

## **220316-4 Deu 23, The Congregation, Encampments, Asylum, Whoredom, Usury, Vows & Liberality—CThurman**

In the previous chapter Moses reminded Israel that:

- They were not to turn a blind eye to the loss of your neighbor's property, but restore to him those things they found that are his. (vss.1-4)
- Women were not to wear men's garments and men wear women's. The idea that women were to be women and men, men. (v.5)
- They could take nestlings and letting the dam go free. (vss.6, 7)
- Their houses were to have battlements installed to prevent harm to others. (v.8)
- They were not to sow the field with mixed seeds; they were not to yoke incompatible beasts to work the field; they were not to wear garments, I assumed, made of unequal materials: linen and wool; and they were to put hems to the borders of their garments. (vss.9-11) And,
- They were not to commit these six sexual trespasses: to settle the charge of infidelity (vs.13-21); adultery (v.22); betrothal violation in the city (v.23, 24); betrothal violation outside the city (vss.25-27); fornication (vss.28, 29); ban to marry the father's wife (vs.30)

The 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter involves the sanctity, the holiness, the godliness and purity of the nation of Israel. The details of this touches is as follows:

- Who shall enter into the congregation or not, and what that means. (vss.1-8)
- Keeping war camps from defilement (vss. 9-14).
- Refuge for maltreated servants (v.15, 16).
- The issue concerning whores and sodomites (vss.17, 18).

- Improper uses of usury (vss. 19, 20).
- Keeping vows (vss. 21-23).
- Liberality for the hungry (vss.24, 25).

Who shall enter into the congregation or not, and what that means. (vss.1-8)

**1 ¶ He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off,**

*is wounded*, פָּצַע, pa-tza[g], always tss. with the English *to wound*, Cant.5.7; 1Ki.20.27; Deu.23.1; the common noun, פָּצַע, peh-tza[g], again always tss. with the English *a wound* (cf. Ge.4.23; Ex.21.25; Job 9.17; Pr.20.30, *blueness of a wound*; 23.29; 27.6; Is.1.6)

*in the stones*, דָּכָה, dak-kah, a fem. noun, only this once in the OT; the verb דָּכָה, dah-kah, is tss. *to crouch* (Ps.10.10), *to break* (Ps.5.18); *to be sore broken* (Ps.38.8; 44.19), *to have a contrite heart* (Ps.51.17).

*privy member*, שֹׁפָךְ, shoph-kah, a fem. sing. noun, only this once in the OT; the verb שָׁפַךְ, shah-phak, tss. *to pour*, *to pour out*, *to shed*, *to cast*, *to gush out*; also see the masc. noun שֶׁפֶךְ, sheh-phek, *to pour out*.

**shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.**

[the first time that this phrase is used in the OT, & it is in this chapter 6 times, vss.1, 2 (twice), 3 (twice), 8]

*into the congregation*, בְּקָהָל, the prefixed בְּ, for *into the*, and the masc. noun קָהָל, qah-hal, tss. *multitude*, *company*, *assembly*, *congregation*; the verb קָהָל, qah-hal, is tss. *to gather*, *to gather together*, *to assemble*, *to assemble together*.

So, the issue concerns such a person being banned from entering into the congregation. It appears that the congregation is reference to that society of men which are constituted of elders, princes, rulers and captains of Israel. (cf. Nu.35.12, 24, 25; Jos. 20.6, 9; 1Ki.8.5; 1Chron.13.1, 2, 4; 29.1, 10, 20 compared to 28.1) Now we have an idea of what it means to enter into the congregation.

**2 A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.**

*bastard*, מְזֵיֵר, mam-zehr, a masc. noun only twice in the OT, tss.  
*bastard* (Deu.23.2; Zec.9.6).

If we refer to the previous chapter the definition of a bastard child would be any birth resulting from a defiled marriage bed. The LORD bans such a person from serving in an official capacity. Whether the reason is understood or not it is to be obeyed. To venture a reason for the ban, it is very likely that a person of illegitimate birth would not esteem the issues of chasteness as those that were of legitimate birth.

**3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD;**

Remember that the children of Ammon and Moab are the sons Lot bore through his daughters. (cf. Ge.19.30-38) The Midianites were complicit in this crime against Israel too, but Israel slew all their males and took the women captive. (cf. Nu.25.16-18; 31.2; Jos.13.21, 22) Midian appears to continue as a people though. (cf. Jud.6.1, etc.)

**even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:**

After the return from Babylonian captivity Nehemiah applied to this rule.

