Answers

to

Questions

on

Deuteronomy 25:1-19

1. Coffman wrote that Deuteronomy 25 consists of what six paragraphs? A) Limiting corporal punishment as a legal penalty (verses 1-3), B) Muzzling the ox on the threshing floor (verse 4); C) Rules regarding Levirate marriage (verses 5-10); D) A special law regarding wrestling (verses 11-12); E) Law concerning crooked weight and measures) verses 13-16); F) God’s order calling for the extermination of the Amalekites (verses 17-19).

2. The Pulpit Commentary views the material in chapter 25 as relating to what three matters of law? A) Laws concerning corporal punishment; B) Levirate marriages; C) Weights and measures.
3. Where was a person to go for justice when involved in a controversy? **He was to go to court for judgment.**

4. What two things were judges to decide in each case? **They were to determine who was guilty and the extent to which he was to be flogged.**

5. The **judges** were to **exonerate** the **innocent**, but **condemn** the **guilty**.

6. The **integrity** of the **judicial system**, its **ability** to **rightly determine guilt** and to **assign just punishment** are here assumed. (See The Pulpit Commentary.)

7. Corporal punishment in the form of flogging was one of the punishments that could be ordered. During the administration of
this flogging, how was the guilty person to be positioned? How many lashes were to be administered? Who was to witness the punishment? **The guilty party was to lie down and receive no more than forty (40) lashes. The punishment was to be administered in the presence of the judge.**

8. **Punishment** for **guilty persons** was **mandated**, but **brutality, excess**, and **injustice** were **strictly forbidden**.

9. What were the purposes of flogging? Was flogging successful in achieving these goals? **The purpose was to discourage criminal behavior and punish those who broke the law. Limitations on the number of lashes that could be administered was a safeguard against excessive, brutal punishment. There is no record as to its effectiveness in preventing crime.**

10. The most lashes that could be ordered were **forty (40)**. How were the whips constructed? How were the lashes to be counted? **The whip could be a stick with thorns or a leather whip with hard knots and/or bone fragments**
woven into it. If the whip had three tales, each stroke counted for three lashes.

11. How forcefully were the lashes to be administered? How often could a person guilty of a multiple series of offenses be flogged? How could a judge make these decisions? It is not stated how forcefully the blows must be administered or how often a guilty person could be flogged.

12. How did Israel’s laws regarding flogging compare or contrast with the practices of other nations of the time? Israel’s laws for flogging were less brutal than what was practiced by other nations at that time.

13. During the administration of each flogging tradition says what was said or read? Deuteronomy 28:58-59, “If you refuse to obey all the words of this law, the things written in this
scroll, and refuse to fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God. 59 then the Lord will increase your punishments and those of your descendants—great and long-lasting afflictions and severe, enduring illnesses. (NET) and Psalm 78:38, Yet he is compassionate. He forgives sin and does not destroy. He often holds back his anger, and does not stir up his fury. (NET)

14. Hamilton wrote that punishment for crimes and social infractions protected the righteousness of the nation and involved flogging, mutilation, fines, death, servitude, ridicule and humiliation.

15. Give Biblical examples of the use of the number forty (40). Moses fasted and prayed for forty days on two occasions – Deuteronomy 9:9, 18. Elijah and Jesus each fasted forty days – 1 Kings 19:8; Matthew 4:2. Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Numbers 14:33-34. Egyptians was afflicted forty years for their cruelty to Israel - Ezekiel 29:11-13. It rained forty days and forty nights in Noah’s day - Genesis 7:12. Israeliite spies were in the land of Canaan forty days - Numbers 13:25; Goliath taunted King Saul’s army forty days - 2 Samuel 17:16.
16. Animals as well as people were to be treated with consideration.

17. Explain how oxen were used to thresh grain. During the threshing of grain, what was forbidden? Why was this forbidden? Oxen pulled a wooden sledge over the grain to separate it from the straw and chaff. Muzzling the ox was forbidden which would have prevented it from eating as it was working. Compassion was to be shown to animals as well as fellow humans. This is comparable to leaving gleanings for widows and orphans.

18. What far reaching applications can be made of this principle? Compassion is to be shown to all who toil. The one who works deserves payment in return for his efforts. As Paul stated, “The one plowing and threshing ought to work in hope of enjoying the harvest.”
19. If a man died without a son/child, what were the deceased man’s brother’s responsibilities to his brother’s widow? **The brother was to take the widow as a wife and give her a son to perpetuate the family name.**

20. What is Levirate marriage? What purposes was it designed to serve? **If a woman was widowed and left without a male heir, the brother of the deceased was required to marry her and provide a son. The Levirate marriage protected the widow and maintained the name and memory of the deceased brother.**

21. What does “live together” mean as used in verse 5? **The brothers were living in the same household or on the same family land. Another view states it could be defined as being in the same house, community or place.**
22. Why would a brother not be willing to discharge his Levirate responsibilities? Hall suggested . . . 1) **He may not like her.** 2) **He couldn't afford another wife.** 3) **Another wife in the household would cause dissension.** 4) **His family would have a larger part of the family estate if his brother remained without a male heir.**

23. What were the penalties for a man’s refusal to discharge his Levirate duties? **Failure to discharge these duties resulted in public disgrace.** In front of the elders the sister-in-law would remove the brother-in-law’s sandal and spit in his face bringing great shame on him and his immediate family.

24. Under Levirate provisions, the **first born son** to the widow would bear the **name** of the **dead brother**, and keep his **name** from being **blotted out** of **Israel**, a thing to be avoided if at all possible.
25. How did Matthew 22:23-28 relate to Levirate marriage? These marriages were all in accordance to the Levirate law. Jesus pointed out the error of the Sadducee’s reasoning in verses 29-30. The Levirate marriage was designed to provide the widow with protection and a male heir. The Sadducees were questioning spiritual existence in heaven where no marriage exists.

