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The Kidnapper Must Die

24: 7

To kidnap an Israelite was to steal their life away from them; hence, the kidnapper was sentenced to death.

Deuteronomy 19:1 to 26:15 (to see [link click DI](#) - The Social and Family Mitzvot) deals with individual mitzvot, and to today's readers they might appear irrelevant at first, but the very principles behind these commandments were the ones that have brought dignity to mankind. We need to examine these mitzvot in depth to discover the spirit in which they were given, so that we can still live in obedience to **God's Word** today. For example, in **Numbers 18**, the **Israelites** were to bring **their tithes** to the Tabernacle because **the priests** and **Levites** had **no inheritance**. But today we have no Temple and no priesthood; however, we bring our tithes to our place of worship. That is the spirit of the mitzvah.

From **23:15** to **26:15**, **Moses** deals with **twenty** real life situations that the nation would need to function in a godly manner, and valuable lessons for us today as well: **number nine**.

Kidnapping was prohibited, and it was a capital crime. **Anyone who steals** (Hebrew: *gonev*) **a person and sells him, or is found with him under his hand, must surely be put to death (Exodus 21:16)**. To **kidnap** someone and sell them into slavery, was to treat them **like property** and not people created in the image of **God**. Apparently the crime of **kidnapping** was common in the ancient Near East for it was also mentioned in the law codes of Mesopotamia and Hittite Empire.⁵²⁰



If a man is caught kidnapping (Hebrew: *gonev*, meaning *to steal*) **any of his brothers from Bnei-Yisrael, whether he treats him like property or sells him, then that kidnapper must die.** The Jews were not to enslave one another or sell one another to be enslaved by Gentiles. The crime was, in effect, social murder, *the stealing of a life*, for though the victim did not literally die, by being sold into slavery, he or she was effectively cut off from the covenant family of **God**.⁵²¹ To cut an **Israelite** off from the covenant community was to cut **them** off from sharing in the blessing of **God** for **His people** in the Land. Without the support of the **Jewish** community, their life as **a Jew** would be over. **ADONAI** had delivered **His people** from Egypt so **they** could be free, and **kidnapping** was contrary to **God's** purpose.⁵²² Hence, the penalty for the crime was severe – **death**.

So, you are to purge the evil from your midst (24:7). We hear this phrase many times in the study of **the Torah**. One that is repeated seven times from **Chapters 13 to 24**, “**You will purge the evil from your midst**” (13:6, 17:7, 19:19, 21:21, 22:21, 22:24, 24:7).

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for being one-hundred percent pure and holy. Often someone looks good, but upon closer investigation we find out that their motives are not entirely pure; but **You** have never done anything wrong, never made a mistake and never will. **You** only want what is best for **Your** child, even when **You** correct him. “**My son, do not take lightly the discipline of Adonai or lose heart when you are corrected by Him, because ADONAI disciplines the one He loves and punishes every son He accepts**” (Hebrews 12:5-6). **You** desire evil purged and sin done away with so that there may be fruitful blessing. **Now all discipline seems painful at the moment - not joyful. But later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it** (Hebrews 12:11). We love and worship **You**. In **Yeshua's** holy name and **His** power of resurrection. Amen*