

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing

Part V: Specific Treaty Stipulations Of The Great King, Deuteronomy 12-26

M. Heeding God's Directives On Preserving Family Order, Deuteronomy 21:10-23

2. Heeding God's Directives On Rearing Boys For Edifying Family And Community Life (Deuteronomy 21:15-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) Last week, we noted the great need for men to treat women in responsibly honorable ways to stabilize marriages, families and society. We documented facts, showing that opposite this Biblical order, many men either treat women abusively or are squelched of their masculinity under the heavy load of "politically correct" feminism.

Thus, we learned from Deuteronomy 21:10-14 that men should not let their male drive be inhibited in yielding to feminism, but that they also direct that drive unto relating honorably and responsibly toward women as God directs.

(2) However, responsibly honorable men are just not born: a news report on an area talk radio show last week told of the high number of American males before age 23 who are arrested by the police, and in 38 years of pastoral work I have often heard women express dismay over the degree of "irresponsibility" they see in even "good" men!

Need: So we ask, "*With today's great problems related to the incorrect ways men often function, how are boys or EVEN GROWN MEN to be 'reared' to become responsibly honorable for the good of marital, family and society?*"

- I. **When Deuteronomy 21:15-23 was written, Israel faced exposure to the pagan cultures around her that utilized extreme male bullying to dominate others toward unedifying marital, family and community life.**
 - A. Jesus observed how the Gentile nations' rulers "lord it over, control" (*kurieuo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 459) their people in extreme domination, Luke 22:25.
 - B. Such domination might lead a king to kill the husband of an attractive woman he saw so he could take her into his harem, undermining the social structure, Gen. 12:10-12; H. C. Leupold, Exp. of Gen., 1974, v. I, p. 424.
- II. **Thus, Deuteronomy 21:15-23 taught Israel on the proper *REARING* of BOYS to produce MEN who *RESPONSIBLY, HONORABLY* EDIFIED Israel's MARRIAGES, FAMILIES and COMMUNITIES:**
 - A. First, God directed that boys be reared with **fairness** and **acceptance** in their families to counter their growing up to become harmful, embittered adult males who destructively abuse other people, Deuteronomy 21:15-17:
 1. Moses taught that if a man had two wives, and he loved one more than the other, and the least loved wife bore him his first son, in giving his inheritance to his sons, that oldest son was to get the double portion that was his due as the firstborn, Deut. 21:15-17a; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Deut. 21:17.
 2. Regardless how the father emotionally felt about this firstborn son of his less-loved wife, that son was the "first sign of his father's strength," so he was *impartially* to receive his **due** inheritance, Deut. 21:17b NIV.
 - B. Second, God directed that boys be reared to be **responsibly fully obedient** to **proper authority at the threat of death** to avoid their later growing up to harm marriage, family and community life, Deuteronomy 21:18-21:
 1. If a man had a "stubborn and rebellious" (KJV, NIV, ESV) son who would not obey father or mother even if they disciplined him (Deut. 21:18), in fairness to the son, *both* parents (cf. Deut. 19:15) were to lay hold of that son and bring him to the city elders who sat to judge in the city gate, Deuteronomy 21:19.
 2. There, *both* parents were to charge their son with stubbornness and rebellion that had also led to his irresponsible living in indulging in substance abuse (gluttony and drunkenness), Deuteronomy 21:20.
 3. Upon finding him guilty, **all the men of his city** were to execute the son by stoning, leading everyone else in the nation to fear not being responsibly obedient to proper authority figures, Deut. 21:21. Rebellion against parental authority leads to rebellion against community authority and even to God's authority, so the death penalty in such a case was necessary to protect the **nation**, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 301.
 - C. Third, God directed that even criminals whose bodies were desecrated by hanging after death were to have their bodies buried the day of their execution, for they bore God's image. This would **teach** all males of their **value** to **God** as existing in His image, **encouraging them to overcome failure and mature**, Deut. 21:22-23:
 1. If a man was executed and his body hung on a tree as cursed, he had to be buried that day, Deut 21:22- 23:
 - a. The word for "man" in Deuteronomy 21:22a is **not** the generic Hebrew word '*adam*', but renders the word '*ish*' (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 296) and means "a man as contrasted with a woman . . . a great and mighty man as opposed to a poor and lowly one," R. B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the O. T., 1973, p. 49.
 - b. Thus, the Deuteronomy 21:22-23 directive **continues** the Deuteronomy 21:1-21 theme about males.

