

## Notes and Quotes

Based on the chronological reading schedule followed in THE DAILY BIBLE compiled by F. LaGard Smith and published by Harvest House Publishers.

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### **Num. 5:5-10**

*“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: When a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the Lord, that person is guilty and must confess the sin he has committed. He must make full restitution for his wrong, add one fifth to it and give it all to the person he has wronged. But if that person has no close relative to whom restitution can be made for the wrong, the restitution belongs to the Lord and must be given to the priest, along with the ram with which atonement is made for him. All the sacred contributions the Israelites bring to a priest will belong to him. Each man’s sacred gifts are his own, but what he gives to the priest will belong to the priest.’”*

While these are the laws God gave through Moses to the Israelite nation in their existence before Christ, a close look shows a variety of principles that have universal application.

Given to guide daily activity among the Jewish people, these rules and remedies show principles like this: **Whenever we act wrongfully toward anyone, we act wrongfully toward God:** “When a man or woman wrongs another in any way **and so is unfaithful to the Lord...**”

This is one of those cases where the horizontal is connected to the vertical. Our relationship with others (horizontal) is connected to our relationship with God (vertical). Thus, when we wrong people (who were made in the image of God), we wrong God.

Matthew Henry: A law concerning restitution, in case of wrong done to a neighbour. It is called *a sin that men commit* (v. 6), because it is common among men; *a sin of man*, that is, *a sin against man*, so it is thought it should be translated and understood. If a man overreach or defraud his brother in any matter, **it is to be looked upon as a trespass against the Lord**, who is the protector of right, the punisher of wrong, and who strictly charges and commands us to do justly. Now what is to be done when a man’s awakened conscience charges him with guilt of this kind, and brings it to his remembrance though done long ago? 1. He must *confess his sin*, confess it to God, confess it to his neighbour, and so take shame to himself. If he have denied it before, though it go against the grain to own himself in a lie, yet he must do it; because his heart was hardened he denied it, therefore he has no other way of making it appear that his heart is now softened but by confessing it. 2. He must bring a sacrifice, a *ram of atonement*, v. 8. Satisfaction must be made for the offence done to God, whose law is broken, as well as for the loss sustained by our neighbour; **restitution in this case is not sufficient without faith and repentance.** 3. Yet the sacrifices would not be accepted till full amends were made to the party wronged, not only the principal, but a fifth part added to it, v. 7. It is certain that while that which is got by injustice is knowingly retained in the hands the guilt of the injustice remains upon the conscience, and is not purged by sacrifice nor offering, prayers not tears, for it is one and the same continued act of sin persisted in. ... **Note,** Some work of piety or charity is a piece of necessary justice to be done by those who are conscience to themselves that they have done wrong, but know not how otherwise to make restitution; **what is not our property will never be our profit.**