

Clough Deuteronomy Session 18

Deuteronomy 5:6-21: The Societal Implications of the Decalogue Structure  
Fellowship Chapel; 30 Mar 10

Tonight I hoped we would finish chapter 5 but because of some dialogue and questions I've got I want to inject some new material and interrupt the flow here so we'll probably just get through the Ten Commandments themselves tonight. Tonight we're still on chapter 5:1-33, we are still working with that Ten Commandments event, God speaking, and we are looking again at this slide that we've looked at several times now because I want to emphasize again and again and again and this is a way of emphasizing this, that when the Old Testament is talking about idolatry, in modern vernacular what the Bible is talking about is the metaphysics and epistemological basis of faith. So that's why idolatry is so critical in the Old Testament, that's why it becomes the number one issue, not only with Moses but for centuries, prophet after prophet, Isaiah, Jeremiah, the whole exile thing seems to center primarily on idolatry. And if you don't grasp what's going on you kind of say well gee, you know, that's kind of making an issue out of something that I wouldn't think God would make that much of an issue when there are so many other sins around. It's because of the destructiveness when these blocks are destroyed everything up here topples. So this is why God is so concerned with this issue.

So we said that the Bible has the only answers that work to the great questions of life. And God has gone through Israel as a sort of historical laboratory to demonstrate cause/effect. So this slide shows the centrality of the issue of living. Now we come to the next one and we're going to take up this material and I want to inject it and I'm going to inject, maybe five versions of this thing from time to time as we work our way through Deuteronomy. And the reason I'm doing this is because I've had questions from people in the class about things they're encountering in the work place and in the classroom, particularly in the issue of ethics. So what we're going to do is we're going to look at different attempts by unbelievers to build a substitute Ten Commandments. So this is actually a question we want to ask ourselves because our fellow workers are already doing this, people in the classroom, people in the media are already doing it, they're far down the road. And if we're going to dialogue with them in any serious way we need to understand this. It's like going to be a missionary to some tribe in Africa, you're not going to be very successful if you don't know their language and their thought forms.

So one of the approaches we're going to deal with tonight is subjectivism and this is a very popular view of morals, standards. It's a moral relativism, and this permeates the whole culture. You're going to have to run into this and there are certain arguments that are flipped out that people will personally drop into the conversation if you're dialoging and you want to kind of prepare yourself for the conversation so you can at least... you may not have an opportunity to present the gospel but you may be able to just raise a few questions in their mind about their own beliefs.

Let's define what we're talking about here. I'm illustrating this for another reason and that is when you go to the Bible the amount of treasure that you mine and discover in the Scriptures is largely a function of the

intensity of the questions with which you come to the text. So as we go into this text we want these kinds of questions in our minds because this is God's Word and what does He say about these thing. So let's define what we're talking about. This is the number theory, there'll be about five of these, tonight we're just dealing with one, we don't have time to get into them, it deprives us of getting into the text. But subjectivism or moral relativism is this: Ethical judgments merely express and individual's emotions or attitudes toward an action. Let's think about this a moment; ethical judgments merely express an individual's emotions or attitudes toward an action. Okay, that's a statement of moral relativism. It's a fair statement and moral relativists will agree to that. So let's look and listen to the arguments for this; what are the popular reasons why people think this way.

Well, for one thing, circumstances and generations differ from person to person. So the argument here is that because we have people of different times, different cultures, that therefore you would expect that they would have a different sense of morals, that the morals vary by the circumstances and the point in history. It's almost as though these folks have a new theory of truth, it's called the clock theory, that as the clock unwinds that somehow truth is changing. But the point is that this is an argument for this position. Another very popular one today, and a lot of people who will flippantly take this position in conversation, here's the guts, here's where the emotional power to them is, it's intolerant to impose one's values on others. This is an age of tolerance, and it's absolutely intolerant for you to impose your values... "who are you to impose your values on me," kind of thing.

