

Clough Deuteronomy Session 40

Deuteronomy 17:8-20; Israel's Supreme Court & the Limits on Kingship vs. Pagan Kingship

Fellowship Chapel; 7 December 14

Tonight as you can see on the outline we're going to finally get into the king and finish out chapter 17 but I wanted to again stress, as we start into this, the overview, the big idea that's behind these offices. It comes out of the fifth commandment and that is the social building block for a nation is the family. There's no getting around it, even the church cannot substitute for the family. And it's very, very implicit throughout the Mosaic Law. And so we've listed three things, the institution of the family is where? #1, social interaction first happens, that's the first thing that we see, that's one of the three dots that you see there in the handout. The second point is it's where behavior is shaped for good or evil. And it's all shaped in the family because that's the first place that we encounter that, and even as an adult, you can think back to childhood experiences that you had that shaped your attitudes and just basically gave you a head start in life. And that's where the education really occurs; education in a family happens at those unpredictable moments when they just happen.

And we go back to Deuteronomy 5:16, that verse that's quoted in the handout, because that's the signature. That occurs almost randomly in the Mosaic Law, and tonight we're going to see the last verse of chapter 17, after we're dealing with kings, of all things, you have this truth restated, that is that your days may be long, that it may be well with you in the land, which Yahweh, your God, is giving you. So that truth, which is in the 5th commandment, ties the endurance of the society back to the behavior in the family. And why I keep stressing this is when you have a socialist type mentality in the political realm you always have these government programs that try to step in, they try to deal with the delinquency rates and they try to deal with what do we do with the gangs in the streets, what do we do with, basically the output of a dysfunctional family. And we have millions and millions of dollars poured into these programs and they really have a hard time showing any benefit. And the reason is because it's government trying to be a surrogate parent when the families are dysfunctional, and the government can't act that. The government has very, very limited tools, even though it has unlimited taxing power it can't get down to that level of the family. So family, remember, preceded government as we learned last time.

So when we come down here to chapters 16:18-17:13, that summary I have, I have six points just to review the idea of justice and why, at this point, the first of the three government positions are the judges, not the kings. Notice the king is not the first position here, it's the judge. And that should tell you, a little light should turn on and say oh, isn't that interesting, the king is subsidiary, he's almost a second thought, AFTER the judges. And so that says okay, then if that's the case, we need to look at what are they talking about in the function of these judges. So I tried to summarize it here from the last two lessons in these six points.

The first one is that the local "courts," as we saw from Ruth 4 last time, were accessible and they were responsive to local disputes; they were accessible and responsive to the immediate local disputes as well as

having elders who were knowledgeable of the local circumstances. I mean, it was the ideal thing, it was a small scale local operation so they could get to deal with controversies before they boiled all over the place.

The second point is, and this is the important theology behind judging, behind the role of the judge, and this goes back to the thing we've been studying, why, at the end of chapter 16 you have that strange verse 21, at the beginning of chapter 17 you have the strange verse in 1, all of a sudden in the middle of all of this discussion about the judges we're talking about a pagan cult place. What's that got to do with the court? And that, we said, is because courts need a transcendent standard and in the ancient world they would go to omens and all kinds of things to try to get judgments with pagan religion, all the mysticism and so on.

That leads to point 2, judgments were treated as derivative of God's judgments; it's always God's judgments that are in the background. The courts are only a partial imperfect revelation of God's judgments. We'll see that very graphically tonight. And there is basically two things about that, man is morally accountable to an external, transcendent standard, and that external transcendent standard is God's holiness, or a counterfeit. And that's the danger, that's where the counterfeiting comes in. God judges and has delegated partial judgment to man since Noah, and that institution, civil government, is defined in Genesis 9 as having a monopoly on lethal force.

Now I used the word, it's a strong expression here, lethal force, and I put that out because I wanted to show you the seriousness of why you do not want government to get into every area of life. Government is like a sledge hammer, you don't use a sledge hammer to kill flies, unless you want to ruin the whole house. And whenever you get government involved, just remember, behind government authority is lethal force. And you have to ask the question: is government the real to use to solve this particular problem? Nobody thinks of that question; are there alternative ways of dealing with the problem without getting government involved in every area of life. And the reason is because it's serious to get government into every area of life.

