

## Deuteronomy 24:1-22 (April 30, 2021)

**Reflection: How does developing a deep theology on different social issues and handling different relationships help us as Christians?**

**In our own lives** – it helps us to conceptualize theologically how God thinks about these situations and then allows us to act in those situations that best glorifies God (Psalm 32:8, Prov 3:5-6, 2 Tim 3:16-17)

**With other believers** – it helps us to conceptualize what God desires from our relationships and then allows us to glorify God in those relationships (for example, Eph 4:2-3, Eph 5:22-33)

**With non-Christians** – Not only does the Bible speak on how Christians should engage with non-Christians (Mark 2:15, 1 Cor 15:33), but also helps us to talk to non-Christians about what we believe and could be useful for evangelism

*Additional question you could ask – do you think we/you have a tough time developing a deep theology? Why?*

### **Read Deuteronomy 24:1-5**

#### **1. Summarize this section's teaching on divorce and the public duty of newly married men?**

24 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, 2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, 4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the Lord. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.

5 "When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be happy with his wife[a] whom he has taken.

#### **Recap:**

- First: when a man divorces his wife
- Protecting the well being of women within marital relationships
- That a husband find's something "indecency with her"
  - o Two interpretations of this within Judaism:
  - o Shammai: A man may not divorce his wife unless he has found unchastity in her
  - o Hillel: May divorce even if she spoils a dish for him
- He writes her a certificate of divorce, send her from his house
- She is then free to marry someone else, and if her second husband writes her a certificate of divorce the first husband cannot marry her again "after she has been defiled."
  - o Why its defilement: text is not exactly clear. Likely, because divorcing someone, having an intervening marriage, and then going back to her first husband a form of legal adultery.
  - o This deflects accountability away from her to either physical problem (which could be what is the indecency) or to her husband.
- This is considered detestable in the eyes of the Lord
- Second: A recently married man must not be sent to war for a year so he can stay at home with his wife
  - o As spoken about in earlier chapters, Israel believed in solid social foundations in their society. In ancient near east, stable families were a very important

2. **Malachi 2:16 (NIV) says, “‘The man who hates and divorces his wife,’ says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘does violence to the one he should protect,’ says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful.”** From this passage we can clearly see that God hates divorce and this preface the discussion found in Matthew 19. Read Matthew 19:3-9. In this passage Jesus is asked “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?” How does Jesus answer their question and show that the pharisee’s view of marriage is all wrong?

*a. Answer: Jesus’ answer*

1. takes us back to God’s original design from creation Gen 1:27
2. Takes on the principle of an unbroken marriage from Gen 2:24
3. What God has joined together let not man separate

Therefore: God’s intention was never for divorce, that man and women were not to separate

*b. Pharisee’s wrong:*

Pharisees read it into a commandment. However, these are not commandments, but rather already taken place dealing with the legislation about divorce and remarriage. It was merely a permission. He speaks of their purpose, this Deuteronomic stature was a response to human failure, an attempt to bring order to an already unideal situation caused by human hardness of heart.

3. **In your own view, how does the world see divorce or remarriage? What are some worldly reasons that people get divorced? How does the Christian view differ from the world’s perspective?**

*i. In your own view, how does world sees divorce or remarriage? What are some worldly reasons that people get divorced and remarried?*

Worldly reasons why people get divorced are fairly vast. However, it has to do with personal expectation or happiness.

There could be many reasons, here are some:

- 1) My spouse isn’t who I thought they were
- 2) We are no longer in love
- 3) I married the wrong person
- 4) I am not happy

*ii. How does the Christian view differ from the world’s perspective?*

1. God designed marriage to be lifelong
2. There is morale aspect to marriage
3. The image of marriage between God and his bride

4. **Do you think there are reasons Christians can be divorced and/or remarried?**

There are bible believing Conservative Christians across the board who hold to different views, and I wouldn’t be surprised if people at CGC hold to different positions. Really 3 views:

- a) Permanence view – who holds that there are no grounds for divorce or remarriage for Christians outside of death of spouse
- b) Semi-permanence view – allows for divorce under certain circumstances but not remarriage
- c) permissive view – allows an exception for divorce and remarriage under certain circumstances

My personal view is the permissive view. (From John Macarthur)

1. Jesus gives grounds for divorce as porneia (Matthew 5:32, 19:9)

is a general term that encompasses sexual sin such as adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and incest. When one partner violates the unity and intimacy of a marriage by sexual sin—and forsakes his or her covenant obligation—the faithful partner is placed in an extremely difficult situation.

