

Bethany Bible Study & Discussion



Deuteronomy Part 23 (chapter 21) KJV

6.28.2023

CHAPTER 21

Unsolved Murder, Respect for Captive Woman, Right of Firstborn, Prodigal son, Cursed death on Tree

How to atone for blood shed in the land in unsolved murder cases? (1-9)

What are the guidelines for treating a desirable captive woman? (10-14)

Does first-born son lose his privileges if father remarries and has more children? (15-17)

How to respond to rebellious sons? (18-21)

What is the significance of executed criminal hung on a tree? (22-23)



Atoning for unsolved murder (1-9)

Unsolved Murder & Atonement for blood shed in the land

If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him:

² Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:

³ And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;⁴ And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:⁵ And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried:⁶ And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley:

⁷ And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.⁸ Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

⁹ So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the Lord.

Unsolved Murder

If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him (1)

Ch.19 – Murderer known (cases of intentional or accidental murder)

Ch.21 – Murderer unknown

Since murderer is unknown, how to atone for the blood?
(bloodshed caused by murder pollutes the land)

Numbers 35:33

So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

In case of murder, land cleansed by blood

Atoning for unsolved murder

Responsibility given to elders and priests closest to the city (2).

Priests settle the case acting as judges (Deuteronomy 17:8-11)

Heifer (young calf that has not been used in the land) (3)

brought to an uncultivated land in the valley (4)

and neck broken (4)

Elders wash their hands over the beheaded heifer (6)

What does washing of hands signify?

Washing of hands

Washing of hands symbolizes innocence

Psalms 26:6

I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord:

Mathew 27:24

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person:

Atoning for unsolved murder: Prayer & Result

Washing of hands is accompanied by **Prayer**

Confession (our hands have not shed blood nor been a witness, 7)

Have mercy and forgive Israel of the shed blood (8)

Result:

Forgiveness to the community (8)

Guilt of blood shed in the land taken away (9)

Murderer is still guilty of murder

What if true murderer is found later? He will be killed.

One day all mysteries will be solved ... Murderer will face final judgement at the great white throne (Revelation 20:11-15)



Atonement in the Old and New Testament

Atonement

To Atonement means to:

“cover”

or “cancel” the sin,

or write off the “consequences” of sin



Atonement: Old Testament

To Atone means to “cover” or “cancel” the sin, or write off the “consequences” of sin

Old Testament: Path to Atonement (blood sacrifice)

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul

Hebrews 10:4 It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.

OT SACRIFICES ... Sins covered but not taken away

Atonement: New Testament

New Testament: Path to Atonement (blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross)

... Jesus became the substitute for our sins

... our sins are covered and we are reconciled to God

Romans 5:16

... we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

I Peter 3:18

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

NT: Sin Covered + Sinner Reconciled + Sins taken away with one sacrifice

The Path to Holiness ... is through Repentance & Confession

Today we don't offer sacrifice of animals, we Repent & CONFESS

REPENT – Turn back on Sin, and Turn to God

I JOHN 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Sin must be dealt with (a) Immediately, and (b) Completely

Unconfessed sin leads to burden of guilt, risk of more sins, and loss of communion with the Lord. **Confessed sin** leads to freedom

Psalms 32:1-4 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ²Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. ³When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. ⁴For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer

The background features a complex, abstract design with overlapping organic shapes in shades of teal, olive green, and grey. These shapes are filled with various patterns: some have small white dots, others have white dashes, and some have white vertical lines. The overall effect is a textured, layered composition.

Treatment of Captive Women (10-14)

Desiring a Captive Women

¹⁰ When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

¹¹ And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

¹² Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;

¹³ And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

¹⁴ And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.

Captive Woman

War (not the war against 7 nations occupying Canaan). These wars could have been provoked by enemies or initiated by Israelites.

War Won, Enemies taken captive (10)

How to respond to a beautiful captive woman that a man may desire?

Treatment of captive Woman

Treat the captive woman with respect

Desire should culminate in marriage and not for satisfying temporary lust & passion

Time given for preparation and final decision for marriage

- Bring her home (12)
- Woman shaves her head (mourning?, Job 1:20) and trim her nails (12)
- Woman takes off her garment of captivity (13)
- Woman mourns for her parents one month (13) (Deuteronomy 32:8, Moses death mourned for a month)
- **After a month, set her free or marry her**
- She cannot be sold or kept as a slave

Marrying captive women

Ideally, Israelites should not enter into intimate relationships with any pagan women

But God knew Israelites will not obey the law of separation. Even Solomon, the wisest man, did not honor the law of separation.



**Rights of first-born son
(15-17)**

Preserving Rights of First-born in Polygamy cases

¹⁵ If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated:

¹⁶ Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn:

¹⁷ But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.

Preserving the right of first- born

Scenario: Man with 2 wives (one he loves, one he hates)

The rights of first-born cannot be altered, even if the first-born was from a wife that he does not love

First born son birthright included a double portion of property (17) and also given leadership role in the family (when father dies)

Firstborn: Opener of womb, Sanctified to the Lord (Exodus 13:2, 22:29)

First-born

First born receives a double portion (17)

Some exceptions seen: Isaac over Ishmael, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob

GENESIS 25:5-8

And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. ⁶ But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country. ⁷ And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. ⁸ Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people

Firstborn titles given to Christ ... "firstborn of every creature" (Colossians 1:15)

"first begotten into the world" (Hebrews 1:6)

"first born among brethren (Romans 8:29)

"first begotten from dead" (Revelation 1:5)

One of the titles given to Israel ... "firstborn" (Exodus 4:22)



Dealing with Rebellious son (18-21)

Rebellious Son

¹⁸ If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:

¹⁹ Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;

²⁰ And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.

