

## Out of Bounds

### I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide#2 Happy 31st to Kel
- B. Slide#3 **Family night** next Wednesday: Free dinner will be served at 6pm. **Volunteers are needed.**
  1. Pulled pork, pulled chicken, as a sandwich, or in a taco.
  2. If you would like to **help** please see Larry or Tony in info booth after study.

### II. Slide#4 **Intro: Out of Bounds**

- A. What are all these laws for? Is God a Type of Killjoy?
- B. **Oswald Chambers** said that the root of all sin is the suspicion that God is not good. Isn't it true that somehow we've got a generation of kids - and perhaps their parents as well - who think that God is not good, that sin is attractive, and that God is a type of killjoy?
- C. To which Josh McDowell answered, I think that's true. And that's why, in my relationship with my own children, I have hammered home the idea that within every **negative** precept - every *Thou shalt not* - there are always 2 **positive** principles.
  1. **One**, God gives them to **protect** us. **And second**, He gives them to **provide**.
  2. He's **not** a cosmic killjoy who wants to take the fun out of life.
    - a) There is a story of a high school **guy** who wanted to go swimming with his **girlfriend** at midnight. The neighbors down the block had a pool, and he knew it. So they ran down there and scaled the fence even though there were **No Trespassing** and **Do Not Enter** signs. Just as he hit the diving board, the girl yelled, but it was too late. There was only a foot of water in the pool. He broke his neck, and he's in therapy to this day. He didn't realize that the signs on the fence - the **precepts** - would have **protected** him.<sup>1</sup>
  3. **Remember**, Laws are for **our protection** and **our provision**.
- D. Slide#5 **Kite**: Once on a time a paper kite - Was mounted to a wondrous height,  
Where, giddy with its elevation, - It thus express'd self-admiration:  
"See how yon crowds of gazing people - Admire my flight above the steeple;  
How would they wonder if they knew - All that a kite **like me** can do!  
**Were I but free**, I'd take a flight, - And pierce the clouds beyond their sight,  
**But, ah!** like a poor pris'ner bound, - My string confines me near the ground;  
I'd brave the eagle's towering wing, - Might I but fly without a string."  
It tugg'd and pull'd, while thus it spoke, - To break the string - at last it broke.  
**Depriv'd** at once of all its stay, - In vain it try'd to soar away;  
Unable its own weight to bear, - It flutter'd downward through the air;  
Unable its own course to guide, - The winds soon plung'd it in the tide.

<sup>1</sup> Josh McDowell, New Man, March/April 1995, p. 55

Ah! foolish kite, thou hadst no wing, - How could'st thou fly without a string!  
 My heart reply'd, "O Lord, I see - How much this kite resembles me!  
 Forgetful that by thee I stand, - Impatient of thy ruling hand;  
 How oft I've wish'd to break the lines - Thy wisdom for my lot assigns?  
 How oft indulg'd a vain desire - For something more, or something high'r?  
 And, but for grace and love divine, - A fall thus dreadful had been mine."

*John Newton (slave trader that was converted & wrote Amazing Grace)*

### III. Slide#6 **A CRIMINAL'S DIGNITY (1-3)**

- A. **Prosecuting criminals** (1-3)
- B. The primary intent of this law was to *regulate corporal punishment*. After a case was decided in court...the guilty man was to be flogged *in the presence of* the presiding judge who was to see that the penalty was carried out justly. *Even a criminal's dignity was to be maintained.*
1. **The Code of Hammurabi** (Law 202) permitted 60 lashes.
  2. Later **Assyrian laws** permitted between 40 and 50 lashes.
  3. By **NT** times **the Jews** had settled on 39 lashes as a safeguard against going over 40. 2 Cor.11:24 **From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.**
  4. It has often been said that **Jesus' scourging** consisted of 39 lashes, **but** since He was scourged by **the Romans** and not by the Jews the number of lashes He received is **not known**.
    - a) Sometimes the Romans were *excessively cruel* in their scourging.
- C. (3) **be humiliated** - a convicted offender was still **a fellow human being** who should not be *humiliated, or lit. made light*, that is, *made less than a person*.

