

LAWS OF THE LAW CONTINUED

PREMARITAL SEX

Deuteronomy 22:13-21 The sheets that were used their first night together were kept by her parents as a sign of her purity and virginity. When a young woman had sex for the first time, she would bleed because the hymen (a fold of mucous membrane partly closing the orifice of the vagina) would break. This precaution was taken because the consequences were severe – stoning to death. The concern for maintaining a girl’s virginity impacted her lifestyle and when she would marry.

Clear and emphatic emphasis is placed upon God’s will regarding premarital sex. His judgment is stated with the phrase – “she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot.” They stoned her to death to purge the evil from among Israel. Today, such punishment is not to be enforced because we are no longer under the curse of the law, nor does our society permit such action. However, the moral issue is still enacted since the new covenant places emphasis on the avoidance of fornication.

Matthew 5:27-33 In the English language of today, the word “adultery” refers exclusively to extramarital relationships; however, the way Jesus used the word seems to have included all sexual immorality. The Greek word translated adultery is *moicheuo*, which is used only 11 times in the New Testament. The English word “fornication” is used regarding all illicit sexual actions and has a broader definition than adultery. The Greek word translated as fornication is *porneia* and, as with the English counterpart, has a broader meaning than “adultery” and includes illicit sexual intercourse, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals, intercourse with relatives, etc.

Matthew 5:32 Jesus used the word “fornication” regarding a wife having extra martial relations, and in verse 28, he used “adultery” to mean what we would call fornication today.

Deuteronomy 22:13 “If he turns against her” implies he may find out that she is not a virgin and not turn against her. Today our society is so far removed from the holiness that God desires that the likelihood of a young girl maintaining her virginity has decreased significantly. However, based on this section, we can conclude that it may be very wise and loving for couples to be honest with each other regarding illicit sexual activity before getting married so as to avoid this problem after marriage.

How can Christians conclude that premarital sex is acceptable today? Does living under the age of grace imply that morality has decreased or that God is less concerned with morality? The teachings of Jesus do not require less, rather more.

EXTRA-MARITAL SEX

Deuteronomy 22:22 Jesus changed the consequences of adultery from capital punishment to divorce. Under the old covenant, death was a common punishment for the purpose of –“you shall purge the evil from among you.” Israel was an isolated community which was governed as a

theocracy with basically no outside influences. In Jesus' day, they were no longer isolated and were governed by the Romans with Roman law. Jesus brought in the new covenant which freed us from the curse of the Law. We must be careful not to eliminate the godly standards that make up the immutable laws of God which were in the old and are still a part of the new covenant. In the new covenant, we are told to avoid fornication because those who practice it will not inherit the Kingdom of God. Yet, the New Testament does not explain what fornication is because it is detailed in the Old Testament. Under the old covenant, they were required to offer animal sacrifices, carry out the feasts, worship at the temple, maintain strict dietary laws, etc. – all of which the New Testament explains is no longer applicable. By comparison of the new with the old, we can rightly determine what God wants us to understand and live. To eliminate everything in the old because we are now in the new is wrong and will lead to extreme interpretation of the Scripture and wrong behaviors. To embrace all that is in the old when Jesus and his apostles clearly changed things is also wrong and will lead to wrong behavior.

ENGAGEMENT

Deuteronomy 22:23-24 The engaged woman is considered the spouse of her engaged man; and therefore, fidelity is to be honored and is demanded.

RAPE

Deuteronomy 22:25-27 Rape is put on par with murder.

Deuteronomy 22:28 and 29 Three things are required: 1) pay her father, 2) marry her, and 3) can never divorce her.

FATHER'S WIFE

Deuteronomy 22:30 Not marry her, whether his own mother or a stepmother. "Uncover his father's skirt" means to lie with her whom his father had thrown his skirt over or married.

Genesis 9:20-ff The sin of Canaan

Leviticus 18:6-20 Sex with relatives is forbidden.

WHO MAY OR MAY NOT ENTER THE CONGREGATION

Deuteronomy 23:1- 6

(1) Eunuchs—"It was a very ancient practice for parents in the East by various arts to mutilate their children, with a view to training them for service in the houses of the great." JFB

(2) Bastards—Such an indelible stigma in both these instances was designed as a discouragement to practices that were consider disgraceful. (3) Ammonites and Moabites—without provocation they had combined to engage a soothsayer to curse the Israelites; and had further endeavored, by ensnaring them into the guilt and licentious abominations of idolatry, to seduce them from their allegiance to God.

HOLINESS IN THE ARMY

Deuteronomy 23:9-14

RUNAWAY SLAVES

Deuteronomy 23:15 and 16 What is implied is that the slave has been ill used by a cruel and tyrannical master and was in danger of losing his life or of being lamed by him. Under such cases, the slave was obliged to make his escape.

PROSTITUTES

Deuteronomy 23:17 and 18

CHARGING INTEREST

Deuteronomy 23:19 and 20; Exodus 22:25; Leviticus.25:35-37; Nehemiah 5:1-7; Luke 6:35

VOWS

Deuteronomy 23:21-23 Jesus gave additional insight regarding this subject in Matthew 5:33-37. He said not to make vows but rather to mean what you say.

WELFARE

Deuteronomy 23:24 and 25

LAW OF DIVORCE

Deuteronomy 24:1-4

FIRST YEAR OF MARRIAGE

Deuteronomy 24:5

SUNDRY LAWS

Deuteronomy 24:6-22