*Ne.13.1 ¶ On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever;*

2 *Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.*

3 *Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.*

**4 *Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way,***

*they met*, Piel (intensive act.) pret. verb דָּמָךְ, qah-dam, **the first this verb has been found in the OT**, tss. *to be before, to go before, to meet, to prevent.*

***when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.***

**5 *Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.***

**6 *Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.***

*peace*, a masc. noun שְׁלוֹמִי, shah-lōhm, tss. *peace, well, welfare, salute, safe, health, prosperity, familiars, friends.*

*prosperity*, the adj. טוֹב, tōhv, tss. *good, please, goodly, goodness, merry, prosperity, wealth.*

cf. Numbers chs. 22-25, which led to the deaths of 24,000 Israelites in the sin of fornication.

So, if we take a generation as developed by the 40 years sojourn of Israel through the desert this would mean the child of Ammon and Moab are expressly banned from the congregation of the LORD for 400 years. But the idea is more of a ban to them for appointments to places of authority *forever* (v.3).

***Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever –***  
To do otherwise would result in compromising this rule so that these would

begin having rule over the children of Israel. The LORD clearly commanded against this. This is not suggesting that the Israel be hateful at continual war. But as it regards official service Israel was not to rest or prosper this issue whenever it might present itself. Absolutely not!

**7 *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother:***

*abhor*, Piel (intensive act.) fut. of the verb אָבַח, tah-[g]av, tss. *to be abominable, to abhor*; the noun אֲבִיחָה, toh-[g]eh-vah, tss. *abomination, abominable, abominable thing*, and means rejected, despicable, detestable things.

The Edomite refers to the descendants of Esau. Esau is, with Jacob his twin brother, the son of Jacob (son of Isaac, son of Abraham). (cf. Ge.25.21-26)

***thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a stranger in his land.***

**8 *The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the LORD in their third generation.***

In other words, as this relates to the Edomite and the Egyptian, third-generation immigrants (grandchildren) may begin to receive appointments to various position so authority.

So, what have read? There shall no man enter into a leadership position in the nation of Israel that is a eunuch, of illegitimate birth, an Ammonite or a Moabite. But after proselytes-immigrants of Edom or Egypt have been in the land for three generations they may begin to be appointed to places of authority in Israel – But not as Israel’s king. Israel’s king was to be of their brethren.

*Deu.17.15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.*

Keeping war camps from defilements (vss. 9-14)

**9 ¶ When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.**

A warning against taking of spoils which the LORD forbid. No spoils were to be taken of the gods of the people's that were the previous inhabitants of Canaan. The silver and the gold upon the gods of these nations was to be rejected. (cf. Nu.7.22, 25, 26) The places where the nations worshipped their gods were to be utterly destroyed. (cf. Deu.12.1-3) No captives were to be taken of the people so that Israel not learn of their ways. (cf. Deu.20.16, 17) Israel may assume their houses, wells and vineyards, and fruit trees. (Deu.6.10, 11) But every living thing was to be destroyed.

**10 If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp:**

[untranslated], תִּבְּרָה, tah-vek, , a masc. noun tss. *in the midst, within, amongst, between, through, in, etc.*; i.e. **21.12, [untranslated]; 22.2, [untranslated]; 23.10, within; 23.11, into; 32.51, among.**

Touching the carcass of any unclean creatures. (Lev.5.2; 11.23-25, 39, 40)  
Seed of copulation. (cf. Lev. 15.16-18)

**11 But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again.**

[untranslated], תִּבְּרָה, tah-vek, , a masc. noun tss. *in the midst, within, amongst, between, through, in, etc.*; i.e. **21.12, [untranslated]; 22.2, [untranslated]; 23.10, within; 23.11, into; 32.51, among.**

**12 Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad:**

**13 And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon;**



(Hiphil [causative act.] infin.; Deu.32.39, *to deliver* (Hiphil [causative act.] part.

*and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.*  
*naked matter*

*holy*, קֹדֶשׁ, qah-dohsh, an adj. tss. *holy, saint, Holy One.*

*unclean*, fem. noun עֲרֵבָה, [g]er-vah, tss. *nakedness (oft), uncleanness.*

The children of God, if faithful, are always in conflict against, self, Satan, and others. The manner of the conflict is according to the word of God or else it is a loss.

