

Clough Deuteronomy Session 37

Deuteronomy 15:10-16:17; Israel's Distinctive Theocentric Faith in God's Economic Order-Part 4

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Last time we, if you look on the outline where we are, in chapter 15, verses 1-18, was a distinct culture of economic liberation. And what we're trying to show here is that every one of those little indentations, every one of the rows in chapter 12, chapter 13, chapter 14, chapter 15, these are outworkings of the Ten Commandments. So rather than leave the Ten Commandments as just abstract rules Moses went ahead and gave specific instances so you can see how it works out. The last two sections, from 14:22 down to 15:18 largely concern economics. And I want to comment at the beginning, because tonight we're on a third section that deals with economics, and so you wonder why is this heavy emphasis going on over and over on economics and it has to do with how God has designed society. Remember this diagram that we had where we showed how the structure of a human society, in particular the nation Israel, how it works based on that chiasm.

Remember we had the Ten Commandments and the chiasm and life was in the middle and then we had the other commandments packed toward it. And then what we did is we just put it vertically. The idea here is that you have heart allegiance in the lower level; that's the basic, that dynamic has to work. You have to have unity on the part of the people of the kingdom. And that's why He had the first commandment, second commandment... tenth commandment. Then you come up one level and you get the integrity of communication and that's the idea of the integrity of language. And without that you can't go one step higher, and it's that third step that all these passages have to do with and that's labor and property. And if you see the place in the diagram it starts to fit together why economics becomes such an issue in the Old Testament law code, why there's so much economic implications of these Ten Commandments. And that is, you can't sustain marriage and family and life without obviously some sort of production going on.

So that's why in the outline tonight, if you'll look at A and B, one is the Dominion of Genesis 1:26, which we've spoken of many, many times. And that means that biblically accepted labor ought to be valued by a biblical society. And I emphasize biblical here because sometimes labor is not valued, sometimes it's useless. And so in those two New Testament passages, Luke 14:28-30, 31-32, in fact, if you'll hold the place and turn there it's an interesting example of how the Lord Jesus Christ, when He was teaching, utilized economic planning and it's interesting, since oftentimes people get confused about discipleship and believing, now here's a great passage that shows you what Jesus meant by a disciple, but before He makes that application He's really using two instances of planning; one is a business plan and the other is a military plan.

In Luke 14:28 He said... the introduction of this was He was talking about followers. Now at this point He's not talking about believers, He's talking about... well, hopefully they are believers but He's talking about not salvation here but sanctification; this is after a person is a believer does he want to be a disciple of the Lord, and He says there's a cost to this. Then He says in verse 28, "For which of you," now He gives

two illustrations, "For which of you intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it- [29] Lest after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, [30] saying this man began to build and was not able to finish." It's a construction project, Jesus obviously had observed these things going on and they knew about planning, all the logistics, you have to have a plan, you have to have blueprints, you have to have materials, you have to have labor, you have to have skills, actions to construct the tower. And He says before you start it you need to think about the cost of getting there and getting it done.

Then He gives the illustration in verse 31, "Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? [32] Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace." So there's a military example. And so both of these cases He's talking about planning ahead in order to finish the job. Then He makes the application, [33] "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple." He's not talking about salvation there, He's talking about a disciple. And remember that Jesus was an itinerant rabbi, and what do you suppose He did... itinerant rabbi, it means He traveled around, it meant that if you were going to be a disciple of this itinerant rabbi you'd have to figure out a way of support because you had to go everywhere he went; that's the way an itinerant rabbi would work. So there's an example of planning labor so that it accomplishes something in the end. So Jesus uses that.

Now we go to the second passage in the New Testament because this one says okay, now we've made the plan, what then. And so in James 4, here's a caveat in other words. It's not just doing a business plan or just planning it out, a Christian has another situation. And so in James 4:13, here's the Jewish traveling businessman who has his sales campaign. So see what happens, these guys knew business, James, you know, James, Jesus and the apostle Paul, all these guys are Jewish people and Jewish people were very active in the business field. "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit.'" Now that's a business plan and you can see a guy doing that. And there's nothing wrong with planning, as Jesus points out in Luke 14.

However, verse 14 gives a caveat to this process. However, "you do not know what will happen tomorrow," you don't have perfect predictions, business plans have to have some sort of prediction of the economic conditions but what James is arguing is you never have 100% certain forecast, so there's always a risk of uncertainty in every business plan. And so it says, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. [15] Instead you ought to say 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'" Now some people in church history have taken that last verse, 15, and argued that you shouldn't plan at all. That's not the point of the clause, you just have to read it carefully, all he is saying is "If the Lord wills we shall live and do this or that," that's the planning. All it's saying is God can detail the plan, that's all. It's not saying don't plan, it's just saying

put your plans before the Lord. So this all has to do with dominion, and you can see it's life enveloping; we can't escape the idea of dominion. So in the blank that I have on A, carefully planned labor is necessary but it isn't sufficient, it's necessary but not sufficient because of God's providential override on human plans, and we've all experienced that.