2. Well, the male criminal, as bad as he was, nevertheless bore the image of God as a human being (Genesis 1:27), so to avoid angering God at the extensive defamation of the body that bore God's image, the body of even the most heinous male criminal was buried the same day of the criminal's execution, Deut. 21:23c.
3. This quick, respectful burial of even a disgraced, executed male would teach onlooking males, boys and men alike, that regardless how bad they thought they were, they still had great value as existing in God's image, so there was always room for them to repent of sin and mature into responsibly honorable men!

III. In reality, many grown men have NOT been either properly or fully reared. However, that state can be corrected: if a man trusts in Christ and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (John 3:16; Romans 8:9b), that Holy Spirit acts as a PARENT so the man is not left as an "orphan" (John 14:17-18 ESV, NIV). Thus, if he RELIES on the Holy Spirit to HEED Scripture (Galatians 5:16; 1 Peter 2:1-2), GOD will PARENT him to MATURE him into responsible, honorable manhood in his marriage, home, church and society!

Lesson: God directed that the rearing of responsible, honorable men who would be constructive in their marriages, families and society involved (1) parents who treated them fairly and accepted them in the family, (2) parents who required them responsibly to obey proper authority and (3) parents and others who directed them to see themselves as valuable in God's image so they might not give up maturing due to temporary failure, but repent and "rebound" to mature. (4) As a grown man who was NOT reared well, heeding God's "parenting" will properly mature him.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ for salvation from sin and indwelling by the behavior controlling Holy Spirit, John 3:16 with Romans 8:3-4. (2) As PARENTS, may we then rear our sons by (a) fairly, impartially accepting them as individuals in our families, (b) by requiring full, responsible obedience to proper authority and (c) teaching them their value as bearing God's image for encouragement to rebound from sin unto maturity. (3) If a grown man sees he is immature due to partial or errant rearing, may he rely on God to heed Scripture to mature.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

(1) My Dad reared his children, his three sons, to obey him without question. Disobedience was not an option. Then, he privately told our Mom that to develop responsibility in us, he would assign us tasks that he knew were a bit above our abilities to achieve so as to "toughen" us as "men" for the "harsh" world we would face in our adult lives!

An example of this training occurred one late afternoon while I was in high school and living on a ranch with our family near Durham, California. Dad drove me out to a field he had just leased, one that consisted of patches of alfalfa hay that grew between the trees of a young English walnut orchard. He had me get up onto the tractor seat and said, "Don, I could afford just enough fertilizer to fill the spreader hopper behind the tractor, and the fertilizer is to be spread only on the alfalfa patches. If you let some of it fall on the weeds instead of the patches, you may run out of fertilizer and not feed all the alfalfa. If that occurs, it will hurt my income and our family's livelihood, so you need to be careful with this! I also need you to finish this job by nightfall!" Then he then got in his pickup and drove away!

I felt overwhelmed! Our family livelihood required I do this job right and quickly, but I was too young even to have a car license! However, Dad required obedience, so I started up the tractor and began to spread the fertilizer, opening and closing the hopper feed with one hand behind me to work the trigger rope while the other hand steered the tractor, all while jerking my head back and forth to do the job without running into trees at the side or into fences at the end of the orchard and as darkness began to fall, making the job harder! When the last patch was done, I got down from the tractor to open the hopper lid and found it was empty! I didn't know if the fertilizer had covered all the patches since it was so dark I couldn't even see the fertilizer drops. For that matter, I could hardly see the alfalfa patches. All I could do was drive the equipment back to the ranch and hope Dad would later approve of my work.

The alfalfa grew well, and not one part of any weed patch grew up -- there had been just enough fertilizer spread, and all of it went onto the alfalfa! Dad then gave me one of his priceless compliments, saying, "Don, you did a perfect job with the spreader!" ***That motivated me to TRY to be courageously responsible THROUGHOUT life!***

(2) An application of Dad's training to adult men who see they need to "finish being reared," or to associates of such men: beyond (a) knowing Christ as Savior, to mature, an "unfinished" adult man must (b) **revere God** so as to **believe and obey His Word unconditionally!** (c) Then, when the "parenting" Holy Spirit (John 14:15-18) lets severe trials arise in that man's life, he must ((i)) rely by faith on the Lord's spiritual power (Gal. 5:16) to ((ii)) "**attack**" the trial "**head on**" in **courageous responsibility**, to do **exactly** what **God demands** that he do in the trial! (d) This level of honorable, responsible commitment is then to be applied in all realms of life for the rest of that man's life!

May we put our trust in Christ and rely on the Holy Spirit's ministry rightly to rear our sons for God.