

Ki Tetzei

Deuteronomy 21:10 - 25:19

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh

¹⁰ When you take the field against your enemies, and the Lord your God delivers them into your power and you take some of them captive, ¹¹ and you see among the captives a beautiful woman and you desire her and would take her to wife, ¹² you shall bring her into your house, and she shall trim her hair, pare her nails, ¹³ and discard her captive's garb. She shall spend a month's time in your house lamenting her father and mother; after that you may come to her and possess her, and she shall be your wife. ¹⁴ Then, should you no longer want her, you must release her outright. You must not sell her for money: since you had your will of her, you must not enslave her.

¹⁵ If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him sons, but the first-born is the son of the unloved one — ¹⁶ when he wills his property to his sons, he may not treat as first-born the son of the loved one in disregard of the son of the unloved one who is older. ¹⁷ Instead, he must accept the first-born, the son of the unloved one, and allot to him a double portion of all he possesses; since he is the first fruit of his vigor, the birthright is his due.

¹⁸ If a man has a wayward and defiant son, who does not heed his father or mother and does not obey them even after they discipline him, ¹⁹ his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his town at the public place of his community. ²⁰ They shall say to the elders of his town, "This son of ours is disloyal and defiant; he does not heed us. He is a glutton and a drunkard." ²¹ Thereupon the men of his town shall stone him to death. Thus you will sweep out evil from your midst: all Israel will hear and be afraid.

²² If a man is guilty of a capital offense and is put to death, and you impale him on a stake, ²³ you must not let his corpse remain on the stake overnight, but must bury him the same day. For an impaled body is an affront to God: you shall not defile the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.

Chapter 22

¹ If you see your fellow's ox or sheep gone astray, do not ignore it; you must take it back to your fellow. ² If your fellow does not live near you or you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home and it shall remain with you until your fellow claims it; then you shall give it back to him. ³ You shall do the same with his ass; you shall do the same with his garment; and so too shall you do with anything that your fellow loses and you find: you must not remain indifferent.

⁴ If you see your fellow's ass or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it; you must help him raise it.

⁵ A woman must not put on man's apparel, nor shall a man wear woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord your God.

⁶ If, along the road, you chance upon a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs and the mother sitting over the fledglings or on the eggs, do not take the mother together with her young. ⁷ Let the mother go, and take only the young, in order that you may fare well and have a long life.

⁸ When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you do not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone should fall from it.

⁹ You shall not sow your vineyard with a second kind of seed, else the crop — from the seed you have sown — and the yield of the vineyard may not be used. ¹⁰ You shall not plow with an ox and an ass together. ¹¹ You shall not wear cloth combining wool and linen.

¹² You shall make tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.

¹³ A man marries a woman and cohabits with her. Then he takes an aversion to her ¹⁴ and makes up charges against her and defames her, saying, "I married this woman; but when I approached her, I found that she was not a virgin." ¹⁵ In such a case, the girl's father and mother shall produce the evidence of the girl's virginity before the elders of the town at the gate. ¹⁶ And the girl's father shall say to the elders, "I gave this man my daughter to wife, but he has taken an aversion to her; ¹⁷ so he has made up charges, saying, 'I did not find your daughter a virgin.' But here is the evidence of my daughter's virginity!" And they shall spread out the cloth before the elders of the town. ¹⁸ The elders of that town shall then take the man and flog him, ¹⁹ and they shall fine him a hundred [shekels of] silver and give it to the girl's father; for the man has defamed a virgin in Israel. Moreover, she shall remain his wife; he shall never have the right to divorce her.

²⁰ But if the charge proves true, the girl was found not to have been a virgin, ²¹ then the girl shall be brought out to the entrance of her father's house, and the men of her town shall stone her to death; for she did a shameful thing in Israel, committing fornication while under her father's authority. Thus you will sweep away evil from your midst.