So part B, this is another aspect to why economics are so critical and why he keeps getting involved in all these laws and statutes. The second area of economics is valuation, and that's the word that comes over theologically as imputation. When you read about we are credited with the righteousness of Christ, that is an accounting word. That was used throughout the business world. In fact it was so used that there was a fellow that I met at Aberdeen Proving Ground that was getting his theology degree from some liberal seminary somewhere, and he came out into the office one day and he was talking about how Paul had taken the whole idea of the Bible and jammed it into an economic theory. I thought what is he talking about, and then I started asking him, where are you coming from with this. Oh yeah, he says, Paul is using all these economic terms for theological purposes so he's coloring the gospel with all this economic stuff. Well, not really, it's the reverse; economics are a picture in general revelation of how God works. So we have a problem in valuation. In other words, when somebody produces something how do you price it? That's the question. And one of the central issue in economics is how do you price something, because price is an assignment of value to something. And there are three approaches that are used, the first two based on man, and the third one based on God. And we'll quickly see how this applies spiritually.

The first is the free market approach; in the free market approach vast numbers of individuals assign their price estimates. Think of the stock market, you have millions of people involved in pricing, say GM stock, now that it's come back, or Ford, or GE, or whatever company, and the idea is that... if you ever see the stock market floor and you have to bid the thing, and bid asked, and this is going on and on and on but these guys at the pits are getting orders coming in from different people, I'll buy that stock when it hits 45 and I'm not going to pay a penny more, and so there's a limit order there, so that stock is valued at \$45 according to that person. Somebody else may buy it at \$46. So you have a spectrum of different people guessing at what the value is. And that's what a free market is all about. And people say well, the free market is kind of a free for all, because everybody is just guessing. Well, that's true but here's the advantage of a free market... they all can't be wrong. So the free market may not be the most accurate way of pricing something but it prevents disastrous decisions.

So let's go to the second one and we'll see why. The elite approach is where a powerful few claim superior insight into assigning price estimates. That's Marxism, socialism, regime of bureaucrats, when Franklin Roosevelt took over gold in the United States, Hans Morgenthau, one of his cabinet folks, in his biography points out one morning he walked into the White House and there was FDR trying to price gold for the day because the federal government confiscated it all and he was setting the price, so that day he raised the price 21 cents an ounce. And so Morgenthau is a treasury guy and he says Mr. President, why are you pricing gold 21 cents higher today than you were yesterday? Oh, because

three times seven is a lucky number. Now there's a classic instance of what happens when an elite few try to price something; you've got one or two people doing the pricing and you say oh, they've got their Phd's and so on. Yeah, but they have no business sense and so they can make disastrous mistakes and that's the weakness of Marxism, socialism and so forth. It happens when you have any monopoly, whether it's a corporation monopoly or whether it's a labor union, it doesn't make any difference, whenever you have concentrated power that determines how to price something you have the danger of a disastrous error. And the only time where pricing in the Bible was justified in a narrow few elite was Joseph in Egypt, when he controlled the food situation. Now, in that case what did Joseph have that no communist or socialist have. Joseph had prophecy, Joseph had access to omniscience. That's how he could justifiably control the food of Egypt, because he knew he had a perfect forecast. But any human doesn't have a perfect forecast, therefore we argue that the... and the Bible does too, that the free market is the safest way to go.

Okay, the third one, which we can't as humans do, but this is where it applies spiritually, ultimate judgment, where absolute true value is given by God to each person's labor. And only God can do that, and the reason only God can give true value to something is because God is aware of the inter connections. For example, somebody might invent, make some new invention, and God knows that that invention will do this, this, this, this, this, this for the next fifty years. He sees all the implications of that invention, and He sees the person's heart. Now the market doesn't even consider the heart and motive but God does. And so God sees the inner motive, He sees the outer results of this, and He puts the true value on it and that's why we have judgment. This is why, in the final Great White Throne judgment in history, where every unbeliever will have to face God and interestingly the text in Revelation doesn't talk about sin, it talks about works, they will all be judged by their works. And the theologians have argued about this and the sense is that unbelievers finally are judged on the basis of the lack of value of their goods, apart from Christ there's no perfect true value, so all the human good that's gone on will be exposed for what it is. That's why people are judged on the basis of their works, unbelievers. But then at the Bema Seat Paul is arguing in 1 Corinthians 3 that some of our works are wood, hay and stubble and they'll be burned up. What are these judgments about? They correspond to what the market does in that a price is attached or imputed to a work. So that's why there is a parallel between the economic realm and the spiritual realm.