And then the third argument is, it's very clever, this one, because obviously if you have relativism you can have two different people with two different moral judgments, so here's how they get around it. Most people don't think of this one, this one of the people who I call the more purist, deeper subjectivist thinking; they have to answer the question: what do you do when person A and person B are having their own private subjectivism come out with different views toward an act? Now you've got differences, so doesn't that just prove their point? Well, their answer is that two persons conflicting judgments can both be true because they both accurately reflect the individual attitudes. See the argument, it goes back to this, "ethical judgments express an individual's emotions or attitudes toward an action."

Now, let's think about something here; look at that definition carefully and ask yourself whether moral subjectivism, or moral relativism is saying anything about actions themselves? Anybody see a point here to bring out? Look at the definition; what is the definition primarily concerned with? The person's attitude toward an action or the action? The attitude of the person. So ultimately moral subjectivism doesn't have anything to say about actions; moral subjectivism or relativism is autobiography, you're telling me how you feel, it's a psychology report but it's not related to the action itself, it doesn't have anything to do with the action, it has to do with whether you personally have a distaste for it or not.

So let's look now at the next slide which is the arguments, the problems to this position. So we start once again, definition, "Ethical judgments merely express an individual's emotions or attitudes toward an action,"

very common... very common. Now here's the first problem, we just talked about it; it says nothing about the actions themselves, only autobiographical expressions lacking basis for moral outrage over evil actions. There can't be moral outrage over an action because on this basis, if you think this way, what is the outrage expressing? Anything about the action, or is the expression just what you feel? It's just a psychology report, it's not an evaluation of the act itself.

The second problem is, and this is a powerful one, and this one, by the way, is something to keep in mind of every non-Christian position; ultimately they're self-refuting, and here's why. Self-refuting, since every person inevitable judges other's actions, if you follow them around, do they or don't they use the word "should" or "ought." How many times a day do we use should or ought? Every time we're using should or ought, and you can listen to a conversation and write it down, and have a check list, every time somebody says should or ought they're making a moral judgment, in particular a subjectivist intensely dislikes you to make a judgment about them. You ought not to do that, but there's no basis for them to say you ought not to judge them because, you know, if it's all personal feelings. I read an article that sort of gave a funny example of this, the problems you get into. It was a philosophy class at a university and this student was a very brilliant student and gave a wonderful paper on why morals are total subjective, and you know he printed out his paper and he turned it in to class and he put it in a nice little binder and gave it to the professor. The professor returned the paper with an F saying I don't like blue. Anybody see what the professor is doing? The student was incensed that the professor hadn't even read the paper and had given him an F, and the professor looked at the student and said well, I read the paper and you said that everything is subjective, I don't like blue. See the problem? The problem is it doesn't work when people start judging what you hold true, then there's a reaction.

So the third problem with it, socially, and this gets into Deuteronomy and why God protects against this sort of thing and why He wants an objective moral standard is that the resulting anarchy, if you have everybody going their own way with their own feelings, what you wind up with socially is anarchy. But anarchy can't be tolerated, so therefore, how do you deal with anarchy? The strong people, the elite people, somebody in power decides I will decide what is right and what is wrong; we can't have chaos so I will take over. And so what you do is anarchy always breeds totalitarianism and it has to because people can't stand chaos, people can't stand anarchy. So totalitarianism always results from this, where you have a judgment; the problem is when you go from anarchy to totalitarianism, and this position is correct, what you've got is more arbitrary judgments, this time it's just the totalitarian leaders decree what offends them, but there's still not a basis for morals or ethics.