²² If a man is found lying with another man's wife, both of them — the man and the woman with whom he lay — shall die. Thus you will sweep away evil from Israel.

²³ In the case of a virgin who is engaged to a man — if a man comes upon her in town and lies with her, ²⁴ you shall take the two of them out to the gate of that town and stone them to death: the girl because she did not cry for help in the town, and the man because he violated another man's wife. Thus you will sweep away evil from your midst. ²⁵ But if the man comes upon the engaged girl in the open country, and the man lies with her by force, only the man who lay with her shall die, ²⁶ but you shall do nothing to the girl. The girl did not incur the death penalty, for this case is like that of a man attacking another and murdering him. ²⁷ He came upon her in the open; though the engaged girl cried for help, there was no one to save her.

²⁸ If a man comes upon a virgin who is not engaged and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are discovered, ²⁹ the man who lay with her shall pay the girl's father fifty [shekels of] silver, and she shall be his wife. Because he has violated her, he can never have the right to divorce her.

Chapter 23

¹ No man shall marry his father's former wife, so as to remove his father's garment.

² No one whose testes are crushed or whose member is cut off shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord.

³ No one misbegotten shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord; none of his descendants, even in the tenth generation, shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord.

⁴ No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord; none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation, shall ever be admitted into the congregation of the Lord, ⁵ because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey after you left Egypt, and because they hired Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Aram- naharaim, to curse you. — ⁶ But the Lord your God refused to heed Balaam; instead, the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, for the Lord your God loves you. — ⁷ You shall never concern yourself with their welfare or benefit as long as you live.

⁸ You shall not abhor an Edomite, for he is your kinsman. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a stranger in his land. ⁹ Children born to them may be admitted into the congregation of the Lord in the third generation.

¹⁰ When you go out as a troop against your enemies, be on your guard against anything untoward.

¹¹ If anyone among you has been rendered unclean by a nocturnal emission, he must leave the camp, and he must not reenter the camp. ¹² Toward evening he shall bathe in water, and at sundown he may reenter the camp. ¹³ Further, there shall be an area for you outside the camp, where you may relieve yourself. ¹⁴ With your gear you shall have a spike, and when you have squatted you shall dig a hole with it and cover up your excrement. ¹⁵ Since the Lord your God moves about in your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemies to you, let your camp be holy; let Him not find anything unseemly among you and turn away from you.

¹⁶ You shall not turn over to his master a slave who seeks refuge with you from his master. ¹⁷ He shall live with you in any place he may choose among the settlements in your midst, wherever he pleases; you must not ill-treat him.

¹⁸ No Israelite woman shall be a cult prostitute, nor shall any Israelite man be a cult prostitute. ¹⁹ You shall not bring the fee of a whore or the pay of a dog into the house of the Lord your God in fulfillment of any vow, for both are abhorrent to the Lord your God.

²⁰ You shall not deduct interest from loans to your countrymen, whether in money or food or anything else that can be deducted as interest; ²¹ but you may deduct interest from loans to foreigners. Do not deduct interest from loans to your countrymen, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings in the land that you are about to enter and possess.

²² When you make a vow to the Lord your God, do not put off fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will require it of you, and you will have incurred guilt; ²³ whereas you incur no guilt if you refrain from

vowing. ²⁴ You must fulfill what has crossed your lips and perform what you have voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God, having made the promise with your own mouth.

²⁵ When you enter another man's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you want, until you are full, but you must not put any in your vessel. ²⁶ When you enter another man's field of standing grain, you may pluck ears with your hand; but you must not put a sickle to your neighbor's grain.

Chapter 24

¹ A man takes a wife and possesses her. She fails to please him because he finds something obnoxious about her, and he writes her a bill of divorcement, hands it to her, and sends her away from his house; ² she leaves his household and becomes the wife of another man; ³ then this latter man rejects her, writes her a bill of divorcement, hands it to her, and sends her away from his house; or the man who married her last dies. ⁴ Then the first husband who divorced her shall not take her to wife again, since she has been defiled — for that would be abhorrent to the Lord. You must not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a heritage.

