

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

You said, “You shall not see your brother’s ox or his sheep going astray and ignore them. You shall take them back to your brother” (Deut 22:1). I praise you today as the God who sees and helps those in need. You are kind and loving, even to those who hate you. I worship you, for “Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds” (Ps 36:5). Hallelujah!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you told me more about the second part of Moses’ second sermon to the Israelites in the plains of Moab at the end of the 40-year wilderness period. Moses continued to explain your covenant laws in detail so the people would know how to live a holy life that was pleasing to you. Your cities of refuge made provision for cases of involuntary manslaughter, and those who were innocent of premeditated murder were protected. At the same time you commanded that murderers be put to death: “You shall not pity him” (Deut 19:13). This shows me that you want the wrongdoer punished *and* the innocent protected. A just society will be careful to do both. Your instructions for the conduct of war were simple yet profound, and everything was based on this truth: “The LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory” (Deut 20:4). It was true for them, and it is true for me today! Many of your laws help me understand how to love my neighbor. The laws related to caring for a neighbor’s animals (Deut 22:1–4) teach me that loving my neighbor means: (a) not ignoring the potential loss or destruction of their private property, (b) caring for their lost property until it is returned, and (c) not ignoring them when they’re struggling with their vehicle (donkey) or their tractor (ox). The law requiring a railing on the roof of a house (Deut 22:8) teaches me that loving my neighbor means: (a) being concerned about their safety, (b) going out of my way to protect them when they are on or near my property, and (c) ensuring my property is designed with their safety in mind. There are so many practical principles in your laws if I will just take the time to look for them!

### *Reflection*

You told the Israelites not to take a mother bird from the nest of her young (Deut 22:6–7). Am I being a wise steward of the natural resources you have given me?

### *Request*

Father, give me insight into your law. Help me understand how your precepts reveal your character, and give me the grace I need to love my neighbor as I love myself.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for the wisdom that is contained in your Word. “Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors” (Ps 119:24).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[Are You Faithful?](#)” – Charles W. Naylor.*

*Meditation Verse: Deuteronomy 20:19–20.*