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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Matters of hygiene
  - Social distancing is nothing new but here it is the person with the issue that separates from the healthy population.
  - The phrase “cleanliness is next to Godliness” is traced to a sermon by John Wesley in 1778. Although the phrase is not used in the Bible passage like this connect matters of hygiene to holiness.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Matters of hygiene
  - The practice of covering human waste was also a reminder that God walked among them and was the One who provided victory over their enemies.
  - Disease born by unsanitary conditions would run rapidly through an encamped army. There is ample historical evidence of dysentery, which is brought on by unsanitary conditions, plaguing armies during long sieges and sometimes affecting the outcome of the campaign.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- People are to be treated as people, not property. 23:15-16
  - Note the stark contrast to 22:1-4 as to the treatment of a lost animal or other piece of property.
  - The escaped slave was to be welcomed and protected.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Any aspect of sexual immorality related to worship in Israel is abhorrent to God 23:17-18
  - Immoral sexual practices connected to worship
  - Proceeds from sexual immorality used as an offering
  - The land of Canaan was rife with religions of fertility cults. The actual function of a cult prostitute is not well documented but there is a clear connection between their activity and the rituals of the fertility cults.
  - The bottom line is that no inkling of these practices were to be a part of the practice of God's people.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Guidelines for ministry and business 23:19-20
  - Making a profit from helping a fellow Israelite was forbidden
  - Making a profit from a business transaction with a non-Israelite was permitted.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Making and fulfilling promises to God (vows). 23:21-23
  - Promises of offerings or service to God were required to be fulfilled
  - Vows were made by a person of his or her own free will and were not required.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- Respect and responsibility 23:24-25
  - A landowner with crops accepted the responsibility to support the people of his community by allowing people to eat their fill from his crops.
  - The people of the community were to respect the property of the landowner by not taking more than they could eat at one time.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The matter of divorce acknowledged and addressed
  - The scenario:
    - A man marries a woman and she falls into his disfavor because he has found some indecency in her
    - The man gives her a certificate of divorce and sends her from his house.
    - She becomes another man's wife
    - This man either puts her away in a similar fashion or dies
    - The first husband cannot take her again to be his wife

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The matter of divorce acknowledged and addressed
  - This is the first place divorce is addressed in scripture although it is mentioned in the instructions that a priest could not marry a divorced women in Leviticus 21:7,14 and Leviticus 22:13 states that a priest's daughter who was widowed or divorced and has no child could return to her father's home and have all the rights of the family member of a priest .

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The matter of divorce acknowledged and addressed
  - Divorce is neither established or commanded here but rather acknowledged as a practice.
  - The guidance here is for the "sending away" to be taken very seriously since it would be impossible to bring the wife back into the marriage after she had (inevitably) remarried.
  - It is highly unlikely that adultery is the "indecency" mentioned here since adultery was punishable by death.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The matter of divorce acknowledged and addressed
  - Jesus commented on this instruction in Matthew 19:7-9
    - Divorce was never a part of God's plan for a husband and wife.
    - Divorce was not expressly forbidden in the Mosaic Law because God is well aware of the hardness of the human heart and therefore left a protective measure for the women in such a situation.

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Cautions and instructions concerning the land God is giving them.

- The matter of divorce acknowledged and addressed
  - Jesus commented on this instruction in Matthew 19:7-9
    - Jesus made clear in this passage that divorce simply in order to take another wife was nothing more than adultery under the guise of keeping the law.
    - Jesus also makes clear that there are only two events that end or potentially end a marriage, death and adultery.

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