highest privilege in marriage (i.e., intimacy through sexual union that results in the “one flesh” relationship). It does so without shouldering the responsibility, namely, permanent commitment to one another (expressed as “cleaving” in Gen. 2:24). It therefore perverts marriage, the basic*

²⁴⁷ 247. C. Houtman, “Another Look at Forbidden Mixtures,” *Vetus Testamentum* 24:2 (1984):227.

²⁴⁸ 248. See Calum Carmichael, “Forbidden Mixtures,” *Vetus Testamentum* 32:4 (1982):394-415.

³ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 22:9.

⁴ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 22:9.

institution of society. It presumes to dictate to God by altering His plan. Not everyone who has engaged in premarital sex has thought this through, but this is the basic reason premarital sex is wrong. To the engaged couple committed to one another and tempted to have sex before their marriage I would say postpone sex until the marriage has taken place. Scripture regards sex as the consummation of marriage, what takes place after the couple has completed everything else involved in the establishment of marriage (cf. Gen. 2:24).²⁵²⁵

- o. Verses 13-19: the man takes a wife and when they consummate the relationship he accuses her of not being a virgin.
- p. Verse 14: he publicly accuses her. This also accuses her family.
- q. Verse 15: this is difficult. The parents show evidence of her virginity. The ESV Study Bible shares: *The text does not specify what constitutes evidence of virginity. This may be a garment stained with menstrual blood (v. 17), which demonstrates that she is not pregnant, or a stain of hymenal blood, showing that the girl's first intercourse took place on her wedding night. The gate was where legal matters were heard and resolved.*
- r. It is noted: *Some Bedouin and Moslem parents still retrieve and keep these to prove virginity if necessary.*⁶
- s. Verses 16-17: the father clears his family with the elders.
- t. Verse 18: the man is punished. The ESV Study Bible shares: *A hundred shekels is a very hefty fine, much more than a bride-price (cf. v. 29). Workers in old Babylonian times earned half a shekel per month. Along with the rule that he may not divorce her, this law sought to deter men from making false allegations and pursuing easy divorce.*
- u. Verse 19: he is fined and cannot divorce her.
- v. Verse 20: if she is not innocent, she is stoned. "Purge the evil" is listed for the first of 4 times in this chapter. Verse 21 compares what she has done to prostitution.
- w. Verse 22: a man and a married woman are caught in intercourse. They both die. "Purge the evil again." Lev. 20:10 is a cross reference.
- x. Verses 23-24: a woman is engaged and a different man lies with her "in the city" then they both are stoned because she did not cry out. Keil and Delitch shares: *Betrothal was the first step towards marriage, even if it was not a solemn act attested by witnesses. Written agreements of marriage were not introduced till a later period (Tobit 7:14; Tr. Ketuboth i. 2).*
- y. "purge the evil" the 3rd time.
- z. Verses 25-27: this is the same scenario but they are in the field. Only the man dies because she could have cried out but no one would hear her.
- aa. Verses 28-29: this is consensual between a non married man and woman and the woman is not engaged. Some translations treat this as rape, but it seems more likely consensual. They are to be married and cannot be divorced. See Ex 22:16.

Moody Bible Commentary

Some object to a law forcing a woman to marry the man who raped her. However, for several reasons, it is more likely that the verb "seized" (taphas) does not refer to rape but seduction leading to consensual

²⁵² 252. A good book to give teenagers tempted to have premarital sex is Al Haffner's *The High Cost of Free Love*.

⁵ Tom Constable, [*Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 22:13.

⁶ Tom Constable, [*Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 22:13.

premarital sex, rather than rape. (1) In the parallel law found in Ex 22:16-17, the verb used is not “seizes” (taphas) but “entice” (pathah) and then results in consensual sex. (2) The verb “seizes” (taphas), used here, is distinguished from the word “forces” (22:25, from the root chazak, meaning “overpower”) in the previous paragraph, referring to rape. (3) The verb “seizes” (taphas), while literally referring to physical capture, can also have a metaphorical sense, much like “to capture one’s heart” (cf. Ex 14:5), and much more in keeping with seduction. Hence, this law is dealing with a man who seduces a young virgin with words of love so that she lies with him. Afterward, this “seducer of an unbetrothed virgin was obliged to take her as wife, paying the customary bride price and forfeiting the right of divorce” (Meredith Kline, *Treaty of the Great King*, 111). While marrying a seducer may be an affront to modern sensibilities, there is some rationale behind this legislation. It was a means of protecting a woman’s honor. Also if a child were conceived from this illicit relationship, then the child would have a source of financial support. This law may have also provided a strong deterrent against seduction and premarital sex since divorce was not an option. The stability of the family unit and sexual purity were values held in high esteem over feelings in that culture.

bb. Verse 30: uncover his father’s skirt is a euphemism for sleeping with his wife.

cc. The woman is not his mother, but another woman whom his father is married to.

dd. Cross reference: Lev 18:8; 20:11; Deut 27:20; 1 Cor 5:1⁷

⁷ [*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).