

Clough Deuteronomy Session 54

Deuteronomy 24:14-25 - A Variety of True Representation Throughout the Theocracy

Fellowship Chapel; 10 May 2011

This little article that I thought has a sense of humor to it, as you know, the anti-Israel people, primarily the people who are anti-dispensational, want to hurt Israel in the name of the Palestinian rights by basically disenfranchising them from investments. So the United Methodist Church, some of the liberal denominations are all pulling their investments out of Israel or any company that does business with Israel. This Australian town or Merrickville, it must be the San Francisco of Australia, the green party took over and controlled the politics of this city and so they want the council, the city council made the decision to boycott all goods and services from Israel. So they started thinking, after they made the resolution, gee, I wonder how much this is going to cost the town. So according to a paper written by the council's manager of services, there are many goods and services that would need to be eliminated in order to comply with the directive, including Hewlett-Packard computers, Holden and Volvo cars, telephones, equipment from Motorola, and concrete from Fulton-Hogan. The report estimates the cost for this town of replacing IT assets at 3.5 million dollars and the annual cost of using different concrete supplier at a quarter million dollars. It does not attempt to estimate the cost to replacing vehicles, it says changing waste disposal service providers may not even be possible. It noted the council might need to spend five to ten thousand dollars on legal fees, so the total bill to the town for boycotting Israel would be 3.7 million dollars. So again, this is the sense of humor of these idiots that try to do this kind of stuff, forgetting Genesis 12:3, and here you see it work out economically. It's just sort of God's sense of humor, I think, and how He works this out. What they fail to understand is that as Israel is a small nation, if you compare that little tiny nation for the entire Middle East and compare how many Nobel prizes come out of Israel, versus all of the countries in the Middle East, I mean, the ratio is like 100, 150 to one. And so people might ask the question, how come they have more Nobel prizes in Israel than they do throughout the whole Middle East. It's kind of an interesting question.

On the outline you'll see that we are on Deuteronomy 24:8-25:4, that's the chunk of Scripture, that's the section of Scripture and we said that following some scholar's attempt to organize this material by implication, that is by chunking it in terms of specific commandments, I think, as I've studied this more it makes sense; it's a way of explaining why the same text, the same case law is repeated, it occurs in one place, then it occurs in another, then it occurs in another. What's the rhyme and reason to all of that? It's because what Moses apparently trying to do, the Holy Spirit through Moses, he's trying to get us to see that these case laws that enscripturate and give a concrete example of the Ten Commandments moral imperatives, that each one of these case laws is built on a number of the Ten Commandments, they're indivisible, it shows you the indivisibility of the Ten Commandments. This is why in the New Testament it says he who breaks one law is guilty of it all, because it's an integral logically consistent system.

Now last time we covered verses 8-13, in fact that material is repeated material. But since this is our last evening for a while I wanted to start back to refresh our minds about God's design, and how, as we approach the ninth commandment we're dealing on face value, in the Ten Commandments, accuracy in language in judicial proceedings. That's the concrete. But then to follow that principle it suddenly starts mushrooming, enlarges because in order to have that kind of quality of language in a judicial proceeding, implies certain things about language. And those same things about language apply across the board in multiple examples.

So we have this ninth commandment but we made a point back some time ago that this chiasmic structure has a parallel, so that this ninth commandment is paralleled back here, accuracy in language about God. That's the commandment about "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD, thy God, in vain." And that again is talking about language, it's talking about this language depicts reality. So then we came to the design and of course we're working now, we've looked at marriage and family, we've looked at labor and property, now we're back down in integrity of communication. So we've come up the line and now we're working down through these specifics.

So in the outline under the bold set of values and verses that we're looking at, you'll see that I emphasize this is a parallel to 1 Corinthians 2, Paul says I came not speaking to you in wisdom and so forth, what Paul was doing there, remember he's talking to Greek people, people of Greek background, and he's actually doing something in 1 Corinthians 2 that is related to this. And what Paul is denying that he's doing is he denies that when he teaches the Word of God, or preaches evangelistically that he refuses to use the traditional Greek rhetoric. And the reason that Paul refuses to follow the usual rhetoric is because the Greeks, early on, had severe doubts whether people operating from their mind, remember, they're pagans so they don't have a respect or even knowledge of special revelation. Now if you're going to be in that status that means that all truth has to come from here, it means you have to work out from your mind. And these people were smart enough to see that there's some problems with that, and one of the problems that you have is this question: now we Christians can answer this question very, very quickly, but if you're not a Christian and you don't really pay attention to the Scripture you don't have an answer to this question and this is not being facetious, this is a serious question, and the Greeks had asked this and had gotten some very disturbing answers.

Here's the question: How can you be sure that your mental capability as a human being is sufficient to depict in your mind what's going on outside your head. How do you know that? You're assuming that that's the case, everybody assumes that, but on a non-Christian basis you have no basis to assume that. You're just leaping into the dark with that assumption. And people don't ask the question; it's never covered in school of course because that would involve God and it would involve revelation. But the Christian answer to that crucial question is because God made us in His image, and He created the external world and He created our minds and our hearts so that we, as made in His image, can faithfully and representatively depict reality. That's not the case in the Greeks. And so early on there's a whole group of Greeks that were pessimistic that that ever could be, the argument was that you can never get to real truth,

you're just playing games. And so they gave up, and they created a view of language called sophism. And in sophism the idea is that you use language which we would say as Christians by the ninth commandment and by the third commandment, we would say language is there to communicate truth to people and to communicate with God and God to communicate with us. That's our answer.