Finally, point C, the Israelite demonstration of the Kingdom of God, we have to remember and we reviewed this last time because this gets in back of what we're doing in Deuteronomy. Israel is locked into a covenant or a contractual agreement, and we have to grab that because that is underneath all these texts, all these verses, all these claims that God lays on the people. It assumes that there is the economic cause/effect going on in the Old Testament; there is an economic cause/effect, and it's not involving, say laissez-faire economics or Keynesian economics, the unique economic cause and effect that's happening with Israel is something that is related vertically to their obedience or disobedience to God. The economic model of the Old Testament, if you will, has a spiritual component to it that also includes the geophysics of the environment, it includes the fertility of the soil, it includes the climate, it includes

the genetics of the seeds that they're using, it includes the fertility of the bodies of the animals in their herds. I mean, you start to think about this, you talk about a totally sovereign cause/effect, and the difference between that and say some economist and model of how things work is that in the spiritual realm of the Old Testament it was contingent on the relationship going on with God, and God set this up nationally. Israel is a demo of the future Kingdom of God. And it has two parts, Israel's unique relationship that defines what they could have done had they obeyed God, the full potential. In other words, if you wanted to price it this would have been the best price of their nation because they would have flourished.

But point 2, It was contingent on their obedience or disobedience.

Now tonight we are going to go through two sections, we're going to finish chapter 15 and we're actually going to finish chapter 16, so let's go back to chapter 15 and we'll cover the last part we didn't get last time, that deals with the firstborn of the herds. Remember we talked about the sabbatical issue, the resting, the generosity to the poor and so on. Now those themes continue. So in Deuteronomy 15:19, we're going to, if you peak ahead in chapter 16 to get the flow, you'll see, particularly if you have a study Bible or something, you'll see it's the feasts that are going to be mentioned in chapter 16. There's Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles, those are the big three feasts, those are the big three annual times people came to the central sanctuary. Well when they came to the central sanctuary they would have offerings, so that's why in verse 19 to the end of chapter 15 we have to deal with what offerings are they bringing. And here's where God gets the first and He gets the best, because here is a valuation, God's evaluation of the animals that are going to be brought to Him.

[19] All the firstborn males that come from your herd and your flock you shall sanctify to the Lord your God; you shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. [20] You and your household shall eat it before the Lord your God year by year in the place which the Lord chooses. [21] But if there is a defect in it, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God. [22] You may eat it within your gates; the unclean and the clean person alike may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a deer. [23] Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground like water."

Okay, so now we've got to deal with what's the deal with the firstborn, why is this such an issue with God. So if you look at the five points under Roman II on the handout: "Firstborn" sons mark the viability of the family," think about it. A guy and a girl marry, and the question is, can they have children. And obviously, the firstborn is a signal yes, they can have children. And that was important in the ancient world, and in Genesis 49:3, we don't have time but if you go back to that you'll see where the firstborn to Jacob was Reuben, and when Jacob goes to bless son Reuben, he says you are my strength, you are the firstborn of my strength, and that's the way they looked upon the firstborn child. In Israel they inherited twice what the other sons did. The blank there is it's the viability of the family and their existence insures the continuity of the

family name in history. The son carried the name, just like he does in our society and that was important, because the title to the land, the title to the inheritance was carried in the name. So obviously they didn't want dead-end families, they wanted families that would reproduce into the next generation to carry that family name. So that's part of all this firstborn business.

By the way, in Genesis 29:26 it also happened to the girls, the family story of Isaac and the family back there before Moses. The story there goes about the order of marriage of sisters and the dad, apparently was accustomed, judging from that passage in Genesis 29:26, at least with Jewish people or the people that were becoming Jewish, that the firstborn daughter had to be married first. There was a priority there.

Number 2, God considered the nation Israel as His firstborn son, interesting. The word "son" there doesn't refer to the Messiah, it refers to the nation Israel in Exodus 4:22. So that's an address where God speaks to Moses and He says now when you go to see Pharaoh I want you to get something clear, and this sets up the plagues by the way, God says I want you to identify all Jews in Egypt as My firstborn son; He's talking about the Jewish community. And that means it's important to God, there's a continuity involved here.

