

Veritas Class
July 13, 2014

Righteousness in Securing the Well-Being of the Vulnerable
Deuteronomy 21:18-22:8

- I. Maintaining the Rights of Female Prisoners of War (Deuteronomy 21:10–14)
- II. Maintaining the Well-Being of an Unloved Wife and a Firstborn Son (Deuteronomy 21:15–17)
- III. Maintaining the Well-being of the Parents and the Community of an Incurable Son (Deut 21:18–21)

A. Introduction

1. The Structure of the Text

- a. The Protasis (The Problem)

*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 . . . ,*

- b. The Apodosis (The Righteous Response)

*. . . then his father and mother shall take hold of him
and they shall bring him out to the elders of his town at the public place of his community,
and they shall say to the elders of his town,
"This son of ours is disloyal and defiant;
he refuses to listen to our voice,
he is a glutton and a drunkard."
and all the men of his town shall stone him to death with stones.*

- c. The Motivation

*Thus you will purge the evil from your midst,
and all Israel will hear,
and they will be afraid.*

2. The Background to this Text

- a. The Biblical Background

(1) The Foundational Decalogue Statement (Deut 5:16)

(2) Old Testament Reinforcement

- b. Extra-Biblical Background

B. Exposition

1. The Problem: A Hopelessly Incurable Son (v. 18)

2. The Solution (vv. 19–21a)

Observations:

- (a) Note the role of the wife/mother.
- (b) Note the locus of responsibility for matters of life and death.

D. I. Block

- (c) Note the nature of the process.
- (d) Note the parents' declaration of the son's pathology.
- (e) Note the role of the community in the administration of justice.

3. The Goal (v. 21b)

- (a) Purging the community of "the evil."
- (b) Instilling the community with fear.

C. Theological and Practical Implications

1. The Disposition of Proverbs toward Rebellious Youth
2. The Disposition of the New Testament toward Rebellious Youth
3. What shall we do with texts like this?

III. Maintaining the Well-being of the Land (Deut 21:22–23)

A. The Problem (v. 22)

Three stages in the legal procedure involving a capital crime:

1. A person has been found guilty of a crime worthy of death.
2. The person has been executed.
3. The person's body is hung on a tree.

B. The Prescription (v. 23a-b)

1. Do not let the body exposed overnight.
2. Bury it on the day of the execution.

But why? Two additional sets of questions:

- a. What does *qēlālâ* mean?
- b. Why does Moses refer to God as *Elohim*?
- a' Is the person cursed because his body is hung from a tree?
- b' Or is he hung from a tree because he is cursed?

C. The Motive (v. 23c)

To prevent desecration of the land

D. This Policy in Israelite Life

1. The Old Testament
2. Qumran
3. New Testament Echoes

E. But what shall we do with it?