But the Greeks didn't have that background, so their plan B, the language, was well, I don't know, you know, we have the capability so what we'll do is we know language can persuade people, so they develop all kinds of fancy rhetoric salesmanship. And the use of language to manipulate and persuade. Whether it was true or false it was irrelevant. And the reason I'm spending some time on this, this gives you the flavor of this ninth commandment thing that's going on here, and the implications of the ninth commandment. And it also shows you what's very, very relevant to the culture today, because language today, particularly in the political realm, is just manipulation. I mean, there are people that make careers in our political sphere of using language sheerly to manipulate and get votes. It has nothing to do with reality, these are just schematic things and it's an abuse of the tool that God gave us. God gave us language so that we can speak truth. And to use and to cast away that language tool and use it as a toy to manipulate, is a violation of the ninth commandment. It's a serious violation. And when we get into religion and we try to do that, that's a violation of the third commandment, it's taking the Lord's name in vain. In other words, it's creating a false view of who God is, because we're not paying attention to His language to us.

So we've covered two cases, verses 8 and 9, that was the priestly authority, they said when you have leprosy, and the priests, they had this skin disease or whatever it is, you pay attention to them. And you say well wait a minute, what's that got to do with perjury? This... if a person acts as though the priest doesn't know what he's talking about, what is that person showing as far as his thought about the priest? He's misrepresenting the priest. He's denying that the priest has authority. So it's a false view and it's shown by the behavior of disobedience. And I'll give an application. When local church leadership prayerfully try to follow the Word of God and they try to impose that Word of God and make decisions by that Word of God and you have people that just cast it aside, that's an abuse of the ninth commandment, because these men have tried to see what God's will is, they've tried to erect policies based on the Scripture, and then just to cast that away is basically either to say that God never made it clear in the first place, or these guys don't know what they're talking about, or what? There's a problem there. So that's the eighth and ninth verses.

Then 10-13 we talked about the issue of a person coming into the home of a poor man to get the collateral. And God said no, you don't own the debtor, the lender does not own the debtor. For the lender to come waltzing in, uninvited, to someone's private domicile and grab the collateral is saying something. That action is saying something; it's saying that I own the whole thing and I own the debtor. And what God says, no you don't; when you lend money for collateral the only thing that you have is the collateral, you don't own the person, so bug off! And this is a severe restriction that God is placing on lending and the lender.

Now today we're going to start in verse 14 and we're going to look at what this case law looks like as it's part of the same set. In verses 14-15, "You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. [15] Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you." So starting at the end of this verse and working backwards, the accusation here is, whatever this action is on the part of the employer, that if he doesn't follow this, he sins. The employer sins in how he treats the employee in this case. So now we have to unpack the case and see what's all involved in this thing. What is the point God is making here.

We know from other Scripture, Leviticus 6:4, something about that verb in verse 14 because we've seen these kind of things before. And you'd normally think when you read verses 14-15 it should be under the eighth commandment, it should be under stealing, you know, withholding wages, kind of like a form of theft, but it's not there, it's under the ninth commandment. So we have to adjust our thinking and find... track with the text and see what's on the Holy Spirit's mind through Moses.

"You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy," it doesn't say steal, it says "oppress," and if we do a word study on this verb to oppress, it turns out that in Leviticus 6:4 there's a sin list here dealing with relationships and notice the context of this word. "He shall restore what he took by robbery or what he got by extortion, or the deposit which was entrusted to him, or the lost thing which he found." By the way, you might notice that last one, to commandeer something that was someone else's that was lost, that's theft in the Scriptures. And they had to keep that animal or whatever it was that was found wandering around until they could find the owner, which put a burden on people because they have to feed it, so they had to take care of it. But this is what God means here when we unpack all these Ten Commandments.

But here is that word, "extortion," now extortion of course, we say is a form of threat, but it's also a form of fabrication. And so apparently what's going on in verse 14 by "oppress" and then in verse 15 it says pay day is every day, apparently the issue here was the employer was saying I will pay you at the end of the day and wasn't doing it. And in this case the employee is a very poor person, so we want to further undo this thing and see what's involved with it.

Notice also in verse 14 it includes two classes of people, notice, not just the brethren, but the ger, the resident alien. And who were the resident aliens? The resident aliens are Gentiles who chose, freely chose, voluntarily chose to live inside Israel. And they're not traveling businessmen, remember that's the nokree, that's that third class, so it's not talking about the traveling businessmen, the guy that would be a temporary resident, the ger was a person who chose as a Gentile to live in that nation of Israel. And if they chose to do that that sort of shows you something about their heart. Either they personally had trusted in Jehovah, or they were close to it and they respected His laws, they wanted to live in that kind of a society. So they had made a choice to live there.

So you had two kinds of people, both the Jewish brethren or the alien, notice, "who is in your land within your gates." He's living inside the cities, he can't live in the country. Why can't he live in the country? Who alone can own the land? Jews, so the aliens don't own land, they have to live in the gates, they have to live in the cities. So here are two classes of people. What's the characteristic of both of these situation? One who is "poor," and it uses two words, "poor and needy." This is a person who's desperate, a person that has reached the end of their rope economically. And the idea here is that they want a job, and what we're going to do now is we're going to follow Dr. North's analysis here under three points, and we want to see what the implications are and how this thing is set up.