26. What legal recourse was open to the widow who had been wronged by her husband’s brother in regard to Levirate marriage? What redress of her grievance did she have? The widow could take her brother-in-law to court before the city elders and charge him with failure to fulfill his duty under the principle of Levirate marriage.

27. The court elders were to investigate the situation thoroughly and, if the brother-in-law persisted in refusing to marry his brother’s widow, appropriate legal action would be taken.
28. What was the significance of the removal of the offender’s shoe? *The removal of a sandal was a sign of disgrace that affected the whole family.* “His family name will be referred to . . . as “The family of the one whose sandal has been removed.” To have to walk barefooted was a sign of shame and embarrassment.

29. Spitting in a person’s face was a great insult. What does the Bible say about spitting in a person’s face? *Every Biblical reference to spitting on a person portrays it as an ultimate insult.* See Numbers 12:14; Job 30:20; Isaiah 50:6, Matthew 26:67; 27:30.

30. How long did the disgrace associated with the refusal to discharge one’s Levirate obligations last? To what extent and for how long was the man’s wife and family to share in this disgrace? *Failure to comply with the Levirate marriage requirements resulted in permanent shame and disgrace for the recalcitrant brother-in-law and his wife and family. His name and his family’s name were to be forever known as “the family of the one who’s sandal was removed.”*
31. **God** has **great concern** for the **family** and **justice** for **widows**.

32. If two men got into a fist fight, what should a good wife do to help her husband? **It was acceptable for a wife to come to the aid of her husband; i.e., his life was in jeopardy, but she must not injure the assailant’s genitalia.**

33. Exactly what was the wife not to do? **The wife was not allowed to injure the genitalia of the adversary. To impair a man’s ability to procreate was against God’s will.**

34. To what punishment was a wife who did this forbidden thing subject? **Her hand was to be amputated.**
35. What were the penalties resulting from infliction of injuries in physical altercations? **The penalty for fighting was payment to the injured party for loss of time and recovery.** The penalty for striking a pregnant woman resulting in premature birth without injury was to be determined by the husband and the court. In cases of serious injury the penalty was to be the same as that suffered by the victim; i.e., an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, etc. (Exodus 21)  

36. What is the “lex talionis”? What does it say? What was the intention of this law? **Lex Talionis is the law of retaliation which established a legal code that fit the severity of the punishment to the crime.** It was designed to eliminate revenge and excessive cruelty from the punishment of crimes.
37. What was Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:29-30, 38-42? Did Jesus approve of mutilation? Jesus was teaching us to remove the temptation to sin from our lives by using hyperbole to shock us to make his point and get us to think about his statement that this is how serious sin is. He was not condoning self-mutilation.

38. What was and is God’s attitude toward those who are dishonest in business? What was and is God’s attitude toward cheaters in general? Dishonesty and cheating are sins in the eyes of God and break the eighth and tenth commandments. Cheating widows and orphans is nothing more than a sophisticated form of oppressing them and is an offense against God.

39. How were weights, both heavy and light, and measuring containers, both large and small, used dishonestly in trading? A dishonest merchant would use heavier weights and larger measures when buying and the lighter weights and smaller measures when selling.
40. The **world** to this **day** is **full** of **cheaters**, **selfish** people, **coveters** who have **no concern** for **fairness** or others’ **welfare**.

41. How would the honest of Israel be blessed? How would the dishonest of Israel be punished? Who guaranteed that this would for sure be the case? **God told the Israelites that honesty in their lives would guarantee them long and prosperous lives in the promised land and conversely dishonesty would result in a life void of blessings and loss of the promised land.**

42. **Anyone** who **acts dishonestly** in these ways is **abhorrent** to the **Lord your God**.

43. What does Deuteronomy say about dishonesty being like idolatry? In what ways is this true? **Covetousness promotes dishonesty as the means to acquire that which others possess. It can become the focus of a person’s thoughts pushing aside obedience to God, dwelling on sin.** Jesus
said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:21.

44. Dishonesty in commerce would be especially oppressive to the poor, a thing God hated.

45. How could the total annihilation of the Amalekites be justified if at all? It was God’s plan to annihilate the Amalekites in revenge for the evil ways they had treated the Israelites. They did not fear God and had repeatedly attempted to destroy the Israelites, so for that sin they were to be eliminated from the face of the earth. Their destruction was so complete that no archaeological records of them have been found.

46. How were the Amalekites and Israelites related? The Amalekites descended from Esau, Jacob’s twin brother. Amalek was the grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:12) fathered by Eliphaz, son of Esau.
47. Did Israel ever totally destroy the Amalekites? If so, cite the encounters that led to Amalek’s destruction. 

1 Samuel 15:2-3 records that God instructed Saul to attack and destroy the Amalekites. Saul disobeyed God and did not completely destroy them. Later during the reign of Hezekiah the remaining Amalekites were destroyed by Simeon. (1 Chronicles 4:43)

48. Is it ever right for Christians to harbor hostility and determinations to take vengeance on their enemies? Why or why not? Today we live under a different code of conduct given to us by Christ Jesus. We are to adhere to a higher standard than an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. As we are forgiven our sins by a loving God so are we to forgive those who sin against us.

49. The Amalekites were unafraid of God. Tell of people you have known who were unafraid of God? What will happen to people who do not fear God and who do not keep his
If you do not obey the commandments of God you will miss the joy of God’s blessings and the peace that the knowledge of your salvation brings to you. Without Him, you are setting yourself up for an eternal life devoid of mercy.

50. List important issues addressed in Deuteronomy 25. A) Courts were to dispense justice fairly. B) All of God’s creation was to be treated with respect. C) Family responsibilities were to be taken seriously.