

**Veritas Class; March 9, 2014**

**I. Righteousness Demonstrated in Respect for Human Life (Deuteronomy 19:1-13)**

**Interpretation: The Provision of Asylum for Innocent Manslaughter (vv. 1-13)**

**A. The Nature of the Provision (vv. 1-3)**

**B. The Need for the Provision (vv. 4-7, 10)**

**1. The Announcement (v. 4)**

**2. The Primary Case (vv. 5-7, 10)**

**3. The Secondary Case (vv. 11-13)**

**C. The Expansion of the Provision (vv. 8-9)**

**1. The Occasion**

**a. The Presupposed Divine Action (v. 8)**

**b. The Presupposed Human Action (v. 9a)**

**2. The Required Action (v. 9c)**

**To what extent did the Israelites listen to Moses' instructions here?**

1. After the land was conquered they set aside six asylum towns (Josh 20:7-8)
2. While later narratives are silent on the asylum towns, the notion of asylum survived, albeit in different form: 1 Kings 1:50-53 1 Kings 2:28-34

**Do Christians need to keep this policy?**

God's people recognize that:

1. Righteousness is not demonstrated in the abstract, but in obedience to God and in respect for those who are created as his images.
2. Righteousness is demonstrated in uncompromising respect for human life, which extends to those who inadvertently cause another's death.
3. Righteousness demands that we not let sentimentality interfere with the administration of justice toward the guilty.
4. Righteousness is demonstrated in "love." Hatred is an unrighteous disposition of the heart and rage is her ugly sister.
5. Righteousness recognizes the importance of community, both at the domestic and at the wider level, and especially in the administration of justice.

**What about the notion of asylum today?**

## II. Righteousness and the Sanctity of Property: An Instructional Fragment (Deut 19:14)

1. Links to the preceding ordinance on the sanctity of life
  - a. Lexical
    - (1) The term *gēbûl* (border, territory) vv. 3, 8, 14
    - (2) The term *naḥālâ* (grant of land, patrimony) vv. 10, 14
  - b. Theological: the land as a sacred and inviolable gift from YHWH (vv. 1, 2, 10)
  - c. Literary Contextual: In the Decalogue the right to life statement is followed by right to property statement (5:17-17)
2. Extra-biblical Information: A Babylonian Boundary Stone
3. Other Texts: Genesis 31:51-53; Deuteronomy 27:17; Proverbs 22:28; Proverbs 23:10; Job 24:1-11
4. Significance
  - a. The Location of this Fragment
  - b. The Prophetic Perspective: Isaiah 5:8
5. The Afterlife of the Principle (?): 1 Kings 21:1-24: Ahab and Naboth
6. The Relevance of this Ordinance for Us

## III. Righteousness and Truthful Witness (Deuteronomy 19:15-21)

1. The Declaration: Moses Call for Multiple Witnesses in Criminal Legal Cases (v. 15)
2. The Problem (v. 16)
  - a. A Malicious Witness
  - b. A False Witness
3. The Solution (vv. 17-19a)
  - a. The accuser and accused appear before YHWH (represented by the priests, functioning as judges; (v. 17).
  - b. The Priestly adjudicators are to investigate the matter thoroughly (v. 18a).
  - c. The false witnesses is to suffer the punishment of the crime for which he gave a false testimony (vv. 18b-19a).
4. The Rationale (v. 19b-20)
  - a. To Purge the People of the Evil (v. 19b)
  - b. To Serve as a Deterrent (v. 20)
5. The Required Disposition (v. 21)
  - a. No Pity (v. 21a)
  - b. A Commitment to Equity (v. 21b)