

Text: Dt 22.1-30

THEOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY¹

1. **Consider:** a review of God’s faithfulness (1.6–4.40)
2. **Covenant:** an exposition of the law (5–26)

5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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3. **Commence:** preparations for renewing the covenant (27.1–28.68)
4. **Commit:** an exhortation to obedience (29.2–30.20)

Deuteronomy 22

The first section of the chapter is challenging to understand. The NAU assigns seven brief paragraphs from v. 5-12. Commentaries try to create some kind of logical order, but one verse or another sticks out as different from the rest. I found this summary in Keil & Delitzsch that seemed to state it best:

“Going deeper and deeper into the manifold relations of the national life, Moses first of all explains in vv. 1–12 the attitude of an Israelite, on the one hand, towards a neighbour; and, on the other hand, towards the natural classification and arrangement of things, and shows how love should rule in the midst of all these relations. The different relations brought under consideration are selected rather by way of examples, and therefore follow one another without any link of connection, for the purpose of exhibiting the truth in certain concrete cases, and showing how the covenant people were to hold all the arrangement of God sacred, whether in nature or in social life.”²

Themes from 1-12:

1. Good neighbourliness, 1-4, and 8
2. Orderliness and proper distinctions: 5, 9, 10, 11
3. Good husbandry, 6-7, 10
4. Good conscience before God, 12

¹ Adapted from an outline in Lawrence O Richards, *The Bible Readers Companion*, electronic ed. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 117.

² Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, trans. James Martin, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), 409.

A few quotes on key passages:

On v. 4: “Love for one’s neighbor alone should dictate that the fallen creature be assisted, but in the context here the focus is on the animal’s well-being. If allowed to remain in that condition, it could well have suffered loss of life.”³

On v. 5: “the divine distinction of the sexes, which was kept sacred in civil life by the clothing peculiar to each sex, was to be not less but even more sacredly observed. *‘There shall not be man’s things upon a woman, and a man shall not put on a woman’s clothes.’* אָבִי does not signify clothing merely, nor arms only, but includes every kind of domestic and other utensils (as in Ex. 22:6; Lev. 11:32; 13:49). The immediate design of this prohibition was not to prevent licentiousness, or to oppose idolatrous practices (the proofs which *Spencer* has adduced of the existence of such usages among heathen nations are very far-fetched); but to maintain the sanctity of that distinction of the sexes which was established by the creation of man and woman, and in relation to which Israel was not to sin.”⁴

On vv. 9-11: “The reason for these prohibitions against planting **two kinds of seed** in a field, yoking together **an ox and a donkey** for plowing, and weaving **wool and linen ... together** is uncertain. They may have had a symbolic function in teaching the Israelites something about the created order. Or the mixtures mentioned in these verses may reflect certain pagan cultic practices.”⁵

Theme of 13-30: Laws concerning morality

Laws concerning bridal purity:

What to do when the charge is false (13-19)

What to do when the charge is true (20-21)

Laws concerning extra-marital relations

With a married woman (22)

With an unmarried woman in the city (23-24)

With an unmarried woman in the country (25-27)

With a forced relationship (28-29)

Against incest (30)

³ Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, v. 4 (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 297.

⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 3:409.

⁵ Jack S. Deere, “Deuteronomy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 302.

“Higher and still holier than the order of nature stands the moral order of marriage, upon which the well-being not only of domestic life, but also of the civil commonwealth of nations, depends. Marriage must be founded upon fidelity and chastity on the part of those who are married. To foster this, and secure it against outbreaks of malice and evil lust, was the design and object of the laws which follow.”⁶

“As for the structure of the pericope, it follows an order of ascending or increasing degree of impropriety. There first is a section dealing with the undertaking and dissolving of marriage (vv. 13–21), followed by statutes concerning improper sexual relations with a married woman (v. 22), one who is betrothed (vv. 23–27), and a virgin who is neither married nor betrothed (vv. 28–29). The unit closes with a prohibition against marrying one’s stepmother (v. 30). The degree of seriousness lies not always in the deeds themselves but to some extent in the amount of complicity by the offended parties.”⁷

“God designed these laws to stress the importance of monogamy and faithfulness to one’s spouse in a polygamous culture. ... God’s people need to keep sex in its proper place in relation to marriage (cf. Heb. 13:4). The focus of this entire chapter is how to express love properly, namely, with God’s blessing.”⁸

⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 3:410.

⁷ Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 302.

⁸ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 22.13.