Third, because judgments were derivative of God's judgments, the judges had to reject pagan cultic influences on their concept of justice. In their search to get a standard they could not contaminate the standard, which should be God's holy character, with some pagan counterfeit. That's why they were so picky about having no cultic thing going on near the gate, which is where the judgments were occurring.

Fourth, The judges had to employ strict rules of evidence that required thorough investigation, and they were model to this in the ancient world. And our rules of evidence in our court system derives a lot from Mosaic influences.

Five, the judicial system relied upon citizen participation as reporting witnesses. The whole thing was basically citizen centered. The citizens not only were the witnesses, they were also the executioners, as we saw last time. The worst possible, most serious sentence, was capital punishment and the very witnesses to the crime were the ones that would throw the first rocks. And that shows you how much the people were

involved in this. There were also controls that if you brought a false case against someone you would reap the consequences of your accusation. That tended to keep down frivolous suits.

Finally, six, a properly functioning court system lowers economic business costs by ensuring that contracts will be enforced. Business people have to invest, knowing there's going to be a risk involved. And one of the risks involved is theft, contractual bankruptcy and everything else. Every businessman has to face it, is the supplier going to go bankrupt after you've paid the supplier to... you know, provide stuff for your business and the guy goes bankrupt, you've paid the bill and you don't get the supplies. That's a risk that business people have to cope with. But if you have a functioning court system that's efficient, it doesn't take eight years and five judges to go through, then you have a predictability in the environment. So those are some of the neat things that had this system of Moses worked it would have produced this order.

So we've looked at two sections, chapter 16:18-17:1 and 17:2-7. Now today we are looking at verses 8-13 first because this finishes the area of the judges. So we've done two of the three sections, now we're going to finish the third section, devoted to judges. And we need to, to get background on this, we need to go back to the slides and remember there were four stages in how Israel was organized. The first stage was Yahweh and the Law, and I show these stages because I want you to watch what changes and what doesn't change. As you look at this first slide, the first setup, you see the chain of authority, it's very clear what the chain of authority is. It's the Lord, and then it's the Law that the Lord has given, and then Moses is the third level in this chain of authority, but Moses is under the Law, and the Law, of course, is the revelation of God's holy character. That functioning doesn't change; the way it operates does change.

So we have the second stage, now Moses between him and the people, remember he has the subsidiary people, so there's a hierarchy of leadership, a hierarchy of authority here. That's just administrative detail; in other words, to carry it out he had to break up the duties, he had to have division of labor. But notice the legal authority hasn't changed here, you still have the trace from Yahweh to the Law to Moses.

Now we come to the third section and here is where he embellished the administration a little more with another level of leadership in there where he took the shoterim, remember these were the spirit empowered people that dealt more with the leadership spiritually in the nation, but the authority hasn't changed, the chain of command hasn't changed, it's just details in how it's managed.

Now we come to the fourth stage when Moses dropped out of this picture, so now what has to happen. Now we have, and here's where we have to watch the chain working, you have Yahweh, then you have the Law, that hasn't changed, the Law is still the Law of the land. But Moses is out of the picture, he's going to die. And so you have the Supreme Court now, there's going to be a new thing, and that's what we're studying in this passage. This has replaced Moses; it hasn't replaced the shoterim and the sarim, although they've become urbanized because you've had these different cities as they've settled in the land, but again, the flow of

authority has not changed. The people have changed because now there's not a prophet here, there's something else. But what we want to look is what I call, sort of like a Supreme Court.

So let's look at verses 8-13, "If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the LORD your God chooses." So now in modern vernacular that's a change of venue, they're moving the case out of one court into another court. So you "go up to the place which the Lord your God chooses. [9] And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. [10] You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the LORD chooses." Notice twice in this text he emphasizes "the place which the LORD your God chooses. That's an observation in the text and we need to come back to that observation and see why Moses twice repeats that point. So 'You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the LORD chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you. [11] According to the sentence of the law in which they instruct you, according to the judgment which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left from the sentence which they pronounce upon you. [12] Now the man who acts presumptuously and will not heed the priest who stands to minister there before the LORD your God, or the judge, that man shall die. So you shall put away the evil from Israel. [13] And all the people shall hear and fear, and no longer act presumptuously." You can say wow, that gets serious real quick, that anybody who disobeys the Supreme Court gets killed, a capital offense to defy the Supreme Court. You have to say wait a minute, whoa, what is going on here with this. So let's go through this.