Item 3, the 10th plague of the Exodus judgments aimed at the firstborn sons-without blood on the door, in other words, every firstborn in that 10th plague was destroyed. The only firstborn, either man or beast, would be those who would be covered by that blood, and so this pinpointed the thing.

That led to point 4, Thenceforward Israel's firstborn-man and beast-not just people but also animals, were God's property. Turn back to Exodus 13 a moment and you can see how God treats this. It's all background for this passage we're talking about now. This is the claim, and this is why it's the firstborn animals that have to be sacrificed. In Exodus 13:1, "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2] Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and beast; it is Mine." So God claims an ownership of the firstborn. And in verse 12 you'll see, it says, "that you shall set apart to the LORD all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the LORD's. [13] But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb," that gets into the fact that the donkey was their tractor that they used in business.

So let's go back now to chapter 15 and we come to point 5, the firstborn-whether of man that carries on the family's legal existence or of the beast that proves future production-are a sign of the future, and an aid in developing a future-oriented culture. This is going to play a role here on the trials of bringing a firstborn animal up here, there's going to be a little caveat in the middle of a verse here, I want you to catch it. That's why I'm feeding you all this background on the firstborn. The idea was that if they had a herd and they had a firstborn they had some assurance about the future, that we've got fertility going, we've got production going so we've got a future here because our money depends on that.

But not, if you look at Deuteronomy 15:19, notice after he gets through about saying "All the firstborn males" and so on, "you shall sanctify to the LORD your God," what does it mean to sanctify them? Because, suppose you had a firstborn animal in March and the Feast of Tabernacles isn't until October; what are you going to do between March and October with this firstborn animal; suppose it's a very valuable animal that could be used in work. Look at the next clause, "you will do no work with the firstborn of your herd." So you couldn't use him; and so in effect, by saying "you will do no work," and you will not shear it, God prevented them from making a dime off the firstborn. And so this was an economic burden to the guy because he was trapped, he had to take care of these animals at cost but he couldn't do anything with them and reap any profits from them until he was given to the Lord.

And then, of course it says, verse 20, it says you will do this "year by year," and apparently it was the Feast of Tabernacles where most of this took place, an annual thing, [20] "But if there is a defect in it," then God doesn't value it. They He says you can sacrifice it but don't bring it to me, that's yours, I'll let you have defects, but I want the best. And it's a clear preference for God is what He's saying, he was choosing. Then it says, verse 22, the clean and the unclean "you may at it within your gates," so it could be locally consumed, the defective animals, the less valuable animals, didn't have to be transported to Jerusalem and go through the hoopla.

And verse 23, finally, the last verse in this section, "you will not eat the blood." And again I emphasize that if you see this and think about this as believers, because we're in... you know, we eat meat and some animals have to die so we can eat, turkeys particularly this week, but the point is that animals have to die, and if you think from the creation point of view, animals did not have to die until man fell. And animals were not really authorized to be consumed until after the flood, and then when they are immediately you have this restriction, all this talk about blood, drain the blood before you eat.

Now what is the deal here. This is why I've suggested and it's my suggestion, that God was preparing the human race for substitutionary atonement, that in a carnivorous diet animals have to die that we live, there is a substitution and this is why there's something that is almost like a ritual of letting the blood go back into the earth because the animal dies but his life, the life is in the blood, that life can't be consumed by us because Jesus alone says "eat My flesh and drink My blood." That's the first time you ever, in the Bible, drink blood, and it's only with the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's almost like God wants us to understand there's a substitution, an animal sacrifices his life for ours but it's not the ultimate sacrifice, His Son was going to do that.

All right, let's go on and we'll finish chapter 16, believe it or not. We've got three major sections here; verses 1-12 deals with the first two, the spring cycle. Now I have a chart there, we don't have time tonight to go into all seven of these, but I'm going to cluster them so that you can track the sections. There's a spring cycle in Israel's calendar and then there's a fall cycle. The spring cycle has these four and the fall cycle has three things in it, but these things are congealed into groups. So if you'll look carefully at the chart, in the spring there's a Passover,

there's Unleavened Bread, and there's the First-Fruits. Those three kind of all go together in what is discussed in chapter 16:1-8. So although verses 1-8 in Deuteronomy don't deal with some of these aspects, they're embedded in it.

Let's look at verses 1-8, we'll just look at several observations from it. "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the Lord your God, for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night." Notice "by night," because I see something very precise in the text here, "by night. [2] Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the Lord your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the Lord chooses to put His name," that is the central sanctuary. [3] "You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it, that is, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste), that you may remember the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life. [4] And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning. [5] You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates, [which the Lord your God gives you;]" it cannot be locally consumed, it has to be brought to the central sanctuary. Then it says there [6, "but at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide,] there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt." So there's a reenactment of that historic event. [7] "And you shall roast and eat it in the place which the Lord your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. [8] Six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a sacred assembly to the Lord your God. You shall do no work on it."