### IV. Slide#7 **DOMESTICATED ANIMALS & CHURCH LEADERS (4)**

- A. **Working oxen** (4)
- B. The command **not to muzzle an ox while it is treading grain** (*on a threshing floor to break up the grain stalks for winnowing*) stressed kindness and fairness to the animals that helped a person earn his daily bread. *A domesticated animal was not to be overworked & deprived of food.*
- C. Paul uses this verse in 1 Tim.5:17,18 to support his point that church leadership/**elders** should be paid, and certain ones even paid double, **Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.** For the Scripture says, *You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain, & The laborer is worthy of his wages.*
1. **Story:** Three small boys were bragging about their dads...  
 The **1st** boy said: *"My dad writes a few short lines on paper, calls it a poem, sends away, and gets \$100 for it."*  
 "My dad," said the **second**, "makes dots on paper, calls it a **song**, sends it away, and gets **\$200** for it."  
 "That's nothing," declared the **third** boy. "My father writes a sermon on a sheet of

paper, gets up in the pulpit and reads it, and ***it takes four men to bring in the money!***"

## V. Slide#8 1 SANDAL & SPIT IN THE FACE (5-10)

- A. **Levirate marriage** (5-10)
- B. The brother of a deceased man must agree to care for his brother's widow or be disgraced in the community.
- C. (5,6) **In only one kind of circumstance was marriage to a close relative permitted.**
  1. **The brothers must have been living together** [i.e. **they inherited their father's property jointly**]
  2. **And the deceased brother must have died without a male heir.**
  3. If both of these conditions were met, then **levirate** (from the Latin **levir**, "**brother-in-law**" or husband's brother) marriage was to take place.
  4. Levirate marriage thus would **provide a male heir**, who in turn could **care for the parents** in their old age **and prevent the alienation of family property.**
- D. (7-10) **If a widow's brother-in-law refused to fulfill his duty** - **either through** greed (not wanting to share the family inheritance with his sister-in-law) **or** through dislike of his sister-in-law, **she could tell the elders of his town about it.**
  1. She could then **remove one of his sandals** and spit in his face.
  2. These actions would show her **strong disapproval of his refusal.**
    - a) This embarrassment to him, along with the stigma of being known for his refusal, illustrates how **God used social pressure** to motivate His people to obedience.

## VI. Slide#9 DON'T LET YOUR WIFE TAG TEAM IN YOUR FIGHTS (11,12)

- A. **Stopping a fight** (11,12)
- B. A woman will be punished for wrongly aiding her husband in a fight with another man.
- C. This is **the only instance** in the Law where **physical mutilation** served as punishment for an offense.
  1. **The law of retribution, aka Latin *lex talionis***, was given to encourage **appropriate punishment** of a criminal in cases where there might be a tendency to be either **too lenient or too strict.** [punishment ought to fit the crime]
  2. **Israel's restraint** here **contrasted with** other **ancient Near Eastern law codes** which provided for **a wide range of physical mutilations** depending on the crime committed
    - a) (e.g., in **Assyrian law** a man on the street who kissed a woman who was not his wife had **his lip cut off** with a sword).
  3. The command in 25:11,12 was probably intended to protect both **womanly modesty** and the capacity of **a man to produce heirs.**

- a) This second purpose probably helps explain why this law is placed here immediately after the instructions about levirate marriages (vv. 5–10).
- 4. Jesus did not deny the validity of this principle for the **courtroom**, but He denied its usage in **personal** relationships (Matt. 5:38–42). *There should be no personal retaliation or revenge.*