In verse 8 and then in verse 10, that talks about the place that God chooses. That's the location. Let's think about this; why is this stressed? Because as I point out in the notes, one of the blanks here in 17:8, Central sanctuary is where God's presence dwells, that's the location of the Shekinah glory. That's the temple, that's the throne of the king. This isn't just a collection of guys, this isn't like one of our courts. This is different, remember, it's replaced Moses, and what was Moses? Moses was the intermediary between God and the people. So this court is acting as a Moses replacement and it has the authority of Moses in that the priest and the judges are going to go directly to the Shekinah glory and that's where they get this judgment. Which introduces, now, another idea and that's the title in Roman II in your handout-it's Israel's "Supreme Court" of final judgment. The finality of judgment is insisted upon because human judicial procedures should be analogous to God's judgment and His judgment will be final.

Let's think about Revelation 22; hold the place and let's look at Revelation 22, the very end of the Scriptures. Here's God acting. Remember, God is the model for justice. It's his character that is the standard of justice. So when you go all the way to the end of the Bible you come to the statement in Revelation 22:11, and this is at the end; this is in that evil diagram that I show where good and evil are eternally separated, they will never mix again, there never will be another fall.

And so what does it say? "He who is unjust let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous let him be righteous still; he who is holy let him be holy still." There is the frozen ethical position at the end of history; there's no more changing between good and evil. They are locked eternally. That's the final judgment, that's what we mean by "final judgment," there's no appeal after this; the day of grace is all over, there's no adjustments made, there's no fine tuning any more, this is a final judgment.

And so because it is a final judgment it's the model that's going on here as God tries to show people what it's like to live in the Kingdom of God, that the Supreme Court, the judge (singular), and the priests (plural), and we'll get into their roles in a minute but when these guys hand the sentence down it's from God and that's it; there's no more court of appeals, there's no more change of venue, I mean, that's it, there is no more judgment. And I think the reason God designed it that way is it's a small imperfect version of what His final judgments are. And of course I list John 19:30 there because what was the words of Jesus on the cross? When Jesus Christ took all the sin upon Him and those sins were judged, what did He say? Perfect tense, "It is finished!" That means it's final, the atonement is final, you don't add to it, you don't because I'm going to dedicate my life to Jesus or something and that gives you three brownie points in addition to what Jesus did; it doesn't work that way. The only brownie points we have is what Jesus gained for us on the cross, that's it. And thankfully it is. So once again, these little details you see in the Mosaic Law are pictures... pictures of basic theological truths. Now we come to that little diagram in your notes and I think I have a slide on that. What I'm trying to do here, if you look at verse 9 there are people listed there, "And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge," so there are two kinds of people on this Supreme Court. Now this introduces an idea that's going to be very strange to us because all of us have grown up in a secularized Western European idea of jurisprudence, and we've been brought up from childhood to talk about separation of church and state. And indeed there are two spheres, and you have to be very, very careful about the interaction of these two spheres. But the background that you and I come to this text with is one in which the courts are 100% secular, that religion has been totally and completely divorced from authority in the courtroom. This happened from 1680, 1700 about, on. So if we were living in 1000 AD we could take a time machine back, you would see that the ecclesiastical powers and the civil authorities worked together. That was your State churches and so on; that had some downers to it, as we all know from church history. But that's not to deny there are these two spheres.