So what is going on with this. Okay, the outline, point A under Roman III, Israel's feasts were calendar fixed because Israel is under a set of historical national "contracts" that require verification. When you see specs this tight in the Scripture, that's not just to pin man down but also God so that men will see this is a work of God. And the point here is, the fulfillments of these tight specs in the contract were fulfilled, weren't they? When was Jesus crucified? On Passover. And we're going to see resurrection occurred on First-Fruits. So you have a tight spec so you can use it to identify God's works. The fact that centuries and centuries and centuries and centuries go by and Jesus Christ is crucified exactly on that day of Passover, and that He rises exactly on First-Fruits, what does that tell you? It tells you God, it dramatizes God's sovereign control in history. Okay, so that's that point. And by the way, the Church is not involved in this. Don't smear Israel and the Church together. This is all Israel, we'll get to the church later.

Point B, Israel's feasts contrasted theologically with pagan agricultural feasts, if you have children in college or you take an educational course at a university, they will always try to tell you that these feasts, this annual cycle is a agrarian and the Jews got it from their pagan neighbors and they kind of Judified it a little bit and massaged it and that's why it's there. That is not why it's there. This calendar is profoundly different from a pagan annual cycle, agricultural festivity calendar, and it differs in two areas. It differs in that they affirm Yahweh as Creator and Lord over nature by relating agricultural productivity to ethical

conformity with Yahweh's contractual stipulations, totally missing in pagan rituals of nature, whether it's the English Druids, whether it's the Aztecs, whether it's the Incas, whether it's the Babylonians, whether it's the Assyrians, all of these other pagan notions did not have this theology of ethical conformity to a revealed codex.

Point 2, It differed in that the individual feasts were and are adumbrations of God's supernatural redemptive acts in His integrated plan of salvation that culminates in victory. The pagan thing was just cyclic, it went same thing year after year. These feasts look forward to history moving to consummation, there was a meaning and a purpose in this.

Now in point C, the Passover, the idea that God brought them out of Egypt, it was the 14th of Nisan, which is the other Jewish calendar, and the point there, in verses 1 and 2 is that that's not an agricultural event; the Passover isn't commemorating an agricultural event, it's commemorating a once and for all liberation from Egypt. It's a historic event, and the crucifixion, of course, was on that. Then verses 3 and 4, no leaven. What's the unleavened-ness about? Okay, here's what happened, they took off from Egypt fast because of the plagues and everything else. The Jewish women didn't take the dough and in the Jewish home, when a girl was married she would take her mom's, the last dough, and use it as the seed for all her bread. So there would be continuity of the yeast from mother to daughter, from mother to daughter, from mother to daughter. And what happened in the Exodus was this... no leaven, they had to move out. And so the break of unleavened bread for eight days, a whole week, they had to eat bread without that, commemorated the fact that there was a cultural severance with the world. So the unleavened-ness, that unleavened-ness Paul picks this up and uses it as an illustration in Corinth. But the idea is there is the unleavened-ness signifies separation and a break in continuity, just that change in diet that we're talking about.

Then after that we have verses 5-8, not only do they eat it at twilight, six days, no work, not only the exact day but the exact time of day. Now just imagine you're a mom or a dad, and this was done in your home. This isn't done at a church or a synagogue some where, this is done in your home. So here you are, you're a mom or a dad and your little kids are sitting there at the table, and they're curious because this is different, this is not a regular suppertime meal here, you're doing strange things here. And so they're going to ask you questions and so you, as Deuteronomy 6, remember that chapter, the parents would say well, here is what happens, and then they would reenact this and they would eat it at a certain time of day. And the child is sitting there, well, why do we have to eat it at a certain time of day? Because this is when we left Egypt. So what do you think this did to the kids in the home that went through this ritual every year? It taught them their history, something we fail at largely today. They knew their history because they reenacted their history and their parents made sure their parents understood their history.

And by the way, no work, here's where the cost came in. So now not only does a guy lose the firstborn, and it wasn't just one sheep, in the course of a year how many firstborn do you suppose he might have had; he might have had 15, 20 firstborn, out of the different flocks that he might have had, firstborn in this group, firstborn in that group, I don't know, maybe

they had 1 or 2 but they could have had more. So he can't get any work out of them, he can't shear them, so now this is a cost factor, and he has to move this down to Jerusalem where the sacrifice goes. So now we've got lost cost, that these animals from a human point of view are useless, they have to be transported, then they're sacrificed. All of this is a cost. Then in Leviticus, we won't have time to go there but that's where this First-Fruits thing comes in and that is the idea that they would take the first of the barley that was harvested and they'd wave it before the Lord as a symbol, the idea that harvest is beginning. And the idea there is that First-Fruits, if you look on the chart, is the resurrection of Christ, He's called the First-Fruits. Of what? Of a coming series of resurrections, the first one already has taken place. So this is the whole idea of that spring festival.

