

# Deuteronomy 19:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

## Analysis

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Witness requirement repeated: 'One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.' This reiterates Deuteronomy 17:6, extending from capital cases to all judicial matters. One witness is insufficient regardless of offense severity. The phrase 'shall the matter be established' (יָקוּם דָּבָר, yaqum davar) requires solid evidentiary foundation. This protects against false accusation and personal vendettas. Justice requires corroboration. The principle became foundational to biblical and Western jurisprudence. Paul applies it to church discipline (1 Timothy 5:19: 'against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses').

## Historical Context

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This law protected innocent from malicious prosecution. Naboth's case (1 Kings 21) shows corruption: Jezebel procured false witnesses to frame him. Despite legal form (multiple witnesses), substance was violated (lying testimony). Jesus's trial violated this—inconsistent witnesses, no proper testimony (Mark 14:56-59). The principle: procedural protections serve justice; corrupt procedures serve injustice. Modern legal systems similarly require corroboration, especially in serious cases.

Church discipline processes should follow this pattern—private confrontation, two or three witnesses, then church-wide (Matthew 18:15-17).

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does requiring multiple witnesses balance protecting innocent while ensuring justice for victims?
2. What safeguards prevent witnesses from coordinating false testimony (the Naboth problem)?
3. How should churches implement the 'two or three witnesses' principle when handling serious accusations?

## Interlinear Text

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לֹא	יָקִים וְ	עֵד יִמְ	אֶחָד	בְּאִישׁ	לְכָל	עוֹן
H3808	<b>be established</b>	<b>witness</b>	<b>One</b>	<b>against a man</b>	H3605	<b>for any iniquity</b>
	H6965	H5707	H259	H376		H5771

וְלְכָל	חַטָּאת	בְּכָל	חַטָּא	אִשׁ ר	יַחַטֵּא	עַל
H3605	<b>or for any sin</b>	H3605	<b>in any sin</b>	H834	<b>that he sinneth</b>	H5921
	H2403		H2399		H2398	

פִּי	שְׁנֵי	עֵד יִמְ	אֶחָד	עַל	פִּי	שְׁלֹשָׁה	עֵד יִמְ
<b>at the mouth</b>	<b>of two</b>	<b>witness</b>	H176	H5921	<b>at the mouth</b>	<b>of three</b>	<b>witness</b>
H6310	H8147	H5707			H6310	H7969	H5707

יָקִים וְ	דָּבָר:
<b>be established</b>	<b>shall the matter</b>
H6965	H1697

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 17:6** (Witness): At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

**Numbers 35:30** (Witness): Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.

**Hebrews 10:28** (Witness): He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

**Matthew 18:16** (Witness): But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

**2 Corinthians 13:1** (Witness): This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

**John 8:17** (Witness): It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

**1 Timothy 5:19** (Witness): Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

**1 Kings 21:13** (Witness): And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

**1 Kings 21:10** (Witness): And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die.