²¹ And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

Dealing with Rebellious (disobedient) Son

Stubborn and rebellion son, disobedient to parents

A glutton and a drunkard son

How to respond?

#1. Chasten and discipline in love (Psalms 94:12, Hebrews 12:6)

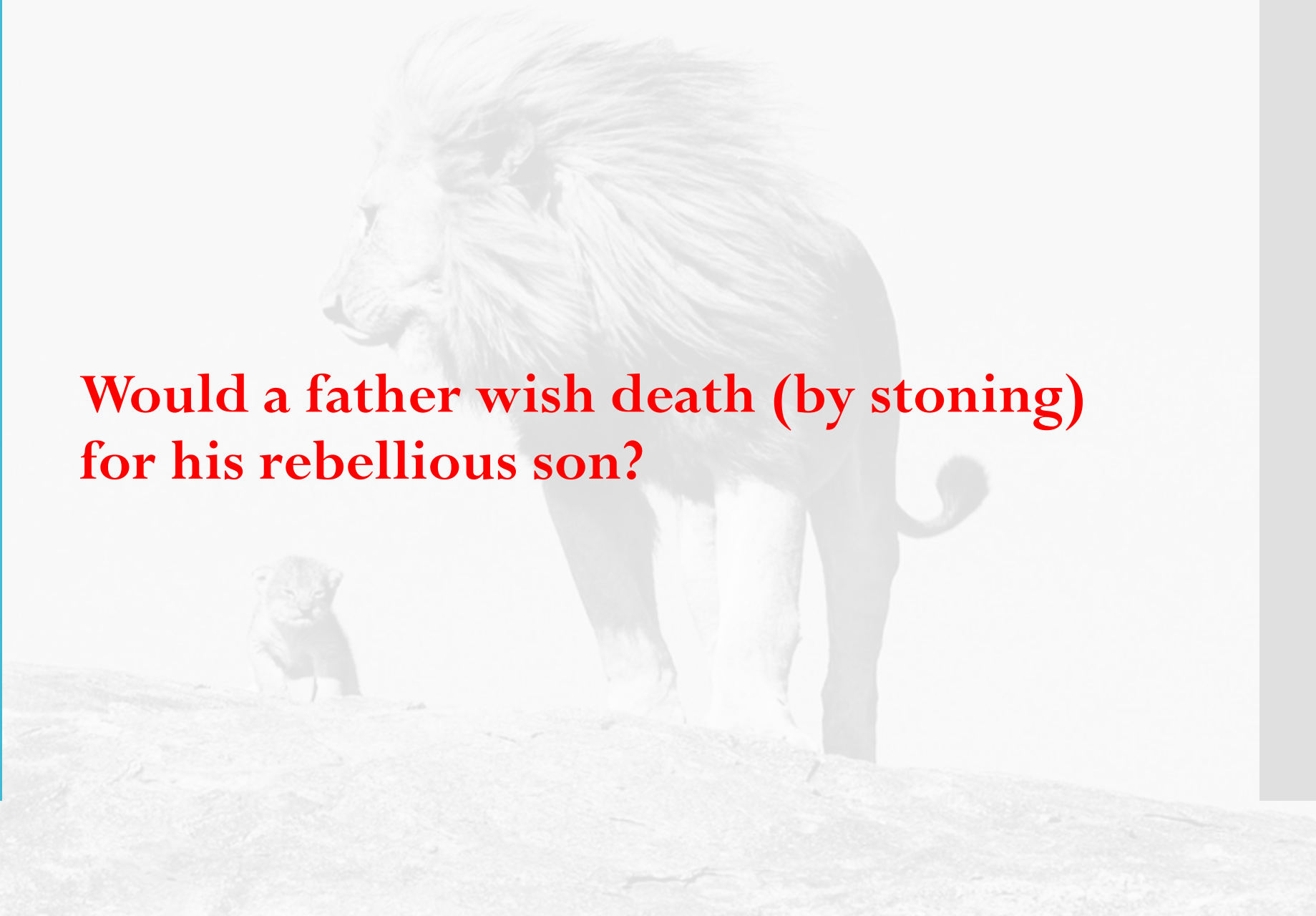
#2. If #1 does not work, bring to attention of elders

If found guilty of rebellion, stone to death

Extreme punishment seen as a deterrent to other children

Rebellious Son

Would a father wish death (by stoning) for his rebellious son?



Rebellious Sons

Would a father wish death?

Prodigal son's father was waiting ... son received back by his father when he returned home with a repentant heart.

Luke 15:20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

Our heavenly father is also waiting ... if we are living in sin, we must take the first step of **repenting and returning**.

David mourned for his rebellious son (II Samuel 18:33)... And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son

(dead) criminal hung
on a tree (22-23)

Hung on a tree

²² And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree:

²³ His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Criminal hung on a tree

Criminal guilty of death is hung on a tree (after being put to death)

- Hung on a tree seen as public humiliation and deterrence to others
- Body removed in the evening, and then buried (not left overnight)

Deuteronomy 21: 22 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: ²³ His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Joshua 8:29 And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

Humanity redeemed at the cursed Tree through Jesus Christ

CHRIST HUNG & DIED ON THE CROSS

ACTS 10:39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

I Peter 2: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, **Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:**

II Corinthians 5:21 Christ became sin for us

RISEN CHRIST

Jesus was buried at the end of the day but rose again the third day conquering death and sin

ACTS 5: 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

I Corinthians 15:55 O death, where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory

Ten commandments
applied
in chapter 21?

**Ten
commandments
applied
in chapter 21?**

Honor thy father and thy mother

Thou shalt not kill

Thou shalt not commit adultery

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife

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