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Stopping a Fight the Wrong Way

25: 11-12

Whereas women were protected against the possibility of not being able to bear an heir, so here, men were protected against the possibility of not being able to produce an heir.

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 eighteen**.

This is the only instance in the Torah where physical mutilation served as punishment for an offense. **Isra'el's** restraint here contrasted with other ancient Near Eastern law codes that provided for a wide range of physical mutilations depending on the crime committed. For example, 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. The mitzvah here was probably intended to protect the woman's modesty and the man's ability to produce heirs.



Whereas the preceding mitzvah dealt with the way to guarantee that a woman could bear a child to be the heir of her dead husband (see [Et](#) - **Levirate Marriage**), this mitzvah concerns a man who loses his ability to father a child. The scenario involves two men fighting and the wife of one of the fighters intervenes on her husband's behalf by seizing the genitals of her husband's opponent. **Suppose people fight with one another, a man and his brother, and the wife of the one approaches to rescue her husband from the hand of the one hitting him; and she puts out her hand and grabs him by his genitals.** The penalty for this act was **to cut off her hand**. This appears to be a somewhat broad application of the principle of *lex talionis* (see [Do](#) - **Life for Life, Eye for Eye**). Since she, as a woman, did not have the same anatomy as a man (hence no exactly corresponding penalty), the removal of her hand (which had seized the man's genitals) served as the appropriate penalty. Although the text does not make the point explicitly, it appears that such intervention prevented the man's ability to father children, hence the severity of the penalty. Although one might be tempted to feel sorry for the woman because she intervened on her husband's behalf, the mitzvah required that the Israelites **show her no pity (25:11-22).**⁵⁵⁵

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that not only do you always do the right thing, **You** also do it in the right way! I want to follow **Your** example of always doing the right thing - the right way. When correcting someone I will do it firmly, but with kindness. "**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.**" . . . 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 12:5-6 and 11). **You** are a wonderful **Father** - both mighty and powerful and kind and compassionate. **You** are perfect! I am so glad that I chose to love and follow **You** and **You** made me **Your child**. But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12). In Yeshua's holy*



*name and **His** power of resurrection. Amen*