So with that in mind, let's go to the Ten Commandments and go further in our study, maybe with a little more appreciation for the material. I showed this last time and I wanted to reinforce my point and that is that when you take an event in Scripture, one of the neat things about the Old Testament, when you read these events you can close your eyes, you know, and just think a moment, just take a few deep breaths and close your eyes and try to visualize the event, and not just try to visualize the event,

put yourself into it. In other words, like at Mount Sinai, visualize what it must have been and visualize yourself standing down at the bottom of the mountain and listening to what we're seeing here; put yourself into that act and event. Now when you do that you become, because that event itself isn't isolated, the event is part of a chain of events, so with that you join this entire history from creation all the way to consummation. And so always remember that warning then in the Bible is a part of a chain of events and the chain protects you; otherwise, if we just talked about Mount Sinai and isolated this and forgot about the Exodus, forgot about the call of Abraham, forgot about creation, forgot about the fall, forgot about the flood and we forgot all these events, Sinai could be kissed off as somebody saying well, gee, funny things happen, you know, maybe Moses was on pot or something. But it's not so easy to dismiss the event when it's part of a chain of events. That's why we have to be careful of not isolating, don't take a piece of the Scriptures.

Then we want to go back to this, we worked with the chiastic structure so we should be reasonably familiar with that and tonight as we go through and finish the Ten Commandments we're going to be down on this lower end of the chiasm, but remember again that a chiasm is a literary way of centering on something, and you'll see it sometimes in the Scriptures, Paul does this in a few places. We don't know whether it's psychological and almost subliminal in writing, the Holy Spirit just used this way of expression, but obviously God is speaking from Mount Sinai and He Himself is using a chiastic structure here. So remember again, verses 6-10, the first commandment, God alone is worthy of worship and service, the tenth commandment itself is not worthy and service, you shall not covet. Then we come down to the next area, accuracy in language about God, you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, that's the second, then we come down here and we go to the ninth, accuracy in language of judicial proceedings, no perjury. Both deal with language. And then we come to the next one, the Sabbath arrangement, management of labor and property, that's in this sabbatical thing, then we come down here, property is to be protected, "thou shalt not steal." So both those commandments hang on property and labor. Then we come to verses 16, it talks about honoring our parents, society depends on functional marriage and family, and here we say no adultery, marriage is to be protected. And then inside, with no answering verse, which is the center of the chiasm, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not murder, life it to be respected and preserved.

So what we did is we took that chiasm and turned it upside so that it's taking this side and putting it kind of on top, so if you take this whole chart and turn it like this, ninety degrees to the left, you get something like this. Down at the bottom you have heart allegiance, either to God or to self; the next level up is integrity of communication, and if you'll look at the sequence there's a logical connection here to social structures, and this is an outline, it's very, very simple but I think it's very profound in how God orders society and the things He thinks about. So down below you can't have a godly society if you don't start with a foundation so when you destroy the impact of the first commandment, even by coveting something, or by declaring allegiance to some other god or some other reengineered version of God, then you're tampering with the very foundation down here. Now this is why, in our country there's been

such a fight over the so-called separation of church and state because it's clear in the founding documents that these men were operating with a Judeo-Christian worldview of who God was. And they knew enough, they all weren't believers, but they knew enough to know that the nation needs that as a structure underneath it, you've got to have that support.

So the next thing up is integrity of communication, we'll look at that a little bit more tonight; then we have labor and property. Now think about the sequence here; you can't have labor and property in business that's going to be efficient and prosper if you're going to have lying, cheating, and deception. If you have deception in advertising it's going to rebound finally to the advertiser. If you're going to have deception in contracts that are written between businessmen, you can have a real problem; you can't do business in an environment that lacks linguistic integrity. It won't work. Then, if you don't have labor in business you have no generation of wealth, you have no production and therefore the next thing to go is marriage and family because marriage and family relies on a certain amount of wealth in order to support that marriage and support that family. And then, marriage and family, when it disintegrates, now life itself is in jeopardy. So I think there's an inherent structure and that's why I keep talking about this chiasm here.

So tonight let's look at verse... we'll just review verses 6-10 very quickly, you'll notice where God says, "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt," the only thing I wanted to review here in these verses, 6-10, is that first verse, "I brought you out of the land of Egypt." That's something you'll see again and again, we'll mention this next time, once you grasp the whole concept of a framework in Scripture it will solve most of your theology problems; you won't have to go and do a lot of super reading, all you have to do is remember, wait a minute, which event comes first. In this case, which comes first, Exodus or Sinai? Exodus, God brought them out. Which of those two events is a redemptive event? It's Exodus. So the Lordship doesn't come out until after we are redeemed and now the implications of redemption start to take effect. But you don't put lordship into the gospel; the Ten Commandments weren't saying gee, guys, let's compare Pharaoh's commandments with God's Ten Commandments and let's work our way out of Egypt. That wasn't the case; law does not redeem, God has to intervene to redeem.