In that little diagram, the priests, what were they doing in the Supreme Court business. Well, just think about it, what does a judge do? Before he can judge, and after he's done investigation and all the facts and the rules of evidence have filtered out the proper facts and all the facts are laid out here, what's the next step in that kind of a process. It's call upon the Law, the standards, the yardstick, to see if all this case down here has violated the Law up here. So he has to go to the Law. Now who are the custodians of the Law? It has to be the priest, the priests are the custodians of the text; the priests are the custodians of the Torah. So the priests are the ones who also are part of the personnel of this final court judgment. And they had a tool called the Urim and the

Thummim, as I point out in that box and you can read about it in Numbers, and the idea there was that that was the way they had on the breastplate of the high priest to discern God's will. And how it worked, we're very vague on it, the Word of God is vague on it, but they had access, because God was there, there was the Shekinah glory there, physically, at the place that God chooses. So the priests have the ecclesiastical authority to say to the state, to the civil authority, what the Law is.

Now we shift over to the right box, the limitation in the ecclesiastical powers is that they don't have authority to kill, they don't have the authority to execute judgment. That's the civil authority. So the civil authority has the power to proclaim the verdict and to enforce the punishment. They are the custodians of judicial force. The two functions are truly different and they are represented by two different kinds of people. But in this case, as God was operating in the Old Testament, the Supreme Court had both the ecclesiastical power and the civil power. As I say, in our time we have gone the other way; in the Middle Ages it was almost the ecclesiastical power and today it's mostly the civil power. Okay. Separation of church and state, as I pointed out: In theocratic Israel the two domains [were equal in authority but distinguished from each other]. In the Enlightenment tradition, that is from 1700 on, basically the Enlightenment tradition really got started as far as this area goes, and you have civil authorities taking over the ecclesiastical.

Now let's go to the text; Deuteronomy 17:10-11, and now we come to the judgments. It says you will not turn to the right or to the left, that means there's no further appeal there, this is it. And then in verse 12 and in verse 13 you see the word "presumptuously," I think, at least in my translation, the King James has it, it's the word for rebellion, it's defiance of authority. So in the blank we have on our handout: Defiance of the authority of the supreme court leads, or implies a rejection of the finality and authority of God's judgment. It's a rejection of the finality and authority of God's judgment. These are sobering principles because these are the principles that support the gospel message. There's a finality to the gospel and you can see the finality. Think of what John 3:18-20 say; it says, [19 ]"And this is the condemnation," doesn't it, that if you have heard the gospel and you turn from the gospel, having heard the gospel, and I turn from it, there's no other recourse, I don't have any other course. And so, "This is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men" who turned away "loved the darkness more than they loved the light." Their reaction to the gospel is their judgment; they judge themselves by their response to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. So John gets very serious about this. We can't understand, without this principle of finality, we can't really understand why the gospel is final. We're under pressure in a pluralistic society to compromise this point, but there is no other answer. If God is holy and righteous, and He has executed judgment upon His Son and it is truly finished, that's it, there isn't another way of being saved. Furthermore, if we reject that we face a final judgment, let him be guilty, let him be guilty forever and ever and ever. That's the future.

So it's sobering to think of justice in this form, and this is exactly the form that the Enlightenment tradition that controls our society doesn't like because the Enlightenment position says look, human beings are fallible, you can't have a court like this. Well, what's the weakness in

that argument? You can't have a court like this today because the people are fallible. Well, people are fallible and courts do make errors, but what is different about this court? God's presence. They had access to God's presence, that made the difference. And that reminds us that the courts need to operate with a consciousness that what they are trying to do, imperfectly and with mistakes, what they are trying to do is carry out an analogous task to what God is doing. I mean, I think it's ironic, the only place outside of the Catholic Church in our country where you see robes is in the courtroom. Now isn't that interesting; and where does the concept of a judge wearing a black robe come from do you suppose? It goes back centuries to the idea of the ecclesiastical influence on the court, and the very way they dress is a memory of the past.

So that's the judge, that's the function of the judges. So now we come to Roman III and finish chapter 17 and that is we're going to deal with the nature of Israel's kings. And now we come to a completely different sphere of authority. Let's look at verses 14-20 "When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' [15] you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. [16] But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' [17] Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. [18] "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. [19] And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, [20] that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel."

