

## **Day 205 - MONDAY: July 10th**

### Deuteronomy 23

#### Deuteronomy 23:1-25 NKJV

"He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD. "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. "An Ammonite or 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, 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. 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. You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever. "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. The children of the third generation born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD. "When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. 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. But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp. "Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; 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. 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 from you. "You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him. "There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel. You shall 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. "You shall not charge interest to your brother—interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest. To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess. "When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you. That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the LORD your God what you have promised with your mouth. "When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Here is the UCG reading plan for this day: "Verses 1–8 of this chapter deal with laws pertaining to the ancient

physical nation of Israel—they are not applicable to the Church of God today. For example, verse 6 states that Israel was not to seek the peace of the Ammonite or the Moabite "nor their prosperity all your days forever." Christ, on the other hand, tells His disciples to love their enemies, to bless them who curse them, and to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9, 43–45). The word "forever" in Deuteronomy 23 must be understood in context. Often this word means forever as long as certain conditions apply (e.g., compare Exodus 21:5–6). Deuteronomy 23:1 prohibits eunuchs from entering the assembly of the Lord—that is, from receiving Israelite citizenship, which would have entitled them to full participation in Israelite society and the rights of being an Israelite. Thus, having the status of a "stranger," they could have joined in festival worship and many other aspects of Israelite life but were still forbidden from certain things, such as partaking of the Passover. And they did not have all the protections under the law that Israelites did, such as having to be released from slavery in the year of release. Also, according to verses 2–3, descendants of illegitimate unions, as well as of Ammonites or Moabites, were denied Israelite citizenship until the family had dwelt among God's people for 10 generations. Again, this is said to be the rule

forever. But for those in Christ, such distinctions are eliminated and cannot apply in the way described here.

True Christians may be from any nation and can suffer from any physical debility. As recipients of the Holy Spirit, they are spiritual Israelites, who may immediately worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24). As Paul tells converted gentiles, "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19).

Deuteronomy 23:9–11 states that an individual who contracts some ceremonial defilement during the night does not become ritually clean again until the next sunset. This is, of course, a ritual law that is no longer in effect.

Still, as mentioned before, there were undoubtedly health benefits to such laws. And thus, the underlying *principle* of physical cleanliness is still very much applicable today.

Verses 12–13 concern sanitation laws about dealing with human waste. Remember from the highlight on Leviticus 13–15 that dung was a major ingredient in the "healing" ointments of ancient Egypt. Of course, such products would have done nothing but worsen the condition of ailing patients. Only the revealed knowledge of the all-knowing God saved the Israelites from the same harmful practices.

The next verse, Deuteronomy 23:14, it should be noted, can also be applied in a spiritual way—God may turn away from *us* if He sees something *spiritually* unclean in *our* lives that we do not want to get rid of.

The proscription against returning a slave in verses 15–16 is not talking about indentured servants within Israel.

The *Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown Commentary* states in its note on these verses: "Evidently a servant [slave] of the Canaanites or some of the neighboring people, who was driven by tyrannical oppression, or induced, with a view of embracing the true religion, to take refuge in Israel. Such a one was not to be surrendered by the inhabitants of the place whither he had fled for protection."

In verse 18, the principle is expressed that ill-gotten gain cannot become "holy" by giving a portion of it to God. The word "dog" here, it should be pointed out, is not a reference to an actual canine animal. Rather, as the previous verse makes mention of two related professions—that of a ritual harlot and that of a "perverted one," i.e., a male prostitute—so the same two should be understood in verse 18. Thus, a harlot and a dog refer to a harlot and a male prostitute. Actual dogs in the ancient Middle East were often looked upon as worthless scavengers and so became

metaphoric for unsavory or immoral people. Indeed, the word "dogs" is often used metaphorically in the Bible (compare Psalm 22:16, 20; Matthew 7:6; Matthew 15:26–27; Philippians 3:2; Revelation 22:15). Therefore, if someone runs a pet store or raises animals and sells dogs, it is perfectly acceptable to offer a portion of the profit to God. The verse in question has nothing to do with that. Verses 19–20 forbid charging interest of a *poor* brother, but permit charging reasonable interest of a foreigner, as loaning money to foreigners was usually done in a business context (compare *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary*, note on 23:19–20; "Usury," *Unger's Bible Dictionary*; *New Bible Dictionary*; *Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*). In fact, the Church of God in modern times has long understood that an Israelite *was* permitted to charge reasonable interest of even another Israelite if the purpose of the loan was not to help a poor and needy brother, but as a business transaction in a commercial context. Indeed, Christ cast banking (in which interest is charged of some so interest can be paid to others) in a positive light in some of His parables (compare Matthew 25:27; Luke 19:23). The same principles, then, apply today regarding Church members. Judging from the spirit of the law, it would be

inappropriate for a converted Christian to charge a poor and needy person interest, whether or not the poor person is in the Church (compare Galatians 6:10). On the other hand, it would not be wrong for a converted Christian to charge another person, even one in the Church, interest on a loan given strictly in a business context.” [END]

I don't have anything additional to add to this chapter.