

Deuteronomy 23:1-25 (April 9, 2021)

Reflection: *Do you think all the purity laws (and the laws dealing with impurity) in the Old Testament are to be adhered to today?*

Read Deuteronomy 23:1-14

1. Summarize Moses' commands for those who cannot enter the assembly of the Lord (v.1-6) and those who can (v.7-8). Why might eunuchs and those born in forbidden unions not be allowed to enter the assembly of the Lord?
2. Should churches hold these exclusionary views when they assemble to worship?
3. What are Moses' commands when the Israelites encamp an enemy (v.9)? What are the two situations that Moses' speaks on and how are they to be resolved in cleanliness (v.10-13)? What is the rationale of why they shouldn't be impure (v.14)?
4. How does this purity relate to God's people in the New Covenant? (1 John 3:6-9) How has Christ won purity on our behalf (Matt 26:28, Heb 10:19-22)?

Purity, cleanliness, and holiness are closely related terms and are important to what marks God's covenant community. The New Covenant has made clean what was unclean in the Old Covenant. For example, with the coming of Christ eunuch and foreigners are welcomed into covenant community (Isaiah 56:1-8), Christ has cleansed lepers (Lev 13:1-3, Matt 8:1-3), made unclean foods clean (Lev 11:1-8, Acts 10:9-15, Rom 14:14, 1 Cor 8:7-8). Therefore, the symbolic ritual purity in the Old Testament has been abolished because of Christ (Heb 9:23). However, the impurity of sin is something that Christians are repeatedly told to fight and be vigilant against (Gal 5:19, Eph 5:3, Col 3:5, 1 Thess 4:7).

5. How would you counsel someone who suffers from the guilt of those things seen as ceremonially impure in the Old Testament?

Read Deuteronomy 23:15-25

6. What is the law given here about slaves from foreign lands (15-16) and cult prostitution and its wages (v.17-18)? What is the law given about charging interest on loans to fellow Israelites and foreigners (v.19-20)? Taking of vows (v.21-23)? About the picking of grapes and grains in a neighbour's vineyard (v.24-25)?
7. What are some things we can take away from these passages about how we are to treat and love our neighbours whether they are a servant or a fellow believer? How is keeping our vows or promises related to purity and holiness?

Though we are no longer under The Law it doesn't mean that purity doesn't matter anymore. God calls us to strive after purity, firstly through the purification of sin and the imputation of righteousness that comes through Christ and secondly to pursue righteous living in our own lives. Purity is something that matters to God and his people, and we all should consider how important purity is in our lives and faith.