And this is why I have this quotation, and I'm not picking on our former Vice President here because I could pick any number of current political people, but this was in a conversation he had in the New York Times, Op-Ed recently about global warming, and look at this statement, this is toward the end of that Op-Ed, and it just stood out for me. Look at the language: "From the standpoint of governance," right away, what's he talking about now, he's not talking about individuals, he's talking about the top, government, and in particular he's talking about world governments because he's talking about the United Nations. "From the standpoint of governance what is at stake is our ability to use the rule of law as an instrument of human redemption." Now if that isn't an expression of the legalistic heresy of Galatians I don't know what is. Law never redeems and the reason law can't redeem is because it can't change the heart. All law can do is have external pressure and compulsion, but that's not redemption: "A person convinced their will is of the same opinion still." You haven't redeemed anything, you haven't

changed anything, so law is not... this is a heresy and it's a heresy being pursued throughout the whole political realm, it's not just this country, it's all over Europe and so forth. It's a foolish thing; it's a substitute for the gospel.

Now let's go to verse 11 and now we're going to shoot through the rest of these Ten Commandments. [11] "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain," literally in the Hebrew, if you'll notice in your notes, I've translated it roughly, again, this is not polished translation, don't compare this with the good translations that you have that are published. I just do this to show you kind of an emotional impact of the words if you took them literally. "Do not lift up the name of Yahweh your God unto vanity." In other words, don't take the name and hold it up and show only vanity that's associated with that name. It's not just talking about cursing in a careless way; it's attaching God's name to something that isn't in His character.

Let me turn to Leviticus 19:12 and you'll see what I'm talking about here. "You will not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God, I am God." Verse 12 is what is meant by taking the name of the Lord God... see, it's very close to the ninth commandment, don't commit perjury. And what is perjury? Perjury is basically claiming a statement is true before God when it's a lie and there's a theology behind it. If you think you can get away with a lie, if I think I can get away with a lie what I'm theologically saying is God is no longer omniscient, He's looking the other way, I can get away with something. So the pagan opposite to this thing, to the integrity of language, is a term that ancient Greeks used.

In fact there were a series of thinkers in Greece who had come to the conclusion after endless philosophical debates that you could never get to truth, forget it! So they said instead of teaching students philosophy what we're going to teach them is rhetoric, and rhetoric is art of speech. And the reason that these Greek guys would teach the students rhetoric instead of philosophy is because they felt philosophy never went anywhere, it didn't provide truth, so now the way you succeed in life is you manipulate through the use of words, and that's called sophism, or sophistry. And that's a term that you'll need to use because you'll see that today, you'll see people taking words and word smithing, and what they're trying to do here, it doesn't matter whether they are true or false, it's how we can manipulate, how we can work our way around things with what we say and how we say it.

Now rhetoric has a purpose if you have truth underneath it. Frances Schaeffer, years ago, pointed that out, when a culture that does this in a serious way, with people that really know what they're doing and deliberately are engaging in this, he had a great word for it and he called it semantic mysticism. They're just using connotation words, words that have a connotation, like l-o-v-e, l-o-v-e has a connotation so what you do is you tack a word that carries all this connotation and you bring it over here and you label your little product with it, or your action, or your program. And what happens is, is that people because they're used to this meaning, they carry this meaning over to this thing that you just baptized, and it's powerful to do this, it's really sneaky. And the application, of course, the Christian organizations if we're going to do something in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us have integrity with