## VII. Slide#10 **CHEATER, CHEATER, PUMKIN EATER (13-16)**

- A. **Differing weights** (13-16)
- B. The Israelites were to be **totally honest** in their **business dealings**.
  - 1. They could well afford to be so, **since** it was ultimately **the Lord** who would **withhold** or **give prosperity** to them.
  - 2. **Thus honesty in business** was a way of **proclaiming one's faith** in the Lord's ability to support him and give him long life.
    - a) **So how about you?** Is it the same in our business today?
    - b) **This week, have you been completely honest** in your business dealings?
    - c) **Do you think the Lord is still the One who withholds or gives prosperity?**
    - d) **Do you think your *honesty in business* is a way of proclaiming your faith?**

## VIII. Slide#11 **EXPLOITING THE MOST VULNERABLE (17-19)**

- A. **The destruction of the Amalekites** (17-19)
- B. The Amalekites were *a nomadic desert tribe* ranging from **Sinai** northward to upper **Arabia**.
  - 1. Their genealogy is traced to **Amalek**, grandson of **Esau**.
  - 2. Two specific battles with the Amalekites were mentioned in the Pentateuch, **but** here Moses indicates **a series** of hostilities that are not mentioned elsewhere.
  - 3. The unprovoked attacking of the **weak, sick, and helpless** Israelites lagging behind evidenced the **cruelty and cowardice** of the Amalekites, as well as their **lack of fear of Israel's God**.
  - 4. Since the Amalekites **had shown no mercy to Israel**, they were to receive none.
  - 5. Israel was to **blot out** the memory of Amalek from under heaven.
    - a) More than 400 years later **David** defeated the Amalekites (2 Sam.1:1) **but** they were not completely wiped out till about another **300 years later** in Hezekiah's day (1Chron.4:41-43).
- C. He ends with a strong command ***you shall not forget*** which is the **last** of 9 such commands in Deuteronomy.
- D. **Today what does this look like?** bullying, trafficking, taking advantage of the most vulnerable, exploiting those in abject poverty. ***You shall not forget.***

## E. The Little Flower

A story is told about **Fiorello LaGuardia**, who, when he was mayor of New York City during the worst days of the Great Depression and all of WWII, was called by adoring New Yorkers ‘the Little Flower’ because he was only five foot four and always wore a carnation in his lapel. He was a colorful character who used to ride the New York City fire trucks, raid speakeasies with the police department, take entire orphanages to baseball games, and whenever the New York newspapers were on strike, he would go on the radio and read the Sunday funnies to the kids.

One bitterly cold night in January of 1935, the mayor turned up at a night court that served the poorest ward of the city. LaGuardia dismissed the judge for the evening and took over the bench himself. Within a few minutes, a tattered old woman was brought before him, charged with stealing a loaf of bread. She told LaGuardia that her daughter’s husband had deserted her, her daughter was sick, and her two grandchildren were starving. But the shopkeeper, from whom the bread was stolen, refused to drop the charges. “It’s a real bad neighborhood, your Honor,” the man told the mayor. “She’s got to be punished to teach other people around here a lesson.” LaGuardia sighed. He turned to the woman and said “I’ve got to punish you. The law makes no exceptions—ten dollars or ten days in jail.” But even as he pronounced sentence, the mayor was already reaching into his pocket. He extracted a bill and tossed it into his famous sombrero saying: “Here is the ten dollar fine which I now remit; and furthermore I am going to fine everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a person has to steal bread so that her grandchildren can eat. ‘Mr. Baliff, collect the fines and give them to the defendant.’” So the following day the New York City newspapers reported that \$47.50 was turned over to a bewildered old lady who had stolen a loaf of bread to feed her starving grandchildren, fifty cents of that amount being contributed by the red-faced grocery store owner, while some seventy petty criminals, people with traffic violations, and New York City policemen, each of whom had just paid fifty cents for the privilege of doing so, gave the mayor a **standing ovation**.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Brennan Manning, *The Ragmuffin Gospel*, Multnomah, 1990, pp. 91-2