And I'm taking time to go through all this and this may bore some of you but what I'm trying to do is show you that the Mosaic Law Code was very cleverly designed, against what you'll get in a university classroom, that oh, this is Jewish autobiography, it was put together by a committee of fifteen people over ten centuries and it was mixed together and what the text has today is just sort of patchwork of this author and this author and this author. I mean, we had a gal here years ago, her dad and mom saved money to send her to a (quote) "Christian" school and sacrificially saved money, they didn't spend to save up money for their daughter's education to send her off to a nearby Christian school and the dad comes to me after the first half of the semester and says look what my daughter is getting in class. And I'm looking at it, and it's Wellhausen Old Testament higher criticism. Now liberals don't even believe that any more. That's old, old higher criticism. That's 150 years old and this is what's being taught in a Christian school. So I said you'd better go to the Dean of Students and check this out, you're paying here and this isn't a privilege, you are hiring the teachers to teach your daughter. And so he goes up there and they blow him off. So he pulled his daughter out and sent her to John Hopkins. So that's the origin of my phrase, if you're going to get unbelief send them to a State school, it's cheaper. Why pay special tuition at a Christian school if the Christian school is just teaching the same thing the secular schools are teaching, and then tack on a little chapel service once a week.

So the idea there is that the Bible has an authenticity about it, has a design about it. This is cleverly designed. So if you'll follow on the handout here, here's an analysis. Again, Dr. North is a Christian economist and we disagree with how he applies this, but we have to give the guy credit, he's done a lot of work that you'll never find in Old Testament commentaries, because Old Testament commentators aren't trained economists. They totally miss the point in a lot of this stuff.

[Dr. North's analysis of the economic implications:]

Number one, the first implication is that wealthier laborers could afford to forego "payday everyday," say, "payday once a week" because they had cash reserves for the necessities of life; destitute laborers did not and thus would be excluded from competing for the job, [-principle of equality of opportunity to enter the work force]" you visualize, say you get paid once a month, well, the first month you're working you don't get money, you don't get money until the end of the month. Now if you're very, very poor, literally, and living from hand to mouth, how can you

compete for a job like that? You're excluded from the workforce. So the implication of this, it allows a very poor person to enter the workforce because he doesn't have to compete with the wealthier employees that could take a postponed paycheck. So there's a rhyme and there's a reason to this.

And so Dr. North comments, "It is the vulnerability of the weakest seller of labor that makes this law necessary. God imposes this law because of what I call the priestly factor in free market pricing. This factor is seldom if ever discussed by free market economists. When human life is at stake - beyond the modern economic principle of marginalism - unrestricted free market competition is in some instances not morally valid. All real-world societies recognize this fact, but free market economists rarely do, since they are committed to a supposedly value-free (ethically neutral) analysis." And what he's talking about there is if you go into an economics class and you argue between Friedman's School, the University of Chicago, the Keynesian School at London, the [sounds like: Bah nee sus] school in Austria, whatever the school of economy is that you're studying, all three of these want to approach economics like there's no ethics involved, it's just economics, it's an abstract view of economics.

Well, here clearly you have an ethic intruding into the economic sphere. So this is why, one of the reasons why we have differences today politically between conservatives who are trying to conserve a value of American past when ethics did impact, versus the modern libertarian. Now we can be friends with the libertarian because they too want less government. But a libertarian is not about ethical involvement; libertarians are for gay marriage and anything else because they don't care, it's everybody for himself kind of thing. So as conservative Christians we cannot really be libertarian. On some issues we can go with them, but there's a difference here. And as I point after the quote in your notes, this "priestly pricing" is also seen in the tithe which 10%, which ability to pay, it's not a flat tax in the sense of everybody with an abstract number; it's based on ability to pay that respects the poor person; a poor person can't pay more than that. And by the way, as long as we're talking about tithing, today one of the manipulative terms is oh, I think that wealthy people ought to pay their fair share. When you hear that, ask the question, if you can, excuse me, would you answer a question; how do you determine what is "fair," by what standard? And then watch them go... that's the answer you'll get, it'll be a committee that decides that, or the economist can decide. Why? On the basis of what? What basis have you got for saying that. The only basis we've got scripturally is when God taxed people He taxed them at a flat rate. And apparently God considered that fair. And I suggest that God knows a little bit more about fairness, ethically, than any economist or set of politicians.

So when you find that little slogan about the wealthy pay their "fair share," how about the poor paying their fair share. So it's a two-edged sword here. See, you've got to be quick and think about these things. This is all related to the Scriptures because we believe God spoke in history.

2. Now what he's protecting here is he's saying yes, at the marginally level of an extremely poor person entering the work force from bottom up, God opened up by restricting competition. In other words he limited the

competition of wealthier employees here by deliberately intruding into the economic sphere with an ethical rule. But, other forms of competition were allowed so that the theocracy was not socialist; and I keep warning you about this because you're going to see increasingly, now that Obama has Jim Wallace on his side, you're going to see things, even in Christian writings about well, what we're following are the Old Testament mandates, that's why we've had this class in Deuteronomy and every place we've gone through this series where I know that's where they're going to go I've made my point and here's another one, that restriction of competition here was at the marginal level of an entry level into the work force. It was not restricting other competition; it was not socialism, in other words. The theocracy was not socialist, it was free market capitalism disciplined by God's interventions here and there. Otherwise it was free market.

