



# DAILY DEVOTIONAL

## SATURDAY, MAY 23, 2020

*Readings: Deuteronomy 24*

### *DEUTERONOMY 24: NOT SO RANDOM AFTER ALL!*

At first glance, the list of God's commands in Deuteronomy 24 looks like a miscellaneous grab-bag of disconnected decrees, once relevant to Israel, but no longer of interest to us. Our temptation is to skim over the top in a blur.

But if we study them closely, two important truths rise to the surface. First, each command embodies the Lord's commitment to protect his people by providing for the vulnerable. For example, the laws on divorce protect the woman from being tossed about due to self-seeking husbands (24:1-4). The laws regarding security-deposits for a loan protect the livelihood, dignity, and needs of the poor borrower (24:6, 10-13, 17). The prescriptions for quarantining skin diseases (their version of Covid-19!) protect both the diseased and the community (24:8-9). And so on throughout the chapter. It thus becomes clear that these various commands are unified by their common concern to extend God's love in "concrete ways" to those in need.

Second, such commands summon us to trust God to meet our own needs so that we are free to meet the needs of others. The call to love others is always a call to rely on God's love for us. Disobedience is therefore a "sin" because it disregards the "inheritance" we have already received from the Lord (24:4, 15). It consequently brings "evil" into the midst of the community of the redeemed (24:7) and risks God's judgment (24:9). On the other hand, to obey God's commands because we depend on his protection and provision is "righteousness for you before the Lord your God" (24:13). The variety of commands in this

chapter illustrate that the "right thing to do" is always to extend the same mercy to others that we have received from our Savior. For as Moses declares twice in our chapter, "you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do his" (24:18; see v. 22).

In what concrete ways is God calling us as his redeemed people to trust his protection and provision in these unusual days so that we might act to protect and provide for others in our sphere of influence?

*-Scott Hafemann*

