

Deuteronomy 22:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.

Analysis

They shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver—'anash (עֲנָשׁ, "ameerce") means to fine or levy a monetary penalty. One hundred shekels represented a substantial sum, roughly 2.5 pounds of silver, approximately 2-3 years' wages for a laborer. This heavy fine served as restitution and deterrent. **Give them unto the father**—the financial penalty goes to the wronged family, compensating for attempted injury and vindicating their honor.

Because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel—the offense isn't merely personal but covenantal. Slander betulat Yisra'el (בְּתוּלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל, "a virgin of Israel") attacks Israel's covenant purity and community integrity. **She shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days**—the husband permanently forfeits divorce rights, ensuring the woman's economic security despite his treachery. This protects her from future abandonment by the man who already proved willing to slander her.

Historical Context

The hundred-shekel fine was double the standard bride-price (fifty shekels, Deuteronomy 22:29), punishing the husband's malice while enriching the wronged family. The permanent marriage requirement seems harsh by modern standards

but functioned as protection in ancient contexts where divorced women faced destitution. The husband who proved untrustworthy through false accusation lost the privilege of divorce, binding him to provide for his wife regardless of his feelings. This law prioritizes the woman's welfare over the man's convenience, countercultural in male-dominated societies.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the financial restitution combined with permanent marriage obligation demonstrate biblical justice addressing both material and relational harm?
2. What does the husband's loss of divorce rights teach about consequences for covenant-breaking behavior?

Interlinear Text

וְנִתְנֶנֶּה	כֵּסֶף	מִאָה	אֶת	וְיִעַשׂ	וְיִעַשׂ
And they shall amerce	H853	him in an hundred		shekels of silver	and give
H6064		H3967		H3701	H5414
לְאָבִי	וְיִבְנֶאָבָה	הַזְּבִיא	שְׁם		
them unto the father	H1	of the damsel	H3588	because he hath brought up	name
		H5291		H3318	H8034
לְאֵשׁ הַתְּהִלָּתְעַל	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּתוּלָתְעַל	וְיִלְעַל	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	לְאֵשׁ הַתְּהִלָּתְעַל
an evil	H5921	upon a virgin	H1330	of Israel	H3478
H7451				H0	H1961
לֹא	וְיִמְלָא	כָּל	לְשִׁלְךָ	וְיִכְלֶא	
H3808	he may	not put her away	H3605	all his days	H3117
H3201					

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 22:29 (Parallel theme): Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

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