And as North points out, "This law does not prohibit other forms of competition among workers. It prohibits only this one, which reflects the character of God in his gracious dealings with men in history. There is no law in the Bible against one worker's willingness and ability to offer to work for less per day or less per hour than another worker presently does. Now today who says that ought not to happen? There is no law in the Bible against one workers willingness and offer to work for less per day or less per hour than another worker. Labor unions, that's a no-no. Labor unions are preventing workmen from competing with one another. And they will try to justify it to you that that's a worker's right. Where is it a worker's right? Do you see it anywhere in Scripture. They defend it on the basis of the text of Scripture. You can't. So he goes on. "The legal right to make a better offer is inherent in the biblical requirement that we become more profitable servants." Now obviously, why would a person want to work for less wage? Because if he was competing with someone else for the position, and he could do the work, he could that beat that other person out by offering a lesser wage. Now that is exactly forebode in everywhere you have a union shop today, absolutely forbidden. But there is not a scriptural shred in any of God's revelation that prohibits that sort of competition.

Point 3, This exception to competition is granted to the destitute laborer on the boundary of employment-it is an early form of employment insurance, here's why. The employer's economic problem, what we're trying to do now is pretend we're the employer, the employer's economic problem is his lack of knowledge about the competence of the new worker. If you've ever hired someone this is a question. So the employer uses a delayed payment scheme in order to minimize his search costs in estimating the competence of new workers. Accurate knowledge is not a zero price resource; employers try to obtain such knowledge as cheaply as possible. They use the new worker's to accept delayed payments as a cost-effective substitute for more detailed information regarding the worker's abilities and his willingness to work. In other words, they didn't have background checks and that sort of thing but just watching the guy, does he show up on time. I mean, this is a major issue with certain people, they get a job and they don't even show up on time. So the point is, what kind of work habits does this person have. And so there's a period of trial. So you can understand the problem here. The problem, though, that God sees with the delayed payment is that the employer thereby allows wealthier employees to defraud the destitute employees so to protect him they have this open door thing.

So that's thinking about what's going on with these two verses, talking about payday every day, it was just a device to try to get these people into the work force.

Now we come to verse 16. Now if you just read this text, you know, one verse after another, you'd go from verse 15 to verse 16 and you'd wonder what on earth ties verse 16 back with verse 14-15. What is going on here with verse 16. "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers, a person shall be put to death for his own sin." Now why is this plopped in the middle of this? I think the reason is that verse 16 is getting at responsibility, individual responsibility and the idea here is that when you have a person who is trying to argue that they're not responsible, they are pushing blame on somebody else. So in the case where the father would be put to death for the child or the child be put to death for the father, what you've got there is a shifting of responsibility. It's being moved and misrepresented, it's being moved from one person over to the other person and this again implicates the ninth commandment. So in our blank there in verse 16, failing to hold people responsible for their sin not only causes violation of the sixth commandment, but also the ninth commandment because it misrepresents the rationale for judgment.

And there's a case in point and I narrated it there, because we've seen it, in Deuteronomy 1, way back when we started the series, remember what happened. The first generation of that nation, what happened to them? They never got in the land. Why didn't they go in the land? They were moaning and groaning about oh, what's going to happen to our children? And the Lord said I'll tell you what's going to happen to the children, the children are going to inherit the land and you're not, and they're going to inherit the land because you folks, you heard My word and you failed to trust Me so you're disqualified, I'm not going to allow you to inherit the land because you won't believe Me, you won't trust Me. So there is where God, and remember, Moses is talking here, he saw that, God held the entire first generation, apart from Joshua and Caleb, He held the entire first generation responsible for their sin. He did not blame the second generation for the first generation's sin. So you have a test case of how God operates this way.

Now I point out the other thing here that goes on, and that is the people will say well what do you do about the fourth commandment, "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me?" It's the fourth and fifth generation of what? "Those who hate Me." In other words, there's a sin pattern passed from grandpa to daddy to son to the baby, four generations. There's usually three or four generations that know one another so they're close. So where a family persists in a sin pattern, and I'm sure we've all seen that, we've seen it historically, the Herod family, Herod the great, he was a nincompoop, he was the guy, that genocide in Matthew 2, and then we have his son's a jerk, and he dies later in the book of Acts. So the whole Herodian family was screwed up for three or four generations and they were all discipline by God, they all died horrible deaths. So there's a case where God holds them responsible but he's not destroying the child because of the father's sin, he's judging the child because the child keeps sinning the same way his dad did. In other words, that family hasn't broken the sin pattern,

and families can propagate sin patterns, you know, that's just the way it is.

So we get back and we want to stop just a moment here to say whoa, let's go back to an old chart. What we're saying here is that in the ninth commandment usually you're dealing with political issues or ethical issues, but you cannot allow yourself to be distracted. While you're dealing with these, you're actually dealing with these, because underneath the ethic is the question of what is truth? What kind of a universe we live in. Remember the quote I showed of Bertrand Russell, and that is: If the universe really is a chance meaningless environment where do you get your ethics from. You can't get meaningful ethics from a meaningless universe. So all those questions are... and we are sloppy today and the sad thing is that very, very few people on the public circle are teaching us and modeling us on how to think about these things. Think of the two issues that are tearing up our society right now. The one ethical issue that goes up before the law courts and we are having all kinds of problems with the health care bill because of abortion. People will say... we've got one people that will say a mother has a right to do what she has to do with her body; it's her body, not the man's body. And so this is choice. And of course, the pro life people say wait a minute, it's not just the woman's body, it's a fetus, aha, but the difference between those two positions starts down here, doesn't it? You're talking about the nature of the reality of the human body. That, by itself, isn't an ethical issue, it's a metaphysical issue, it deals with what is. And then epistemologically has God spoken in history to tell us about the womb? Or has He not; has He remained silent or has He spoken. So if you're going to say well, I don't believe the Bible, you're in effect saying well you have your own epistemology, you've rejected revelational epistemology. So obviously you're going to have ethical and political... you're going to go in that direction. But very few people bring this out.

