

摩西在演說的末了，再次提到以色列人與上帝所立的約（26:16~19）。以色列人應允順服他們的上帝，上帝也仁慈的認以色列為祂特別的聖民，應許祝福忠心遵守此約的人：「又使你得稱讚、美名、尊榮、超乎祂所造的萬民之上……」（26:19）。今天，新約耶穌的信徒也從上帝得著相同的恩典和祝福：「但你們是聖潔的國度，是屬上帝的子民，要叫你們宣揚那召你們出黑暗，入奇妙光明者的美德。」（彼前2:9）

## 禱告

主上帝，我們讚美您，因為一切美善之事都是從您而來。謝謝您藉著耶穌的寶血為我們立了新約。願我們接受並信守這永恆的約定。奉主耶穌聖名，阿們！

**July 10**

**Scriptures:** Read Deuteronomy 25 & 26

**Key Verse:** “So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the Lord your God has given to you and your house...” (Deuteronomy 26:11)

## **Overview**

Since mankind was made in the image of God, he is never to be deprived of his individual human dignity, even when being punished for crime. Moses regulated corporal punishment with this thought in mind; the sanctity of the individual. Any punishment was to be preceded by a legal and fair trial presided over by a judge, resulting in a just and deserving sentence. The punishment was to be personally supervised by the judge himself. The severity of the beating depended upon the offense, but Moses ruled that it was never to exceed 40 lashes (the number representing judgment). Justice was not only to be based upon the law but upon mercy as well (for God is loving and merciful), that the offender, while being punished, might not be humiliated (25:3). Later we see that the Jews kept the letter of this law, but not the same spirit (2 Cor.11:23-24).

The next law Moses propounded was that Israel was not to muzzle an ox while it was working. It is true we are to be compassionate to animals, yet, as the Apostle Paul asked concerning the intent of this law, “is it oxen God is concerned about? (1 Cor.9:9). As well as taking this literally, we see it is a proverbial expression meaning: “the laborer is worthy of his wages” (1 Tim. 5:18). Paul was referring to the minister and teacher of the Word who deserves to partake of the offerings to God.

Moses expounded upon the role of the kinsman-redeemer who was not only to redeem a brother’s lost inheritance, but also to provide for him an heir by taking his widow as a wife if he died before having a child. In such a way, the kinsman would be obeying God, keeping harmony in the family and the community and, most importantly, perpetuating the brother’s name and inheritance within Israel. This was the honorable and loving thing to do for a deceased brother, yet it was not compulsory (25:7). If the kinsman refused, the widowed wife had the right to publicly shame him. Removing his sandals attested to his shirked responsibility (see Ruth 4:7) and he would be like an outcast in the community. An important implication of this law is clearly seen in the story of Ruth, the widowed Moabitess who married her deceased husband’s kinsman, Boaz, perpetuating the line of the Messiah (Ruth 4:17; Matt.1:5).

Moses sought to ensure the integrity of business affairs within Israel by warning against the use of unjust measures. A deceitful and covetous man would often carry two sets of weights in his bag: a large weight (literally “stone”) for buying and a lighter one for selling (cf. Amos 8:5). This wicked practice was an abomination to the Lord. It did not show love for one’s neighbor... only love for self. However, the honest and honorable businessman, having perfect and just weights, was promised a long life in the land.

In chapter 26, Moses turned the people’s attention to an important area of worship once they were settled in the Promised Land. They were to come to God’s central sanctuary and offer Him