So notice, right there in verse 20, the last verse, do you see that principle in verse 20, that's the fifth commandment emerging, this time in the dynastic family of the king; the principles still hold that if you do this, if you obey Me, the Lord says, then I'll prolong your days in your kingdom, "he and his children," that means his dynasty, his sons to carry on that dynastic rule. The whole idea of the monarchy with a dynasty follows the family model of the fifth commandment. So if the dynasty doesn't hold together God's going to discipline it like He does a family that's dysfunctional. And He will not allow that dynasty to go on. Now you can see this work out, if you read through the Old Testament, after the kingdom splits, which we mentioned tonight, you have one line of Judah, the kings in Judah in the south, and then in the north you have dynasty after dynasty after dynasty in the north, in Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and these are not the same dynasty. And Judah is the Davidic house that continues, with pain and grief, yes, but it's one dynasty in the south. In the north, I don't know, I knew at one time, I can't think of it right now, but there's probably five, six or seven different dynasties in the north, one right after another because they kept collapsing because of their internal discord and their dysfunction.

Okay, verse 14, "When you come," in the Hebrew it's just like the first of verse 8, it's like an "If," if this is the situation, "If when you come to the land ... and possess it, and you dwell in it," now it says you're going to say a certain thing. And you're going to say I want to set a king over me like all the other nations have around me. Now right away we've got a big problem here, and this is one of those cases, and I've given you the notes from our past studies, that Deuteronomy 4:25-29, the 8:18-20 passage, the 13:11 passage, all those are passages where Moses is basically prophesying the failure of the nation. Remember that section in there in chapter 13:11, you'll have the poor with you forever, when he just got through saying if you would obey the rules you'd have a prosperous society and you would get rid of poverty. So these are admissions, at least three times in the previous text, that the nation... things aren't going to go very well, you're going to have a falling out here.

So in your outline I've listed a contrast, I've tried to develop a contrast between pagan kingship and Israel kingship. Now this is one way you want to learn to study your Bible. When you read things in the Bible, don't just read the thing in the Bible but set it over against what's out there in society. If you'll do that the Holy Spirit will use that to have you see, oh man, there's some interesting things here in the text, the text says this and gosh, that isn't working that way, not let's bring these two things together and compare. And when you bring these two things to compare, then you realize what the Holy Spirit is revealing and the reality of His work in history, to change how people think.

So let's look at pagan kingship. Pagan kingship, what we're talking about here is Pharaoh in Egypt, the Babylonian kings, the Assyrian kings, the kings of Moab, all around, the pagan kings. Now here's a slide that talks about their beliefs. If you look in your outline I have three points under pagan kingship One is a denial of the Creator/creature distinction; once you deny the Creator/creature distinction what you have left is just nature and man. And man somehow comes out of nature. But what it leads to, the denial of the Creator/creature distinction leads to meaninglessness and chaos, and once you have meaninglessness and chaos people can't stand it, either one, so you have to have purpose and order. Well, how do you get purpose and order out of meaninglessness and chaos? Man brings it about.

Now you see, without the Creator you have no source for purpose, you have no source for meaning, so man becomes this. So now we have a transfer, we have what God should be giving us, not it's going to be replaced by man and in a group or society you're going to have the most powerful people, the most charismatic people dominate so you have the king and the state becomes the source of purpose. The state, then, becomes redemptive, not just preservative. Remember we went back to Genesis 8 and 9, when God established lethal force as an institution, if you see the definition the idea there was that government was supposed to restrain sin, not bring in the Millennial Kingdom. The government, in other words, ideally in the Scriptures, is purely negative; it is only a restraining force, it is a preserving force, it is not a redemptive tool. Redemption is independent of the state and there's the problem of Marxism and socialism and everything else; it's the government intruding into the area of



redemption. And it's just not right, it's pagan. And it pushes positive good and social utopianism instead of the negative restraint against sin and evil. And it uses its monopoly or course of power to triumph over ecclesiastical influence and dominates the pagan priesthood. They were all dominated by the king, the kings ran the show.