The gay issue is another one. Fundamentally behind the whole gay issue, and by the way, we have to be careful in our opposition to homosexuality, we are not saying homosexuals should be ridiculed, beat up and be objects of name-calling and all that sort of thing; respect these people. But the issue is, is homosexuality a constitutional thing for which a person has no choice, it's just kind of a screwed up sexual thing, or is it a chosen behavior. That's not an ethical thing, that's a metaphysical thing. And again it calls upon an epistemology; has God spoken about this or hasn't He spoken about this. So you can't discuss the ethical and political issue without also dealing with the metaphysical and epistemological issue, and nobody does this; they're shooting at each other ethically. But they never get down into the substantive argument and I would think as Christians we need to drive the argument down; we need to pull the argument down here because here is the issue of God and revelation. And so it becomes an entrÄ, possibly, for the gospel, to bring the conversation down here to these levels. So it's just a reminder as we go through this.

Now we have item four, verses 17-22 and we have an extended section here that deals with justice and deals with the issue, again, or economics. So first verses 17-18, "You will not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. [18] But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there and therefore I command you to do this thing. Now what has

that got to do with verse 16 and the other verses. We've already seen, by the way, this same point about don't pervert justice, you know, remember we dealt with the requirements for a judge, remember we dealt with the protocols of how you conduct a trial and so on, all that. That was in the other sections. Well, why is it repeated here in the section of the ninth commandment. Because of the first verb, notice the verb, "You will not pervert justice," in other words you're misrepresenting justice and you're doing it to whom? The ger, the stranger, the orphan, the fatherless, and the widow.

Now who are the three nouns that you'll see again and again in the Bible that depict the people that are helpless, the people who have nobody to stand up for them? But these people are made in God's image. So whether they are weak, whether they are vulnerable to exploitation doesn't make any difference, they are made in God's image. And so this is a test to protect that. It would be a very easy thing for people to pervert justice, oh, haven't got time for them, they're just some little peon, don't bother with them. Well, no, that's perverting justice, that's misrepresenting God's justice because you can get away with it and be sloppy about it because, after all, these people, they can't make a fuss, they're too weak to bother, they don't bother me. Well, that attitude, and God says remember, when you guys were in Egypt you were down to the bottom of the totem pole, so God just kind of reminds them of their historical origins and says how'd you like that? What do you think your dad, your grandfather and your great-grandfather did when they were treated like scum bags, when they were treated like they didn't count. Just remember that, I redeemed you, God says, I took you out of that place because that's wrong; you shouldn't treat people that way, and I got you out of that, don't you turn around and start treating people that way either. So that's basically what God is doing, He's dealing with... it's misrepresenting.. the blanks, here, misrepresenting God's justice and His grace," see how the ninth commandment is close to that third one, taking the Lord's name in vain, because if the Israelites were supposed to give a testimony to the world about Yahweh and they're doing and acting out this way, aren't they basically profaning the name of Yahweh? It would be like us, when we misbehave, when we don't follow the Word of God, what are we doing? We're hurting the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ. So again, that's part of the ninth commandment, the ninth and the third go together.

That's verse 17 and 18. Now as we said, the ninth commandment testifies, and this is one of the blanks, the ninth commandment testifies to the capability God has given to man so he can properly "name" the created environment around him," see, it all deals with language, the capability God had given to man so he can properly "name" the created environment. On a non-Christian basis that is not a solved problem. I can show you, I'm going to be teaching a course in Connecticut on the framework here shortly and one of the places, the reading assignments I've got is I show four or five pages in a mathematics book and I use mathematics book because people, that's the last place they would think that religion occurs, and so I deliberately go to mathematics to prove my point. And that is I can show you leading mathematicians in the 20th century who have no idea, and admit it, why math works. They're stunned that you can sit there and evolve and design and solve a theorem that's wholly inside your head and lo and behold, nature operates the same way. And the admit, we have no idea why that happens, because they don't believe in a Creator. I

mean, it's very easy once you believe in a Creator and creation. Of course it does because He's made us to be like Him, to think His thoughts after Him. But if you're telling me the universe is meaningless, and it's just random, answer this question. How come math works, which is a product of our minds. There are no answers to this, but the Bible has answers.

So, "You will not pervert justice to the ger, nor the orphan, nor take a widow's garment as pledge." In this case there's a more strict standard applied to the widow than to the man. Remember before a man could give up his garment as a collateral; in this case a widow was not to, a widow had a double layer of protection, she had to be protected. Again one of the tender things, and I hope you see this because you're going to run into this if you haven't already, with somebody saying oh well, the God of the Old Testament is a meany, He's a God of wrath. And I believe in a New Testament God, gentle Jesus, meek and mild. What's this? This is meekness; they don't read.

Now in verse 19-20 we get into another economic thing. The last section of chapter 24, we hope to get the first five verses of 25 done also and that finishes the section, but if you follow with me verses 19-22, "When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. [20] When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the orphan and the widow. [21] When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterwards; it shall be for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. [22] And you will remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this thing."