Now in verses 9-12 we come to Pentecost. "You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain. [10] Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give," and look at the clause, "which you shall give as the Lord your God blesses you." So it was contingent in amount by whatever individual blessing you got. [11] "You shall rejoice before the Lord [your God]," and now look who rejoices here, "you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your gates, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are among you, at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. [12] And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and you shall be careful to observe these statutes."

Some observations about this, this is fifty days. Do you remember what happened in the book of Acts, the beginning of the book of Acts, when the Holy Spirit comes, before the Holy Spirit came, what did Jesus tell the disciples to do? Tarry in Jerusalem. Now some of the old time fundamentalist pastors used to make a point in devotionals about that and say well, the Holy Spirit came because they tarried. No, it's reverse, they were to tarry to be in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came; the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, and so it was a signal, of course, that the Lord Jesus Christ had risen, He had ascended, He was at the Father's right hand, and He is in charge and He is in command and He occupies the high ground because He sends the Holy Spirit. So it's the Father and Son sending the Holy Spirit to the earth and the idea of Pentecost is a signal that we can observe that something happened in the heavenlies. Pentecost happened.

Then, in the Old Testament the idea was the end of the spring harvest. So there was a continuity between the First-Fruits and this end time of Pentecost. And in this verse, if you'll look on the outline under point C, chapters 16, verses 11-12, see where I list them, son, daughter, male slave, female slave, Levite and so forth, they were all permanent members of their communities, regardless of status under the covenant. So now we have an interesting thing. Four, son, daughter, male and female servant, they were members of the family, but the Levite, stranger, orphan and widow were not in that particular family; by definition a widow had no family, her husband died and so she no longer had a family in that sense, she had her children perhaps but I'm talking about full family here. The orphan, poor kid, didn't have mom or dad, and then you have the stranger,

the ger, and he's a Gentile sitting there in the land, and so isn't it interesting that for this feast that expresses thanksgiving to God for the benefits and the economics of the harvest they would invite these people, and it was the family, they would go as family, not as tribes but as families to Jerusalem or wherever the central sanctuary was, and they were to invite the widow, they were to invite the orphan to come along and enjoy this. And so it must have been a time of fellowship because they were eating together, it was like a picnic, so that it was a social time of people having fellowship one with another before the Lord, literally.

Now one of the things that Gary North points out in his commentary and I think this is a neat little point to make here, there shall be one law. Now remember I said that over and over in this series, social justice, that's the big theme on campus these days, that's the big theme among liberals, social justice. Now look at these three verses, here is social justice, biblical social justice. Among all the nations in the ancient world, of all the nations that existed, you can't find one that has this feature. Go to a library, look at the Code of Hammurabi, go look at some of the pagan law codes, they did not have one law for everybody. There was discrimination built into the legal system, but here, look, three times, Exodus 12:49; "One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you." "One law and one custom shall be for you and for the stranger that dwells with you," Numbers 15:16. "You will have one law for him that sins unintentionally, for him who is a native-born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger who dwells among you." [Numbers 15:29] When it came to their central law codes, it was one law for everybody. That is biblical social justice. It has nothing to do with their economic inequalities.

Now let's look, down at the bottom, page 4, Pentecost--to the exact day--marked the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower Israel and being the Kingdom of God on earth. Now what I'm trying to do here, I'm trying to be careful. Follow me now. We said these feasts don't have the Church in view because they were given to Israel and Israel is not the Church. So then you say well, wait a minute, what's Christian, don't we celebrate the crucifixion, don't we celebrate Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, isn't that important to us? Yes, but the fore view of these feasts is they're given to Israel. Now let's think about the first one, Passover. When Passover happened and was fulfilled with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, that meant that every Jew could be redeemed, did it not? So therefore, that was the intent.

Now we as Gentiles, we are allowed to enjoy the benefits, but the benefits flow to us out of Israel's law, out of Israel's program. It isn't directed to the Gentiles, these feasts, we enjoy benefits from them, but the whole idea was for Israel. This is why in Acts 2 and Acts 3 you have those two speeches by the apostle Peter, remember, he's addressing the nation and he says if you will repent, you people, you crucified our... OUR Messiah, and if you will repent, Peter says, the times of refreshing shall come. He's not talking about salvation the way we think of it; he's talking about the Kingdom and he's addressing Jews who have just nationally rejected their Messiah.