2. All methods should be used to bring the partner to repentance, however, if the partner refuses, the Bible permits release for the faithful partner through divorce (Matt 5:32, 1 Cor 7:15)

3. Paul gives another ground: if unbelieving mate does not desire to live with believing spouse (1 Cor 7:12-15)

4. Remarriage, as a pattern in the Scripture, is permitted to a believer only when divorce was on biblical grounds.

5. Those who divorce on any other grounds have sinned against God and their partners, and for them to marry another is an act of “adultery” (Mark 10:11-12)

### **Read Deuteronomy 24:6-22**

**5. Summarize Moses’ commands and the rationale about taking a millstone as a debt (v.6), a person caught kidnapping one of his brothers (v.7), leprous disease and priests (v.8-9), the correct etiquette of receiving a returned loan (v.10-13), how should you to treat hired hands (v.14-16), how aliens, fatherless, and widows should be treated (v.17-18), reaping the harvest of your field (v.19-22)**

6 “No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that would be taking a life in pledge.

7 “If a man is found stealing one of his brothers of the people of Israel, and if he treats him as a slave or sells him, then that thief shall die. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

8 “Take care, in a case of leprous[b] disease, to be very careful to do according to all that the Levitical priests shall direct you. As I commanded them, so you shall be careful to do. 9 Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the way as you came out of Egypt.

10 “When you make your neighbor a loan of any sort, you shall not go into his house to collect his pledge. 11 You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you make the loan shall bring the pledge out to you. 12 And if he is a poor man, you shall not sleep in his pledge. 13 You shall restore to him the pledge as the sun sets, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you. And it shall be righteousness for you before the Lord your God.

14 “You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. 15 You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the Lord, and you be guilty of sin.

16 “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.

17 “You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge, 18 but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.

19 “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. 20 When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. 21 When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. 22 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

**Recap:**

v.6 – the millstone was used to make basic food like bread, and to take it was to take away the way the family could sustain itself

v.7 – A person who kidnaps his brother and enslaves or sells him would be killed

v.8-9 – The focus is on obeying the priest as Miriam's example is cited from Num 12:10-15

v.10-13 – Elaborating on Ex 22:25-27. For creditors to not intimidate or bully debtors by entering the debtor's house, but rather waiting for that person outside. The creditors were also warned from taking the outer garment (used as a blanket) from the poor among them. And told to return before sun down. This is regarded as a righteous act before God.

v. 14 – To not take advantage of the hired man who is poor and needy whether alien or fellow Israelite. Pay him his wage each day before sunset, this is to treat them fairly and give to him what is owed. Otherwise he may cry out against you, and you would be guilty of sin.

v.16 – Fathers are told that their sins have implications for all who live within household 5:9-10. OT examples of children being punished for crimes by parents, all involve fundamental violations of covenant

v. 17-18 –Ex 23:6 prohibits perversion of justice in legal proceedings. Applies principle to the daily treatment of the marginalized. God will provide their basic needs. Different for widows and poor man's. v.18 was to remind all Israel of their own experience in Egypt. Not only should the memory of their own experience of divine grace stimulate compassion towards all who are disadvantaged, but in so doing they emulate the character and action of their God

v. 19-22– Lev 25 that Yahweh reserved the right to determine how the land would be used. Includes the right of all in the covenant community to a share in its produce

- Extend scope of lev 19, 23 to include fatherless and widow
- Now includes olive groves
- The poor whole sheaves of grain already cut and tied, and not the lower quality grain at edges of garden
- Seeks to motivate rather than legislate generosity by linking wellbeing of the nation to their generosity to the marginalized.

**6. How does the New Testament speaking of our role as Christians in treating the poor and vulnerable? vulnerable (cf. Matt 5:42, 25:35, Acts 20:35, Jas 1:27, 1 John 3:17-18) What would you say to Christians who say they have no interest in these areas? What are some practical things we personally can do to engage the poor and vulnerable?**

*i. How does the New Testament speaking of our role as Christians in treating the poor and vulnerable (cf. Matt 5:42, 25:35, Acts 20:35, Romans 15:26, 1 Tim 5:3, Jas 1:27, 1 John 3:17-18)?*

Answer: In both the Old and New Testaments, we see God's desire for His children to show compassion to the poor and needy. Jesus said that the poor would always be with us (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7). He also said that those who show mercy to the poor, the sick, and the needy are in effect ministering to Him personally (Matthew 25:35-40) and will be rewarded accordingly. ~Gotquestions

*ii. What would you say to Christians who say they have no interest in these areas?*

Answer: Loving one another (John 13:34-35) shows our mark of being a true disciple of Christ, and a lack of any interest in caring for the needs of brother Christian family (to say the least) could show a lack of true spiritual life in you. This does not mean we need to be completely devoted our lives to the poor and vulnerable, but it does mean we can act with care and giving in our local situations.

*iii. What are some practical things can do to engage the poor and vulnerable?*

Answer: Discuss ways we can engage in our circles, church, or society.

**We as believers should not shy away from growing in our knowledge of how God desires for his people to live in these different social situations. Perhaps in today's discussion of divorce, remarriage, and how to treat the poor and vulnerable these specific situations may not be directly related to us today, however, some universal principles and lessons can be derived from these passages and as God's people we should look to understand God's desire for us in these relationships and for it to transform the way we live.**