The technical word for this operation is gleaning, and it was applied, interestingly, not to the businesses, the urban business had no gleaning in them. This was the agricultural and it apparently is because the land was Yahweh's. The business Israelite liked to say well, I built the business, I own it, but no farmer could say I built the land. The land was God's gift; it was capitalization, it was an asset given to them by God directly. So God has the right to say this is the way I want you to do it.

So now the question is, what is going on with gleaning. So again, if you'll follow in the outline we'll turn to Dr. North for some insights. There's five different implications, you could probably get more out of this, but these are the kind of implications no Old Testament commentator you find does this, because they're not trained in the area of economics. Actually there are seven here, so let's go through the seven things that show you how clever, how wise our Lord is when He put this statute and this judgment together.

First, Gleaning was by owner invitation, and how do we know that? Boaz & Ruth, who invited Ruth into the field so she could glean? Boaz. And what do you suppose is the implication of that? The idea that it is the owner of the land who invites the gleaners, people to come in and glean. That automatically acted as a screening device. This means that the gleaning law was a form of conditional charity in each individual

recipient's case, although the loss was compulsory from the point of view of the land owner, because he couldn't harvest the whole field, he wasn't 100% harvested, he was 95% harvested. So the price was always extracted from the produce, but the one to whom that produce was given was filtered.

Biblical charity is always conditional. Charity is always conditional. Why is it always conditional? Because it's a choice, charity is a choice. See this is why we're all dumbed up with socialism, confiscate the wealthy and give it to the poor. Yeah, but that's compulsion, that's not voluntary. So there's a difference. Biblical charity is always conditional. Charity is not to subsidize evil, for it is an act of grace. Unconditional charity, now look at what North says here, this a tremendous point he's making, Unconditional charity is antinomian, meaning it doesn't follow any law. In a fallen world, unconditional charity will eventually subsidize evil. And if you go back and you look at the books of the rescue missions in American cities in the 19th century that dealt with poverty, dealt with the inner city horrors of child women and woman labor and got jobs and food and training for these people, and helped them educate their poor kids that would have spent their lives in a factory, the people who did that were Christians and when you do research in how they ran those missions to deal with inner city poverty, every single one of them spoke to the issue of we cannot subsidize evil, and that meant that they were custodians of dollars that Christian citizens had given them and they were not going to just pour those dollars down the drain. They were going to see that they went to people who deserved this, who were looking for it.

This is even more true of legal entitlements to other people's wealth. Such wealth transfers are not a form of charity. They are legislated theft. They represent a perverse modification of the eighth commandment: "Thou shalt not steal, except by majority vote." These are harsh words but I urge you to try to find something wrong with this, on the basis of Scripture.

2. Gleaning allowed the "deserving poor" to do work... do work to support themselves and improve their condition. God expected the more successful Israelites to provide economic opportunities for such willing laborers. These opportunities respected the dominion impulse in man, the dominion impulse in man, handouts in many ways are demeaning, and people often experience a sense of inner shame because of that. We want to earn because God put a dominion impulse in us. That's what's so frustrating about unemployment when you're looking for employment, you want to be productive, you want to have a sense of accomplishment rather than disrespectful "entitlement." They had to work harder, and this is another point he's pointing out, the gleaners who would come into the field had to work harder to harvest the food products than the owner and his paid harvesters, but they were also free to sell the produce and thereby start a small business. Nothing then stopped them from turning around and taking the gleaning material and selling it if they needed cash right away. So they could get involved in business, see, they're not just passive.

3. Gleaning challenged the modern economic goal of maximization of return, the economic goal of maximization of return by commanding the owner to harvest inefficiently and being wasteful with his crop (another challenge

to libertarian economics) and trusting in Yahweh's compensating blessing. Remember what Yahweh said, do this and I will bless you. Why do you suppose the blessing is there? What kind of blessing is that? It's an economic blessing, he's saying I am commanding a level of inefficiency in your harvesting, I want you to be inefficient, I don't want you to be so efficient you totally harvest the field. I want you to be sloppy and I know that's going to hurt your bottom line but I'm going to take care of your bottom line. I'm going to give you a blessing if you'll do that for me. so this disciplined the land-owner not to become obsessed with every last piece of his production.

4. This was true charity, not a government welfare scheme. It is not a government enforced welfare scheme. The poor had no legal claim, notice, this is not giving the poor entitlements to that vineyard, it was by invitation. The poor had no legal basis, but the owner had a moral responsibility to be gracious just as Yahweh had been, think about the manna for forty years. What to talk about gleaning, the whole nation had to be gleaners once, right, every morning going out and picking up the scraps that God had given during the night. So you should understand what gleaning is, you all were gleaners when I provided food for you

So here are some implications, the obedient owner did not pay salaried harvesters to collect marginal pickings, in other words the edge of the field where it's harder. He paid his main employees to do the easy work. This lowered his labor cost per harvested unit of crop. But the net income loss as a result of gleaning did lower his total return from his land and planting expenses. There is no doubt that this economic loss of net revenue constituted a form of compulsory charity, on the part of the owner it was compulsory morally compulsory, the State isn't involved in this thing, by the way.