So the fact is, Christ died exactly on Passover, He came on schedule and Israel rejected Him. And that means that Jesus Christ, His crucifixion is

effective but Israel, because they rejected him as Messiah, doesn't enjoy the benefits of this. It's like their clock stopped. And then we have Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes, on schedule, and what do they do? Does Israel nationally repent with Peter, Paul? No, the book of Acts ends with Paul so frustrated he says the heck with you, I'm going to the Gentiles now. So Israel's calendar in the spring was fulfilled but Israel couldn't enjoy that.

So now we come to the next series, the fall festivals, and here, if you look at the outline, I fill you in from Leviticus 23 because that's the passage where all this is developed. Deuteronomy, incidentally, measures point C, the Feast of Tabernacles. But let me work through this and let's see if you can see some interesting prophetic implications here. We've seen the spring cycle was literally fulfilled. The mystery is this; there's no historical events that correspond with the fall cycle of the calendar. So now what's this all about? Well, there's the Feast of Trumpets. One day of preparation for the coming events; it said the trumpets would play, and they would announce to the people, get ready for the next festivals. And you see, I got the calendar date there, it occurred on the first day of the seventh month, there was to be no "customary work" on that day. The Feast of Trumpets was only a day. A national alert for the coming events. Now the problem is, what would be the fulfillment of that? There hasn't been because this is an alert to the nation Israel. We'll come back to the fulfillment in a moment but let's just first get the flow of these three. The Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, that occurs on the 10th day of the seventh month, less than two weeks after the Feast of Trumpets. And this day was a solemn reflection on sin and repentance toward God that was to exclude all kinds of work, including getting meals, and it was to include every Israelite, everybody had to be here at Yom Kippur. If you didn't go to this one you were in deep doo-doo. So this was a very serious feast. By the way, this is why the Arabs chose to attack Israel in 1973 on the day of Yom Kippur, because they figured that the Israeli army and the Israeli Air Force wouldn't be ready to go because they' be involved with You Kippur. And Israel was almost overrun. Golda Meir was the prime minister that year and she was afraid to make a pre-emptive strike the day before the Yom Kippur, even though they knew they were going to be attacked because they had already done that in 1967 and the U.N. and everybody climbed all over Israel for preemptive strikes, so she said no, we're not going to do preemptive strikes, which meant that they had to absorb a massive assault, and they almost lost their Air Force; thankfully the United States Air Force provided the parts for their Air Force or they never would have gotten safe from that attack in 73.

But anyway, the Day of Atonement, then we come to the 15th day, notice the dates, the first day, the tenth day, the fifteenth day of the seventh month, this is Deuteronomy 13, so if you'll look at Deuteronomy 13 and read down to verse 17. "You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, when you have gathered from your threshing floor and from your winepress. [14] And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant and the Levite, the stranger and the fatherless and the widow, [who are within your gates]," see again they're inviting people in their community to join with them in worshipping God. [15] "Seven days you shall keep a sacred feast to the Lord your God in the place which the Lord chooses, because the Lord

your God will bless you in all your produce," this is at the end of the fall production, He "will bless you in all your produce, and in all the work of your hands, so that you surely rejoice. [16] Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. [17] Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you."

So Moses, in Deuteronomy 16 finishes off these three great feasts. Now let's backtrack a moment. In the spring cycle you have fulfillments on exactly the days. Okay, it all happened in the same spring, didn't it? The day, the year that Jesus died was the year the Holy Spirit came. Now this is a guess, this isn't airtight theology but Dr. Terry Hulbert wrote his ThD dissertation at Dallas Seminary on this whole issue and I think he did tremendous work on this subject. But if the spring feasts are contract specs to identify God's future work, then why don't we think about what is the fulfillment of the fall cycle. The fall cycle hasn't been fulfilled yet.