So here's a quote from Dr. Frankfort, Henry Frankfort was a famous scholar at the University of Chicago that specialized in Egypt; he specialized in the thought forms of Egyptian things, he also studied some in the Babylonian era too. But look what he says: "The Egyptian belief was that the universe is changeless," that's different from the Babylonian pagan, but in Egypt they accorded special power to stability, you can see it, they built pyramids, they didn't want the pyramids to change, everything was the same. See, that's Egypt. "...the universe is changeless and that all apparent opposites must, therefore, hold each other in equilibrium. Such a belief has definite consequences," see, here we go now, ideas have consequences, you can't just look at consequences, you've got to go back to the ideas behind these things. "Such a belief has definite consequences in the field of moral philosophy. It puts a premium on whatever exists with a semblance of permanence." Stability, that's what the Egyptians wanted. "It excludes ideals of progress, utopias of any kind, revolutions, and any other radical changes in existing conditions.... In this way the belief in a static universe enhances, for instance, the significance of established authority."

Now that's what Egypt believed. Picture in your mind, if you believed that what was the threat of the Jews at the point of the Exodus? You talk about change, think about the impact of this guy, Moses. Here you have hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Jews that are slaves, building the pyramids to last forever, and this guy comes and he's tearing up your static society. He's going to take away all the slaves, who's going to build the pyramids. He even has the audacity to walk in and challenge Pharaoh; what do these Jews think they are? God's people. We have to imagine the force and the conflict that's going on in the Exodus story. This is how Israel starts in history, this is why there's no peace in an unbelieving civilization when you have believers in it. There will always be tension.

Now we come to another slide, I've shown you this before but again to review, here's the Egyptian art clearly teaching its beliefs. Remember, art and architecture encapsulate, like music does, the beliefs of a culture, and here you have a pillar and in this pillar you have the symbol, the Egyptian hieroglyphic for earth, and here you have the hieroglyphic for heaven, and you have two scepters between earth and heaven, and in between is the name of Pharaoh. Now what is that artist telling us? Pharaoh is the mediator, he holds heaven and earth together. And you're going to threaten Pharaoh? In the name of Yahweh, yes. See the conflict? And over here, the lady's comb, and on this woman's comb, again, there's three positions here, Horus, the falcon, riding a boat across the sky, he was believed to be manifesting the sun, and then she had on her comb she had those two scepters again, and then she had a picture of Horus, the second one, and then a picture of the snake which was the symbol of enlightenment. We know what that means. And then she had the picture of eternal life. I always laughed when the hippies picked that up in the 70's, you kids don't know what you're reading here baby,

that's the old pagan symbol for eternal life. It doesn't have anything to do with peace. But that's that because they just didn't know what they were talking about. So these artistic pictures show you what the Egyptians believed.

Now let's go to Dr. Frankfort again. Look at this quote: Pharaoh was the fountainhead of all authority, all power, and all wealth. The famous saying of Louis XIV, the 'I am' [l'etat c'est moi] was levity and presumption when it was uttered, but it could have been offered by Pharaoh as a statement of fact in which his subjects concurred. And it would have summed up adequately Egyptian political philosophy." You talk about a socialist Marxist state, that's Egypt. Look at this; this is an undeniable assertion of the 100% infallibility of the state and not only its infallibility but the fact is that it's your salvation. To touch Pharaoh is to touch the welfare of the whole state and everybody in it. So when Israel came out of Egypt it was a revolution.

Now the Egyptian artists had other ways of depicting Pharaoh's position. Here's a way; they used to draw their characters in height, and the higher the character was the more importance. So, for example, if they wanted to have a group of lesser people they'd shorten them in height and then they'd have the most important person up here. Now what does this artist. The guys to the right and left of Pharaoh in this case are gods; there's no difference. See, the artist has put Pharaoh at the same height as the gods. So this is a total deification of the state. Now this is the same kind of thought forms that were all around Israel. Do you see in the text where it says... it warns the king, [16] "he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to turn to Egypt," it doesn't necessarily mean physically return to Egypt but it's ideologically return to Egypt. Have a king like Egypt, that's what we want, that's going to give us stability.

Now Israel's kingdom, by contrast, #1, point 1 here, it was vested in Yahweh, not Israel. It wasn't an issue of the state, it was Yahweh, the Lord. The second point, the high priest was necessary, now look at this, the high priest was necessary, a king was not necessary. Notice what he says in verse 14, "When you come into the land" and you say I want a king over me, God didn't ordain the monarchy here; He's allowing the monarchy, the monarchy is not necessary for Israel to function. So if you have a group of people arguing that we need, n-e-e-d a king and God says it's not necessary what's happening spiritually here? They are looking to meet their needs with civil power. The state is my savior, not the Lord. This is a step backward for the nation, this is an avocation of their faith in God.

