

Deuteronomy 21

JPS [\[Online\]](#)

Atonement for an Unsolved Murder

1If 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 smitten 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 nearest unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take a heifer of the herd, 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 may neither be plowed nor sown, and shall break 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 according to their word shall every controversy and every stroke be. **6**And all the elders of that city, who are nearest unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley. **7**And they shall speak and say: 'Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. **8**Forgive, O LORD, Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of Thy people Israel.' And the blood shall be forgiven them. **9**So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from the midst of thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD.

Marrying a Captive Woman

10When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God delivereth them into thy hands, and thou carriest them away captive, **11**and seest among the captives a woman of goodly form, and thou hast a desire unto her, and wouldest take her to thee to wife; **12**then thou shalt bring her home to thy 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 thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month; and after that thou mayest 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 deal with her as a slave, because thou hast humbled her.

Inheritance Rights of the Firstborn

15If a man have two wives, the one beloved, and the other hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be hers that was hated; **16**then it shall be, in the day that he causeth his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved the first-born before the son of the hated, who is the first-born; **17**but he shall acknowledge the first-born, the son of the hated, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath; for he is the first-fruits of his strength, the right of the first-born is his.

A Rebellious Son

[\(Luke 15:11–32\)](#)

18If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, that will not hearken to the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and though they chasten 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 doth not hearken to 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 away the evil from the midst of thee; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

Cursed Is Anyone Hung on a Tree

22And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he 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 surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is a reproach unto God; that thou defile not thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.