it. Let's not be phonies, let's not have gimmicks, and let's not have some sub Christian, sub biblical thing that we're calling Christian. And there's a lot of that, unfortunately even in our evangelical circles, hucksterism and so on.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15, the next block of material, deals with the Sabbath. The word Sabbath means to cease, and in the first time God gave the Ten Commandments in Exodus He gave the six days of creation, here He's talking about the redemption from Egypt. But look tonight, concentrate on what happens on Shabbat. Okay, this is Saturday, that's Saturday and it means cease, the word cease. So when you read this block of material, ask yourself which class of people ceased work, because in the Hammurabi codes and the other ancient codes people are treated in classes, a class here, a class here, the low class, the upper class, this tribe, this race, this group of people. Now look what happens when God states "CEASE." Look what He says, let's follow it.

Verse 14, "but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you will do no work; you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. [15] And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there..." you are a redeemed people. So Shabbat testifies to the fact that God's redemption is finished and in another sense it shows you the contrast of Yahweh as the Great King over Israel and He loved His people and He showed them this grace. I guarantee you Hammurabi never showed his people this, the Assyrian kings never showed their people this. This is an act of grace.

Now it has a problem because the problem is, and any business person can think of this, any person doing investing work or anything, wait a minute, if I cease my work, what happens to my wealth? I'm letting things go here for a day, how can I possibly cease and let this go? Well, you see mentally that's exactly what God wanted to do? Now why do you suppose God wanted that mental process? He wanted to teach people that your labor isn't ultimately what's getting you the wealth, I'm getting you the wealth, so I'll take care of that. Now He took care of it in an interesting way. We have a model of this because before God spoke this on Sinai Moses had already taught them the principle.

Hold the place and turn to Exodus 16 and look what happened to the manna. Now the manna was this strange nutrition that God gave to the people; this is logistical grace, how He fed millions of people out in the desert was a miracle. If a modern army goes anywhere the bulk of the people and personnel in a military unit aren't the combat people, they're the logistics people, the people who take care of the machines, people who take care of the fuel, the gas, think of tanks, oh tanks, you know, they go into battle. You don't know how many tank trucks carrying diesel fuel to fuel the tanks. That's where all the people are, there's a couple of people in the tank but there's a whole team of people providing diesel fuel to the thing while it's going through the desert. And you've got to have that supply line. So logistical grace is important and while these people were out in the middle of the desert God had to provide grace, and He did it by food, whatever this manna was, and you know what the word

"manna" means, in the Hebrew it is "what is it?" And that literally was the name, they went out in the morning and said what is this, and that became the name. That would be an interesting brand name, "what is it?" But that's what manna means.

So in Exodus 16:4, "The LORD said to Moses, I will rain bread from heaven and the people will go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. [5] And it shall be on the sixth day," now watch it, what's the sixth day? The day before they won't be able to do anything, so they're not going to have any food for the seventh day unless something happens on the sixth day. Look at this, "and it will be on the sixth day that they will prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." And then down in verse 22, "And so it was, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. [23] Then he said to them, 'This is what the Lord said: 'Tomorrow is the Sabbath, [a holy Sabbath to the LORD]. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning. [24] So they laid it up till morning, as Moses commanded; and it did not stink, nor were there any worms in it.' Now you say why is that? Because it did stink if they kept it more than a day. So now that's interesting; every sixth day God suspended the decay processes so that they could store it; they had no refrigerators out there. So again, God in His grace did this. So I think that's an encouragement that we can follow the sabbatical ceasing from work and be assured that God is taking care of it, and you've got a neat story here, a neat way to visualize this whole thing. Just think of the sixth day and the manna.

Okay, a few other comments that are in your notes. One is that this is the only one of the Ten Commandments not repeated in the New Testament; that's why the church does not have things on the Sabbath; you could if you wanted to but there's no authorization for a Sabbath in the church, you see it in Colossians 2 and other passages. And another point that's interesting, why is it that the day of the week is always seven days, all over the world everybody holds to a seven day week. That's kind of interesting, where did the tradition of a seven day week come from Israel through the Jews?