He's talked about bottom line, but now in the next quote, watch how he deals with the workers. Now these guys are the average worker, it's not the gleaners, these are the guys that would be in the harvest at the piece-meal workers that the employer would have hired to do his harvest. How did piece-rate harvesters suffer a reduction of total income? Because they could not lawfully gather the total crop of the field or the vineyard. Each worker had to leave some produce behind, which means that his income suffered. This also means that the poor of the community were in part funded by the slightly less poor: the piece-rate harvesters. The harvesters were reminded of the burdens of poverty." So this affected not just the owner but it also affected the paid harvesters. "This in effect became an unemployment insurance program for the harvesters. They knew that if they later fell into poverty, they would probably be allowed to participate as gleaners. They forfeited some income in the present, but they did so in the knowledge that in a future crisis, they would be able to gain income from gleaning. Both the landowner and the piece-rate worker financed a portion of this morally compulsory insurance program." Now you'd never think about this and you're not going to run into this in some Hebrew exegete, this is just a guy that's looked at the text and said wait a minute, if God says this, then this must follow, and what about this and what about this. And that's how you see some of the tremendous implications of this Mosaic Law Code.

5. Point 5, another point, "Gleaning brought potential employees with a good work ethic to the attention of employers." In other words, these people would show up, they'd glean, and obviously if they had the incentive to go out and glean and work hard, you know the guy might sit there and say, you know, I see Mr. Jones, he comes in here and he does gleaning and I noticed, boy, he really works hard, next time I need an employee I think I'm going to hire Mr. Jones. He would never have known Mr. Jones had gleaning not brought Mr. Jones on to his land. So now he observes Mr. Jones and he can do an economic analysis of what kind of an employee would Mr. Jones be. "(In modern times "minimum wage laws" do exactly the opposite: these laws exclude untrained potential laborers from entering the labor market and coming to the notice of employers.)"

So we go the opposite way. This is why, by the way, labor unions are always for minimum wage; people never get it. Why are the labor unions always wanting... you say well, I don't understand the connection, here's the connection, by establishing minimum wage you keep these people from competing with you so the union people have all the jobs, that's easy to see. But it's always sold as it's compassionate to have minimum wage. If you were a businessman and you have some teenager with absolutely zero experience who wants to work, he wants to start, he wants a job, and you can't give him the job because you can't afford to pay him the minimum wage because he's not that productive yet, but if you could hire the guy at a lower wage, get his training, he'd come up to those standards, probably himself. But you can't do that because minimum wage stops it. So in the name of social compassion what we've really done is increase unemployment. And that has been proven, by the way. Every market where there's minimum wage laws has higher unemployment than markets without minimum wage, so there's the social repercussions.

6. "Gleaning in this rural setting kept the poor from flocking to the cities and causing development of an urban underclass. It operated in the local tribal areas without an inefficient bureaucracy." It was always very simply ministered, and in every modern major city in Western civilization and in the Middle East for that matter, where is the center of the poverty, your functionless poverty, people who are endemically in poverty? It's always in the cities. But what God designed is He's taking care of the poverty thing out in the countryside so it doesn't come into the city. See, this is designed this way. It's an amazing thing.

7. Gleaning, by being offered to the ger, the resident alien, it increased his loyalty. Nothing like this over there in Syria, nothing like that down in Egypt, nothing like that over in Assyria, man, I like it here in Israel. So it cultivated a respect and a desire to live there.

Now we have a couple of other verses here and we'll finish the section. Deuteronomy 24:1-3 and then we're going to do verse 4 and quit. "If there is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that the judges may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked. [2] Then it shall be if the wicked man deserves to be beaten, that the judge will cause him to lie down and he be beaten in his presence, according to his guilt, with a certain number of blows. [3] Forty blows he may give him and no more, lest he should exceed this and beat him with many blows above these, and your brother be humiliated in your sight."

Now clearly, the emphasis is on the humiliation. And again, the man who, even as a condemned criminal is still made in God's image; he's to be treated with respect. So this again fits into this ninth commandment. The emphasis is upon caring for the dignity of the punished one. And here's the blank, "dignity of the punished one. The condemned one is made in God's image and he must receive punishment fitted to his status under God. Not just beaten to a pulp, I mean, in the Code of Hammurabi they do it sixty times, and it's just absolutely brutal. In Israel that was the maximum. Distortion of that image is misrepresentation of who man is and so if we look at the text, "If there be a dispute," so there's the legal issue. And by the way, here you see what the word justification is meant to be. This is where Protestantism differs from Catholicism. In Catholicism they use the word justification but it's not like we do. They use the word justification the way you and I would use the word sanctification. You're being justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified and so forth. But in Protestantism, justification isn't justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justified, justification is once and for all, it's a forensic sentence, it occurs when you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the reason is it follows a simple court, it's God's courtroom, and He says you're justified.

Now here's an example, the judges judge them and they justify the righteous, they're declaring the person has obeyed the law, he's righteous, he's met the standard. They don't keep reiterating the sentence, Monday they do it, Tuesday they do it, Wednesday they do it, Thursday they do it, no! It's over when the initial justification occurs.

[2] "Then it shall be, if the wicked man deserves to be beaten," and then it goes on about condemning the wicked but even in condemning the wicked we have a restriction based on who the person is. Now if you look at your handout I have a little box there and I have a little comment. I have worked for years inside the correctional system and I can tell you about the correctional system, and the correctional system doesn't correct. What the correctional system does is tax you and me to spend \$40,000 on food and lodging for criminals for the rest of their life. And I know there are people within the DOC that are trying hard, I'm not personally attacking them. I'm just saying that as a system it really isn't functioning; we've got more prisons in this country than any other country on earth. Now doesn't that raise a question, is something wrong with us here in America, why do we have more people in prison than anybody else? Have we got more sin in our country? I don't think so. Why is it we have this problem, and why is it that the three most high cost things for local government, one of the three, besides education and Medicaid, is incarceration. It's an enormous burden economically. So compared to the so-called correctional system today, neither liberals nor conservatives are proposing anything that works. Liberals want "treatment" programs for the non-violent and everlasting cages for those guilty of capital crimes. They don't want to execute people so they cage them for the rest of their life. Conservatives want more strict sentences and bigger jails, which really amount to animal farms, you cage them just like you do animals. Both approaches misrepresent both crime and the criminal.