Well, let's think about these three things; let's think about, for example, the Day of Atonement. What were the words that Jesus said when he was about to be crucified as He was going through Jerusalem and He said you will not see Me until you say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. So there's got to be a repentance toward Jesus Christ nationally in Israel. Some think, and I'm one of them, that on Yom Kippur, sometime fall in the year at the end of the Tribulation, toward the end there, that the nation Israel, after all the horror, the sufferings, they're going to think... something's going to happen, I have no idea what fulfills the Feast of Trumpets, all I know is that the shofar that was used to blow on the Feast of Trumpets was used as a military signal. So perhaps in the future, some September, there's going to be something at the end of the Tribulation where Israel is either delivered from an assault or something happens that somehow makes them think that this is supernatural, our nation has been blessed supernaturally somehow and then Yom Kippur, notice the time, first day the tenth day, so nine days later they're going to gather together and I believe that's when they're going to recite Isaiah 53. I think the nation will be led by the rabbis and they will go back to that Hebrew text of Isaiah 53, the suffering servant passage. Perhaps also see Zechariah where Zechariah says they will see Him whom they have pierced. And then, that will be the national confession, that will be a national repentance, because remember, one of the things on the Day of Atonement was every Israelite had to be there. So this is not just a remnant of Israel, this is all the nation. Of course by that time it will be smaller because of the destruction of the Tribulation. But something's going to happen, they're going to repent on the tenth day of the seventh month, which is sort of September/October in our time frame, and then Jesus Christ is going to come, because He said I will return when you say "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. And at that point the Tabernacles, the Feast of the Tabernacles was a time when they saw themselves as protected.

I've had a computer problem at home and so I can't access the photography, some of the slides I did back many, many years ago in Israel, but we were out, Arnold Fruchtenbaum had taken us out in the plains one time, and he

said hey look, let's stop the car, look at this, we've got a booth over here. A booth, I'm thinking of a toll booth, and he says no-no, this is a booth. So he showed me this thing, I got a picture of it, made of palm leaves, and it's like a camping tent and they would sit in this booth, you and I would think of a tent but it's not cloth, it's not canvas, it's actually made of palms, and that's where they would sit for this feast. That's why it's called the Feast of Tabernacles. You can read more about it in Leviticus. So he said yeah, that's what they do, they still do, sometimes the orthodox people still do that. So I took a picture of it, I was going to show you the picture, maybe next week I'll have the picture. But the idea is we can relax at last, we are protected, Yahweh is here and we're safe again. That's the whole idea of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now I include a very interesting thing out of the New Testament, if you look at point C on the outline you'll see where I have highlighted Matthew 17, that was the Mount of Transfiguration and you know, when we preach that we always kind of make fun of Peter. Remember what happened? Jesus appears, Moses and Elijah, they carry on a conversation, Peter watches it and what does he say? It's good that we've been here Lord, let's make a tabernacle. And we often... you know, I've thought about that, here's Peter with foot and mouth disease, there he goes again, spouting off, but actually, if you think about it he used this word, and it may very well be that yeah, Peter kind of spoke out of turn, but he somehow captured something. Whatever that was, Jesus talking to Moses and Elijah was a fore view of the kingdom to come, and to commemorate that almost unconsciously wells up in Peter, a tabernacle, we'll build a tabernacle, and by that he meant a booth out of palm leaves, the same thing that they would do during the feast of tabernacles. And it may be a hint that in Peter's mind what he was looking at was a fulfillment or a picture of that ultimate consummation.

Then I also list two verses from John, the Gospel of John for your background; when you read John 7 and 8, that's the time, by the way, when the woman was caught in adultery and so forth, but Jesus made two dramatic announcements and this was during the Feast of Tabernacles. In John 7 he says, "Come unto Me and I will give you living water." And then He also says in John 8, "I am the light of the world," that's one of the ego eimi statements of the New Testament. So He makes these dramatic announcements that actually pertain to the Kingdom; I will give you living water, I AM the light of the world, it's not just focusing on Him and His character, it is that, but it's also saying that look, you people, here we are in Jerusalem, here we are celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles and I AM the fulfillment. That's what He's saying.

So conclusion, These feasts were costly, some have estimated that 20% of the gross national product went into these feasts. We can't read these feasts casually, they were very, very costly and they were economically disruptive. And in order to live through that requirement you obviously had to be a believer to trust in Yahweh's provision because you were just watching your profits go down every time you went to one of these feasts, significantly; it was costly. And one person commented facetiously, it also, because they ate a lot you'd say well, did this contribute to obesity. Well, if you think about it they had to walk to Jerusalem and back again, mile after mile after mile. So one commentator facetiously said there was an obesity control by the way they traveled in those days.

But most importantly they were Theocentric. Yahweh, not a central government, was the focus; the King isn't part of this, this is strictly between families and Jehovah. There's a unity in the community but it's a unity of faith. It's not a legalistic imposition of a structure by a central government. Obedience to Him resulted in more than enough economic prosperity to supply the great costs of these feasts. Yahweh was moving history forward to a grand consummation of final rest. And the feasts set the entire national culture against pagan worship.

Next time we're going to deal with just that last part in chapter 16 and we'll get into 17 and start moving on through.