**Family Worship Guide: Holiness, Liberty, and Purity**

**Scripture Reading**

Deuteronomy 23:9–18 (NKJV)

“When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing. If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp. But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp. Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

“You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him.

“There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel. You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the Lord your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.”

**Scripture Memory Verse**

Deuteronomy 23:14a (NKJV)

“For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy.”

**Devotional Teaching and Application**

In this section of God’s law, Moses gives the people of Israel statutes that deal with three very different aspects of their society: a military camp, an escaped slave, and prostitution. What do we mean by this, and how do they connect? They all point to the absolute necessity of holiness among God’s covenant people.

First of all, looking at the military camp, God commands strict physical hygiene and moral purity. Why? Because the Lord their God was walking in the midst of their camp. If God is going to be with us to save us from our enemies, the camp must be holy. Physical cleanliness is an outward symbol of moral and spiritual purity. Sin in the camp renders the people of God weak and liable to defeat, just as we saw with Achan in the book of Joshua.

In our own homes and in our local church, we must separate ourselves from every wicked thing, knowing that a holy God dwells in our midst.

Then we move on to the law concerning an escaped slave. This is a remarkable law. In the ancient world, runaway slaves were hunted down and brutally punished. But in God's order, in God's way, a foreign slave fleeing bitter bondage to find asylum in Israel was to be welcomed, given liberty, and protected from oppression. This is a beautiful picture of Christ. Every man and woman is born as a slave to sin. We are driven by the world, the flesh, and the devil. But Jesus Christ is the true sanctuary. To the sinner who flees the tyranny of sin, Jesus says, “I will not cast you away.” He grants us true liberty, taking us into His kingdom as free men and women.

Finally, God deals emphatically with the abomination of prostitution. Both the religious prostitution of the pagan temples and common prostitution are fiercely condemned. God’s design for the physical relations between men and women in the covenant of marriage is holy, and to corrupt it is to invite His wrath. This applies directly to our modern world, particularly regarding the evil of pornography. To consume pornography is to consort with prostitutes in the heart. It is an abomination. But here is the center of the gospel message: there is forgiveness. As the Apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians after listing severe sexual sins, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11). Christ shed His blood to set captives free from the bondage of sexual sin. Let us walk in the liberty and purity He has purchased for us.

**Questions for Children**

1. Why did God tell the army of Israel to keep their camp clean and holy? (Answer: Because the Lord God was walking right in the middle of their camp.)
2. When a slave ran away from a bad master and came to Israel, what were the Israelites supposed to do? (Answer: They were supposed to let him stay, treat him kindly, and keep him safe.)

**Theological Reflection Questions**

1. How does the command for physical cleanliness in the military camp point to the greater reality of moral holiness within the church today?
2. Consider the biblical doctrine of total depravity and our natural state as "slaves to sin." How does the Old Testament law protecting the escaped slave serve as a picture of the Gospel and our justification in Christ?

3. How does the promise of 1 Corinthians 6:11 ("And such were some of you...") provide both a serious warning about sexual sin and a profound comfort regarding the power of Christ's blood?

**Practical Applications for Obedience**

1. Evaluate your "camp." Are there areas of physical disorder, uncleanliness, or moral compromise in your home or daily habits that need to be repented of and cleaned up out of reverence for God's presence?
2. If there is any hidden sin, particularly in the realm of modern digital temptations or pornography, confess it immediately to God, seek the accountability of a brother in the church, and plead for the Holy Spirit's power to walk in purity.

**Family Prayer**

“Our Father in heaven, we thank You for Your perfect and holy law. We confess that we are prone to tolerate sin in our camp. Forgive us, Lord, for the times we have not kept ourselves from every wicked thing. Thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ, who did not turn us away when we fled to Him to escape the bondage of our sin. Thank You for setting us free and giving us a place in Your kingdom. We ask that You would protect our home and our minds from the corruptions of this world. Wash us, sanctify us, and help us to live holy lives, knowing that You walk in our midst. We ask this in the strong name of Jesus Christ, Amen.”