Where are the jails in the Mosaic Law? Have you seen anything in the text yet about jails? What have you seen? You've seen restitution, fines, and corporal punishment. Where are the jails? I haven't seen any. We might take note of this. So that's verses 1-3.

Finally, verse 4; verse 4 says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." And that's one that Paul uses to justify paying your pastor. So what's with that. Okay, looking at the outline, Care of working animals illustrates their value as created helpers to man. Muzzling an ox is contrary to his nature to snack. If he wants to snack while he's eating, let him snack. Why are you trying to force the oxen into a behavior pattern that he's not designed to do. Oxen aren't designed to be muzzled, they want to snack, they're hungry, they're working. So let them do that. It's saying don't misrepresent how God has designed this animal.

And then I've summarized for you five little things about animals and man's reaction to them. Air-breathing vertebrates have nephesh, plants do not have nephesh. There is a difference between animals and plants, it is nephesh.

And they were not killed for food, at least by man, apparently they killed each other but we weren't authorized to kill them until after the flood, which means it's an abnormality. It wasn't there from creation; killing animals is something resulting from the fall. It wasn't there in Eden. And how people treat animals is usually related to how they treat people, and killing animals for food, I think the reason God has that is to remind us that nephesh has to be given for nephesh; when we sit down and eat a hamburger, an animal has died that we may live. So when you give thanks for food you might think about that, giving thanks to the animal that just gave its life so you can eat and survive, but there had to be a blood sacrifice for you and for me. And Paul uses that and I give you the two verses in the New Testament for where he applies that to the fact that pastors and Christian workers should be employed, should have money. The theocratic society was historical drama that enacted customs, practices, and procedures to reveal spiritual truths.

So that's the ninth commandment and in the fall, Lord willing, we'll take up verse 5 and we're going to finish the tenth commandment and then we go into a totally different section of the Mosaic Law Code. So I appreciate your attention, I know it's been a challenge going through 54 different times here with Deuteronomy, but I hope it's helped, at least for those of you who have never gone into the Old Testament seriously, this will give you a good respect for what's happening in that great work of history that God did with Israel because it's a freebie of coming attractions.

We have a few minutes, are there any questions on this or anything we've covered to date.

[someone says something] Very interesting point, did everybody hear what he's saying. In Iran they had day laborers and the day laborer would bring his children to the work site and the child would do some work, so if there was a dispute with the father would the dispute also go to the children. That's an interesting cultural situation, it would be

interesting again to meditate on this, as a Christian how would you handle something like that. That's what these are really, these statutes and judgments, in our day because we don't live in a theocracy. But the reason why I think it's worthwhile to think these things through is because we live in the same world that they lived in and we're still dealing with economics, we're still dealing with labor, we're still dealing with sickness, we're still dealing with ethics, so yes, God hasn't given us specific statutes and judgments for our society, but we do have Deuteronomy 4 that says these statutes and judgments are wisdom, they reveal wisdom and we should learn from them. One thing I've learned is I have a lot bigger idea of the Ten Commandments now than I did when I started, that these Ten Commandments I had restricted their meaning and never thought about some of these implications that we're seeing.

[question asked] The question came up about minimum wage, if you didn't have the minimum wage how would you protect workers against an employer that would take advantage of that situation. This is where the delicate balance comes in because in minimum wage you throttle the employer but the employer can basically just not hire people. So you've got that downside. If you get rid of the minimum wage one way the people, the young workers could do is they could compete and go somewhere else; in other words, bid up, as their learn they're more worthwhile and more productive, leave, go somewhere else. Now this guy that's taught you the learning curve, he's going to lose because this employer spent time on you training you and then you just walk off and go to another employer. The other employer loves it because you come to him in far better shape than the other guy when you came to the first employer. So the workers can compete that way and oftentimes people say well, you can't compete against big companies. Look, every woman, every man that goes to a supermarket competes with a company. You choose which product you buy, so there are ways in a free market of competing.

But these do raise economic issues and the thing to remember is that in our day a lot of the stuff is just cliché, and it's well meant, I mean, some of these folks, like with minimum wage they honestly are trying to help people. The problem is how do you help people wisely, without blow back, the whole idea of what you're trying to do in the first place. That comment that you saw in Dr. North about unconditional charity eventually subsidizes evil, now you don't have to go very far from here to see that operate. And so now what have you done? Think about what you've done; in the name of trying to help people you have disarrayed productive people by over taxing them, you have built a bloated bureaucracy to administer these programs, instead of being one on one, and so yeah, you've given government jobs to people but where is the money solving the problem that you started with, where's the problem solving. How many bucks is it costing to pull one person out of poverty with these programs. I mean, that would be an interesting statistic, let's see how many people have risen out of the poverty, because that's what we want, we don't want people to be in poverty the rest of their life, we want them to enter the work force and be productive and how much has that happened. I think that would be a great study.

Our time is up.