*1Pe 1:15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ...*

*2Ti.2.4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.  
5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

Refuge for maltreated servants (v.15, 16)

**15 ¶ Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee:**

*thou shalt ... deliver*, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. verb of סָגַר, sah-gar, tss. *to give up, to shut, to shut up, to shut in, to shut out, to stop;* **Deu. 23.15, Hiphil fut., *thou shalt deliver*; Deu. 32.30, Hiphil Pret., *had shut them up.***

*which is escaped*, Niphal (simple pass.) fut. tss. *to deliver, to be without fail, to save, to recover, to escape, to rescue;* **Deu. 23.15, to escape (Niphal [simple pass.] fut. verb; Deu. 23.14; 25.11, to deliver**



(Hiphil [causative act.] infin.; Deu.32.39, *to deliver* (Hiphil [causative act.] part.

**16 He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.**

The word *escape* (v.15) lends to the idea of a servant being maltreated by his master. So the servant flees. Israel was to be a refuge for such suffering servants. David very likely acted on the instructions given in this text when he received an Egyptian servant. (cf. 1Sa.30.11-15)

The issue concerning whores and sodomites (vss.17, 18)

**17 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.**

*whore*, a fem. noun קִדְּשָׁה, q'-deh-shah, five times in the OT and tss. *harlot* (4), *whore* (1);

see also the Hebrew זָנָה, zah-nah, tss. *to play the harlot, to go whoring, to commit fornication, to commit whoredom, to play the whore, to fall to whoredom; Due.31.16; v.18, whore.*

*sodomite* (a homosexual), a masc. noun שֹׂדֵם, tss. *a sodomite* (5), *unclean* (1)

That this stipulation clearly states the children of Israel shall not do so wickedly does not mean that it was any less sinful for the nations should they do the same. No. But of all of the people that should understand the offense of such behavior before the LORD, it should have been the children of Israel.

**18 Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog,**

*hire*, a masc. noun אֶתְנָן, eth-nahn, tss. *to hire, to reward*

*price*, masc. noun מְחִיר, m'-cheer, tss. *price, worth, sold, gain.*

***into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.***

The *hire*, the *price* and the *reward* gained through these wicked practices were not to be put into the treasury to prosper the people of God and His service. In other words no vows of this sort will be allowed if what is involved is bringing in revenue for such wicked practices. The prices of both are an abomination to the LORD.

Notice the parallels: whore-sodomite; whore-dog. In this text the Sodomite is called a dog.

*Ps 22:16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

*Ps 22:20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.*

*Mt 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

*Php 3:2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.*

*Re 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

The sodomite is defined clear enough in the word of God to know that it refers to homosexual men. (cf. Ro.1.27)

*Ge.19.5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.*

6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

8 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

Improper use of usury (vss. 19, 20)

**19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:**

**20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury;**  
foreigner

*foreigner*, an adj. נִכְרִי, nok-ree, tss. *strange, stranger, alien, foreigner*; **15.3; 23.20**.

***but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.***

This is in the context lending with to help a brother in need. There is nothing wrong with usury except it is not to be applied to the poor.

*Ex.22.25 ¶ If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.*

*26 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:*

*27 For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious.*

*Le.25.35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he (thy brother) be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.*

*stranger & sojourner* are גֵּר, *gehr* & תּוֹשָׁב, *tōh-shav* (a temporary 'stayers.' **So to foreigners Israel could apply usury.**

*36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.*

*37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.*

*38 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.*

The righteous will not resort to means of ill-gotten gain, and therefore cut off the wicked occasion to contribute such to promote the Lord's work.

*Ps.15.1 ¶ « A Psalm of David. » LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*

...

*5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.*

The wise Solomon said,

*Pv.28.8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*

Nehemiah, after Israel's Babylonian exile had expired, chastised the Lord's people for charging their poor brethren usury. (cf. Ne.5.7, 10)

In the parable of the talents, the Lord rebukes the man that gained nothing with that which was committed to him. He should have put it out to usury.

*Mt 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.*

There is nothing wrong with gain unless it is through wicked ways or taking advantage of the poor.

Keeping vows (vss. 21-23)

**21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God,**

vow, Qal pret. of the verb נָדַר, nah-dar, tss. always tss. with the English *to vow*; also the same for the noun, נֶדֶר, neh-der.