⁵ When a man has taken a bride, he shall not go out with the army or be assigned to it for any purpose; he shall be exempt one year for the sake of his household, to give happiness to the woman he has married.

⁶ A handmill or an upper millstone shall not be taken in pawn, for that would be taking someone's life in pawn.

⁷ If a man is found to have kidnapped a fellow Israelite, enslaving him or selling him, that kidnapper shall die; thus you will sweep out evil from your midst.

⁸ In cases of a skin affection be most careful to do exactly as the levitical priests instruct you. Take care to do as I have commanded them. ⁹ Remember what the Lord your God did to Miriam on the journey after you left Egypt.

¹⁰ When you make a loan of any sort to your countryman, you must not enter his house to seize his pledge. ¹¹ You must remain outside, while the man to whom you made the loan brings the pledge out to you. ¹² If he is a needy man, you shall not go to sleep in his pledge; ¹³ you must return the pledge to him at sundown, that he may sleep in his cloth and bless you; and it will be to your merit before the Lord your God.

¹⁴ You shall not abuse a needy and destitute laborer, whether a fellow countryman or a stranger in one of the communities of your land. ¹⁵ You must pay him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets, for he is needy and urgently depends on it; else he will cry to the Lord against you and you will incur guilt.

¹⁶ Parents shall not be put to death for children, nor children be put to death for parents: a person shall be put to death only for his own crime.

¹⁷ You shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the fatherless; you shall not take a widow's garment in pawn. ¹⁸ Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and that the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore do I enjoin you to observe this commandment.

¹⁹ When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it; it shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow — in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings.

²⁰ When you beat down the fruit of your olive trees, do not go over them again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²¹ When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not pick it over again; that shall go to the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. ²² Always remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore do I enjoin you to observe this commandment.

Chapter 25

¹ When there is a dispute between men and they go to law, and a decision is rendered declaring the one in the right and the other in the wrong — ² if the guilty one is to be flogged, the magistrate shall have him lie down and be given lashes in his presence, by count, as his guilt warrants. ³ He may be given up to forty lashes, but not more, lest being flogged further, to excess, your brother be degraded before your eyes.

⁴ You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing.

⁵ When brothers dwell together and one of them dies and leaves no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married to a stranger, outside the family. Her husband's brother shall unite with her: he shall take her as his wife and perform the levir's duty. ⁶ The first son that she bears shall be accounted to the dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out in Israel. ⁷ But if the man does not want to marry his brother's widow, his brother's widow shall appear before the elders in the gate and declare, "My husband's brother refuses to establish a name in Israel for his brother; he will not perform the duty of a levir." ⁸ The elders of his town shall then summon him and talk to him. If he insists, saying, "I do not want to marry her," ⁹ his brother's widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull the sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and make this declaration: Thus shall be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house! ¹⁰ And he shall go in Israel by the name of "the family of the unsandaled one."

¹¹ If two men get into a fight with each other, and the wife of one comes up to save her husband from his antagonist and puts out her hand and seizes him by his genitals, ¹² you shall cut off her hand; show no pity.

¹³ You shall not have in your pouch alternate weights, larger and smaller. ¹⁴ You shall not have in your house alternate measures, a larger and a smaller. ¹⁵ You must have completely honest weights and completely honest measures, if you are to endure long on the soil that the Lord your God is giving you. ¹⁶ For everyone who does those things, everyone who deals dishonestly, is abhorrent to the Lord your God.

¹⁷ Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey, after you left Egypt — ¹⁸ how, undeterred by fear of God, he surprised you on the march, when you were famished and weary, and cut down all the stragglers in your rear. ¹⁹ Therefore, when the Lord your God grants you safety from all your enemies around you, in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a hereditary portion, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!