J. Edwin Orr in his book, Does Faith Make Sense, back many, many years ago did some work and he pointed out in the French and Russian Revolutions they tried a one day in ten rest, and what happened? The efficiencies went down; people were not resting enough. So here's another insight from the Mosaic Code and we'll see this from time to time as we go through the book. These rules that look so arbitrary and almost typological, turn out to be related to our nature, that the guy who's making the rules knows how He designed us. We'll see it later in circumcision; why did they circumcise on the 7th day, you'll see, because it's related to the vitamin K in the blood level. So there's interesting neat ways that you know who's speaking here is the guy who made us.

Okay, verse 16, we come now to: "Honor your father and your mother, s the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long," and in Ephesians 6:2 Paul points out this is the first commandment that has a promise to it. In other words, the future of a social order is a function

of the functioning of the family, and part and central to the functioning of the family is the inculcation of honor and respect. That's one reason why school teachers are driving themselves crazy, because the students come to the classroom and they don't honor, they don't respect, and the teacher winds up having to try to create some respect in the classroom when it should have been done in the home before they even got to the classroom. That's the bane of all teachers. But here's what God says, you will honor the parents. Now it doesn't say we like everything they do; in fact, in 1 Samuel 15:30 you have a case where Samuel comes to Saul and Saul's screwed up and he turns to Samuel and he says, he uses this word "honor," he says would you honor me by doing a sacrifice, even though I've messed up, totally messed up here. And Samuel was really ticked off at Saul in that passage, and yet the word "honor," Samuel said will honor you. It didn't mean he liked what Saul did, it means he recognized the position. That's the flavor of this honor.

And notice at the end of this command, "that your days may be long in the land," you'll see how this unpacks in Deuteronomy 6 where it shows more the dynamics of the family, that as the family goes, so goes the nation. When you have almost 50% of kids today in the United States born illegitimately, without a dad around, how do you expect the nation to continue prosperous, it doesn't work because there's a design flaw going on here.

Then verse 17, "you shall not murder," this is the center passage and of course Jesus, in Matthew 5, in the second Sermon on the Mount, if you take this one as the first Sermon on the Mount, what did He do? He emphasized that the murder starts with the human heart, hatred. And the word is "murder," and it does not eliminate the sword of the state. I remember during the Vietnam War I was in the ministry in Lubbock Texas and there were a bunch of anti-war pastors and I would never go to pastor's conferences because it was just a waste of time listening to all the gimmicks, sending bills to people for tithing, don't go see the person, just send them a bill, they may be in the hospital dying but they got a bill because they didn't pay their tithe, that's gimmick stuff, so I usually would never go to a pastor's meeting or anything, and I decided when I heard in the paper that they were going to have some anti-Vietnam thing I deliberately wore my Air Force Reserve uniform and walked in and sat down with them, and boy, the temperature dropped about 15 degrees in that room, and they, of course, they were all about how can you be a pastor and be for that. I got a certificate at home from the United States Marines, I had so many volunteers for the Marine Corps during Vietnam. And the point was that they descended on this command, "Thou shalt not kill," and I said no, that the Marines and the Army, the whole point is to kill the enemy and destroy him, and you can do that as a Christian, as unto the Lord. Well, this just about flipped them all out when I said that, but it's true. I mean, obviously you've got the sword of state in the Scriptures, and you have accidental homicide, Deuteronomy 4 that we just covered, that's not prosecuted as a murder. Murder is a defined act, it's not every taking of life. Romans 13, the sword of state.

Verse 18, it's adultery, and by the way, it's interesting the selection of the word here in verse 18, it's not the general Hebrew word for fornication. So by selecting this word it's zooming in narrowly on the

marriage relationship, so it's not just single people fornicating, it's a protection for the family, "Thou shalt not commit adultery. And by the way, Jesus also pointed out mental attitude starts with this, not the external act.