**thou shalt not**

**slack**

**to pay it:**

stay, defer

to make good, to render

*thou shalt ... slack*, Piel (intensive act.) fut. of the verb אָחַר, ah-char, tss. *to stay, to continue, to sit late, to tarry, to tarry longer, to defer, to hinder, to delay, to be slack.*

*to pay it*, Piel (intensive act.) infin. of the verb שָׁלַם, shah-lam, tss. *to end, to be a peace, to finish, to prosper, to pay, to restore, to reward (Deu.32.41, Piel fut.), to requite, to recompense, to render, to perform, to make restitution, to make good, to make amends.*

**for the LORD thy God will surely**

**require it**

**of thee;**

or, make inquisition of it

*will surely require it*, formed by a combination of the verb, דָּרַשׁ, dah-rash, in Qal infin. and Qal fut. verbs, tss. *to inquire, to require, to seek, to ask.*

**and it would be sin in thee.**

with

**22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.**

refrain

*though shalt forbear*, לָדַל, cha-dal, tss. *to cease, to leave, to forbear, to be unoccupied, to fail; Deu.15.11, to cease; 23.22, thou shalt forbear.*

**23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform;**  
 The profession heed, observe do

*that which is gone out of*, a masc. noun, מוֹצֵא, mōh-tzah, tss. *to proceed out of, that which is gone out of, to spring of, the goings forth of, a vein, a bud of, the outgoings of*; the verb form of this is יֵצֵא, *to go out, to go forth, to proceed, to go abroad, to depart, to issue out.*

**even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed**  
 [though it is] spoken or said

*freewill offering*, a fem. noun נְדָבָה, nah-dav, tss. *a willing offering, a free offering, a freewill offering.*

*vowed*, of the verb דָּבַר, dah-var, tss. *to speak, to talk, to commune, to name, to bid, to command to promise, to declare, to pronounce, etc.*; Deu.27.9; 31.1, 28, 30; 32.1, and I will speak, 32.44, 48 and spake, Piel fut. verb, spake.

**unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.**

So, it is no sin to refrain from making vows, but if an Israelite makes a vow, it doesn't matter if it was voluntary or not, he must keep it and not defer to make it good.

Liberality to the poor (vss.24, 25)

**24 When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure;**  
 as you desire

*at thine own pleasure*, a common noun נֶפֶשׁ, neh-phesh, tss. *creature, soul, person, mind, body the heart.*

thy fill, a masc. noun שָׂבַע, sōh-va[g], tss. *to the full, to fill, to suffice, to the satisfying.*

**but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.**  
sack, pot

vessel, כְּלֵי, k'-lee, a masc. noun tss. *jewels, weapons, sacks, vessels, stuff, furniture, skins, pot, etc.*

**25 When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour,**  
grain

standing corn, קָמָה, a fem. noun tss. *standing corn, corn, stalk, grown up [corn, meaning 'grain'].*

**then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand;**  
crop off

then thou mayest pluck, Qal pret. of the verb קָטַף, qah-taph, tss. *to pluck, to crop off, to cut up, to cut down.*

the ears, מְלֵי יָדָהּ, m'-lee-lah, a fem. noun only this once in the OT.

**but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.**  
lift up, strike, shake

thou shalt ... move, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of the verb נָוַף, nooph, tss. *to perfume, to shake, to lift up, to wave, to offer, to strike, to sift to move, to send.*

sickle, חֶרְמֵשׁ, cher-meysh, a masc. noun only twice in the NT and both times tss. with the English *sickle*; Young's defines this as a 'reaping hook.'

Another Hebrew word, מַגֵּל, also only twice in the OT and tss. *sickle* (marg. scythe; Young's defines this as a large knife)

How the LORD cared for the poor! Earlier in the book of Leviticus the LORD commanded Israel against reaping their fields clean. But rather leave some for the poor and stranger to reap.

*Le.19.9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.*

*10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.*

Of course the text of Leviticus has nothing to do with harvest. Here a person may satisfy himself with the grape and the grain as he could eat them. He was not to fill a sack or use a tool. He may eat until he is sufficed; until his belly is full.

During our Lord Jesus' earthly ministry, He and His disciples did this.

*Mt 12:1 At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn [grain], and to eat.*

*Lu 6:1 And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn [grain] fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.*

First, the LORD commanded Israel who may or may not be appointed to places of authority (except for the office of Israel's king): no eunuch, no bastard, no Ammonite or Moabite, but 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants of Edom and Egypt. (1-8)

Second, of the necessity of keeping the camp of the armies of Israel clean: those that became unclean in the night were to leave the camp until the next evening, they were to relieve themselves outside the camp where they would use the spade end of their weapon, dig a hole and after, turn dirt back over that which came from them. (9-14)



Third, that Israel should let the escaping servant find asylum with them. (15, 16)

Fourth, that there should be no harlots or sodomites of the children of Israel, and no vow that would bring into the house of the LORD any revenue generated through these practices.

Fifth, that Israel was not to apply usury to the poor or to the temporal abider (stranger) in the land.

Sixth, that all vows were to be kept. That it was no sin to refrain from vowing.

Seventh, all the poor a liberal satisfy themselves of the vineyard and the grain. (no pot or scythe)