



## WEEK 7: Laws for Matters of Life and Death

DEUTERONOMY 19-21

### CHAPTER 19

- **Bottom Line: no shedding of innocent blood.**
- *Accidental and intentional homicide— 19:1-13*
  - *Set apart three cities of refuge (more as Israel grows)*
  - *Example of accidental homicide: “without having hated him.”*
  - *“Lest innocent blood be shed in your land” (v. 10)*
  - *Example of intentional homicide/murder—city of refuge will extradite.*
  - *“Purge the guilt of innocent blood that it may go well with you.” (v. 13)*
- *Laws concerning witnesses— 19:15-21*
  - *Two or three witnesses required.*
  - *False witnesses punished in kind.*
  - **“Eye for an eye” was meant for false witnesses, not a general rule!**

### CHAPTER 20

- **Bottom Line: there are limits to the kind of warfare God condones.**
- *Preparation for war—20:1-9*
  - *Do not be afraid, but remember God’s deliverance from Egypt.*
  - *God gives the victory (v. 4).*
  - *Weed out the fearful and the potentially tragic (vv. 5-9).*
- *Engagement in war—20:10-20*
  - *Offer peace first (v. 10).*
  - *Distant cities: kill males only, keep the rest.*
  - *Promised Land cities: “save alive nothing that breathes” (v. 16). Rationale: “that they may not teach you all their abominable practices” (v. 18).*
  - *Besiege people, not trees (food supply) (vv. 19-20).*

### CHAPTER 21

- **Bottom Line: avoid evil & guilt and treat people fairly.**
- *Atonement for unsolved murders—21:1-9*
  - *Nearest city shall make an atoning sacrifice for the murder.*
  - *“Purge the guilt of innocent blood from your midst” (v. 9).*
- *Marrying female captives—21:10-14*
  - *Implied that the captives are from distant cities, since marrying Canaanites was forbidden.*

- *Time of mourning provided.*
- *Beauty “removed” possibly to prevent rushing into a marriage.*
- *Once married, she is given full rights and status in Israel.*
- *If no longer “delighted in,” she can go free (protects her dignity).*
- *Rights of the firstborn—21:15-17*
  - *No partiality or preference based on emotion.*
- *A Rebellious Son—21:18-21*
  - *Not for all rebellious sons, but for those who rebelled despite parental discipline.*
  - *“A glutton and a drunkard” is what the leaders called Jesus (Mt 11:19). It was code for “He deserves death!”*
  - *“Purge the evil from your midst.”*
- *A hanged man is cursed by God—21:22-23*
  - *Hanging seems to be optional as necessary.*
  - *Bury him the same day.*
  - *Rationale: a hanged man is cursed (see Gal 3) and it would defile the land.*

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

- *Read Deuteronomy chs. 22-26*
- *Prepare to share 2 insights and 2 questions*