Then verse 19, "Thou shalt not steal," and the point in stealing in verse 19 is what do you need before you can steal something? What has to exist before the theft can place? People never think about this. You can't have thievery until you have private property. So the whole point of "thou shalt not steal" is a protection of private property. And that's vital, because later the prophets are going to go after the king, King Ahab, for confiscating private property. The state has a right to tax but it does not have the right to arbitrarily steal people's property. And God didn't tolerate that; when God ruled a nation He didn't confiscate property, He taxed, yes, He taxed income, He did not take property. Did you ever think about the difference between an income tax and a property tax? The Bible makes a very distinct difference between these two kinds of taxation. If you tax somebody's income you're taking their productivity as they're producing. If it's a widow, for example, her husband is dead, she's not earning any money but she has property, so you're going to tax the property, where's the widow supposed to get the money to pay the property tax. See, property taxes don't exist in God's economy.

And this is one of the things, as we go through Deuteronomy you're going to see some of these things, and at first glance you read them, and oh well, that's interesting, oh, that's interesting, but wait a minute, slow down and think, this is interesting, why does God have the tax code structured the way he does? He might know something that our legislators don't know about having a social order that flourishes.

Then we have, [20] "Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor," we've already covered that, that's perjury, you can't have judicial process going on if you have lying and deceit, and then in verse 21, "Thou shalt not covet," and it's that command, the tenth one, that Paul refers to in Romans 7:7, he says, and I'm quoting Romans 7:7 here, "I would not have known sin except through the law, for I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said 'Thou shalt not covet.'" So it's the tenth commandment here that made the biggest impact on Paul, theologically. "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbors." Now the animals that are listed in verse 21 we will see legislation in case law where that's protected. We're going to see a detailed case law, we're going to study about what happens if you see your neighbor's oxen loose, what do you do with it and you don't know whose oxen it is. There's a whole case law to deal with that situation. And what it effectively is saying is that it's not just not stealing, but it's caring for your neighbor's property. It goes beyond just the bare naked crime of just theft.

Then finally in verse 22 it's the end of the conversation, "These words the LORD spoke to all the assembly," to "ALL the assembly," notice, emphasis, "in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and then He added no more." See where

it says "He added no more," it means the conversation stopped. This is where the direct revelation stopped and something else started after this, but the Ten Words God has spoken He has spoken publicly. That's why we keep saying that when you mentally, in your mind's eye you play the video so that you can grasp this and you can emotionally enter into this story, when you think about standing there at Sinai think about hearing the voice of God these Ten Words, ten sayings in the Hebrew. And then it stops. And you don't hear about case law, you don't hear about all the details, He talks to Moses about that. And then that's developed over time and we'll have to deal with those.

And then it says, "And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and He gave them to me." Now there's a controversy about the two tablets and it's just a minor point but I think it has a neat twist to it. How many times have you seen cartoons or paintings and you'll see the two commandments and there's five on one and five on the other. And this is common in every day... and I'm not saying it's terribly wrong, but using the analogy of the Ancient Near Eastern codes and treaties, if Pharaoh made a treaty with a lesser king there would be two copies of the treaty; Pharaoh would have a copy and the lesser vassal king would have a copy. Now the next question is, where do you suppose they filed the copies, where was their protected data base? It was the temple of their gods; Pharaoh would take that treaty, stele and he would put it in the hands of the priest and they would be his data base protectors. Then the vassal king would take his copy of the treaty over to his group of people and plop it there, and protect it. So now we've got two copies of the treaty, both in the priestly line.

Now it's interesting to think here that God is producing two copies, one is whose and one is what? The treaty is between Yahweh and the twelve tribes; so God has one copy, the twelve tribes have another copy. Now where do they file it? Where's their protected data base? The ark. So both copies of the treaty go in the ark. God's copy goes in the ark because that's where God's presence is; the twelve tribes copy goes in the ark because that's their worship center, and the closeness of those two is actually a fore view of the human and divine nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. So you have a coalescing that the meeting place is going to be at the ark because both copies are there, both copies are protected. So He makes two copies of stone and He gave it to them.

