

# The Book of Deuteronomy

## Lessons from the Second Address of Moses Part IV

Text: Deuteronomy 19 – 26

- I. 19:14 – “Thou Shalt Not Remove Thy Neighbor’s Landmark”
  - A. Landmarks were used to designate property lines and limits.
    - 1. Usually a rock or pile of rocks on the corners.
    - 2. There were no fences, etc.
  - B. To move or to remove a landmark was to rob a neighbor of what was rightfully his.
    - 1. Stealing
    - 2. Endangers his livelihood
    - 3. Affects the inheritance given by God
  - C. The landmarks were set by those “of old time” – thus, old or ancient landmarks.
    - 1. These would be set by the decree of God when they came into the land.
    - 2. The generation that inherited the land would mark out the borders.
    - 3. Future generations were to honor those boundaries.
  - D. 27:17 – There was a curse upon one who would remove a neighbor’s landmark.
  - E. Job 24:1-4 – Those who did this were viewed as wicked and low.
  - F. Proverbs 22:28; 23:10 – God will deal with those who disrespect His boundaries.
  - G. Hosea 5:10 – An example of God’s judgment upon such people.
  - H. This teaches an important spiritual principle: Do not tamper with God’s Law!
    - 1. 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thes. 2:15 – Divine traditions
    - 2. 2 John 9-11 – Divine boundaries
    - 3. Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19
  - I. Some Ancient Landmarks
    - 1. Book, chapter, verse preaching
    - 2. True worship (Jn. 4:24)
    - 3. Church organization
    - 4. Male leadership
    - 5. Modest dress (1 Tim. 2:9-10)
    - 6. Pure language (Eph. 5:1-7)
  - J. Too many live like the time of the Judges – doing what is right in one’s own eyes.
  - K. May we never be guilty of removing God’s ancient landmarks!

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## II. 24:1-4 – A Bill of Divorce

### Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (ESV)

1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house,  
2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife,  
3 and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife,  
4 then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

- A. This passage is not a command nor an approval; rather, it is a regulation of sinful behavior (cf. 21:15-17; Exo. 22:1; Lev. 6:1-5; etc.).
- B. The word for 'uncleanness' means, "Nakedness; shameful exposure; indecency, or improper behavior."
- C. There were several schools of thought among the Jews as to the meaning of this verse:
  - 1. Rabbi Shammai: "...he has found unchastity in her."
  - 2. Rabbi Hillel: "He may divorce her even if she spoiled a dish for him...."
  - 3. Rabbi Akiba: If he finds another fairer than her, he may divorce her.
- D. The purpose of the passage is to emphasize that the divorced woman may not be taken back by her husband for she had been defiled (cf. Lev. 18:20; Jer. 3:8).
  - 1. It was a legislation of divorce practices, not an endorsement of them.
  - 2. It was meant to discourage divorce.
  - 3. It was designed to protect the divorced woman.
- E. Remember, there were laws and strict punishments that dealt with sexual immorality in a marriage (cf. Deut. 22:13-22).
- F. It is this passage that is referred to by the Pharisees in Matthew 19:1-12.
- G. Jesus emphasized several important things in His discussion involving this passage.
  - 1. First, it was not lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause.
    - a. He referred the Pharisees back to Genesis 1 – 2.
    - b. This passage was also given by God and written by Moses.
    - c. There could be no contradiction between the two.
    - d. God intended for marriage to last for a lifetime.
  - 2. Second, Moses did not command people to get a divorce.
    - a. Instead, he allowed a writing of divorcement – to regulate their activity.
    - b. But, even this was because of the hardness of their hearts – the cruelty of men toward their wives.
    - c. It was not because God desired divorce.
  - 3. Finally, Jesus stated God's law on divorce – marriage is a lifetime commitment and the only exception for divorce is fornication.
- H. This teaching is not popular in the world nor always easy to obey; but, it is the truth of Scripture.