Now from verse 23 to the end of the chapter we're going to have the reaction of people. We might be able to get through this tonight, I don't have this on the notes but we have some time here so let's work through it. "So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders, [24] And you said: 'Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives. [25] Now therefore, why should we die?" Sort of a funny way they constructed that sentence, "For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die. [26] For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? [27] You go near and you hear all that the LORD our God may

say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear it and do it.'"

What do you see in people's reactions? And you see this again and again in the Scriptures? We always want to see God in His glory but when God actually does show His glory we back off, Isaiah, remember in the famous temple incident. So again, here's a picture that's a tremendous theological doctrine that's vital to our salvation experience. What do you see as coming out of... what needs to the people have when they react and say hey, Moses, you take care of this, you know, come on down and tell us later about what's going on. What is that process they have just invested Moses with? Mediator, the mediatorship, and so now we have a neat picture that you can picture in your mind's eye what a mediator does. Just think of what the situation is; the mediator is needed, not because the people have, and this is liberal theology, we need a mediator because finite man can't understand God, is that what the situation is, is that the context of the mediator? Is this an epistemological mediator? No, it's a moral mediator, it's an ethical mediator. They understood, that's what they said, don't talk to us any more, it was no lack of understanding, revelation was clear. The problem isn't a lack of understanding or not understanding what God says and Moses has to kind of help them out to understand.

It's rather, they need somebody to go into the presence of God, listen to what God says, and then come and tell them. That's what they need. So mediatorial function comes from the Holy God coming into a fallen world, and it may also hold true in heaven itself, we don't know. It seems like the angels have free passage, the archangels and so on. But mediatorship arises here; Moses is now put in the position of mediator and priest.

Then what do the people say? Now the people are kind of careless here, the language is emotional, the sentence is almost fragmented, these people are shocked, basically. And then they make this cursory thing in verse 17, "You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and we will do it." Now come on, here you guys, you've just seen the holiness of God, and you're giving us this line that you're going to do everything that Moses tells you?

So God has a sense of humor, so in verse 28, God says oh yeah, "Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken.'" In other words, it was good intent. But [29] Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it may be well with them and with their children forever!" See, God looks deeply, remember what the diagram shows? It showed that you have to have heart allegiance. And if that isn't there the whole thing topples.

Now as you read verse 29 and you look at what God is saying, toward the end of verse 29 which of the Ten Commandments does that sound like? There's a familiar set of phrases in that verse 29 that harps back to one of the Ten Commandments-"Honor your father and your mother, that you may be long in the land. Now if that's what that commandment says and this is what God says, "keeping all My commandments," what does that imply about

the function of the family? If you honor your father and your mother it will be long in the land. Now there's something left out of that commandment, there's an intermediate step that momma and daddy do before it's "long in the land," and it's given here, that you "keep My commandments." So the training is occurring primarily under the authority of the mother and the father, not the state, the mother and the father! In this the home school movement has really clarified an issue that has needed to be clarified in a long time; that doesn't mean everybody has to be home schooled, but it means that the parents better know darned well who it is that's teaching their kids and what they're teaching their kids, and take responsibility for their kids.

[30] "Go and say to them, 'Return to your tents.'" God said I've heard all the goodie words but I know your heart, now you go and say to them, "Return to your tents, [31] But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you," and now look at the nouns, here's what God speaks to Moses privately, not the Ten Words, "I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I am giving them to possess." Remember the two words, "statutes and judgments," statutes are the basic rules of order, and the judgments are what you do when people screw up. So God is training Moses in the statutes and judgments.

[32] "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. [33] You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your god has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land [which you shall possess]." That last verse, which is where we'll stop tonight, that last verse gives you once again the heart and purpose of God. Remember we said what was the center of the chiasm? Life. And what does God want from people? He wants them to be blessed, He says "that you may live," I want you to live, I want you to thrive, I want you to have a great life, I want to "prolong your days in the land which you shall possess." That's the heart of the God of Israel; He's not a stooge, He's not a nasty God, He, at His heart He wanted Israel to prolong this because Israel is the medium through which the world will be brought to Him. So that's God's will. That finishes chapter 5.