The third point is that final judging authority isn't vested in him. We've studied the final authority ended in verse 13; the section from verse 14 on thru 20 deals with the king, but not the Supreme Court. The king had nothing to do in the original form with any judgment, final judgment; it's not part of his deal. Finally, the priesthood was not under his control. So you see, it's like the king in Israel was a square peg in a round hole. It didn't work out, and you know from Samuel and Kings it didn't work out.

So now God says all right, if you're going to do this, then I'm going to be the one that picks him out. But this is going to be plan B; this is God's permissive will and this is kind of scary because what it says is that God will sometimes go along with us when we're wrong and when He does and he kind of gives us His permission, we slipped into plan B when we could have been blessed in plan A. So let's watch what happens.

Turn to 1 Samuel 8; the passages we are studying tonight, Deuteronomy 17 and 1 Samuel 8, you want to write a little note to yourself because these are the two central political passages in the Word of God. You find political philosophy outlined as nowhere else in the Bible in Deuteronomy 17 and 1 Samuel 8. 1 Samuel 8, to give you an idea of how important this has been, this is a denial of the divine right of kings. Here, I brought tonight and I'll leave it in the front so some of you can see it, I got this out of Harvard library, I had Harvard library copy this. This is the tract, hundreds of pages, this is what a tract looked like in the 1600s. This was written by Samuel Rutherford, it's called *Lex Rex*, the law and the king. And this is the Presbyterian argument against the King of England. And he passed this around; you can see how people read in those days. I'll leave it open here and you can come by, it's in old English, but you should see the Scriptures that this guy quotes. But the argument that he's using in this tract is the argument of 1 Samuel 8. So historically it played a role in the diminution and limitations of monarchy in the Western civilization. That's how important these passages are in Scripture, it's not just me blowing smoke here. These actually have a historical role.

Let's look at 1 Samuel 8 and what happened there, verse 6, the situation is 400 years later; they have gone 400 years without a king. Obviously they didn't need a king because for 400 years they existed quite well without a king, but at this point they want a king. So in verse 6, "But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, 'Give us a king to judge us.'" Notice the function they want the king to do, by the way. What did we just read in Deuteronomy 17, the king had nothing to do with judging. WE want "a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. [7] And the LORD said to Samuel," and here's the permissive will of God, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you," Samuel, "but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." Basic failure in the nation. Then the monarchy rises in the nation of Israel it is plan B, it is going to represent a tremendous change and basically spells the end of the nation, in one sense.

What do they want him to do? Heed their voice, they have rejected Me. [9] "According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day-with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods-so they are doing to you also. [9] Now heed their voice. However...." "However, you shall solemnly forewarn them and show them the behavior of a king who will reign over them." Now the point of verse 9 is that even the king that's picked out by God Himself is going to act this way. So he's not talking about an ungodly king, he's going to talk about people that God actually picks and they're going to do this. So now he's going to list the different things he does. And 8:7 here on the outline I have basically he's done three things, provided leadership, military defense and economic prosperity.

But Samuel is going to give them several warnings. The first warning is that you are going to have an "empire building," kings always build their kingdom and you're going to have a monarchy which will move potentially productive people into a self-perpetuating, bloated bureaucracy. Let's watch, and this will be verse 11 and we'll see it go down to verse 13. "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariot, to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. [12] He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, and some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots." So you're going to have this activity but it's going to consume people; people are going to be taken off the farm, people are going to be taken off of small businesses, people are going to be taken out of the economy where they would normally be productive and their production is going to be slanted to the perpetuation of the king's bureaucracy. None of these activities listed in these verses were necessary, these are all extra things that the government creates. And it takes away people when they do this.

Now it's interesting, our country has been warned several times about this, one of the times, of course, was George Washington in his farewell speech, but I have the farewell speech of Dwight D. Eisenhower, in 1961 when Ike left the presidency and he basically, you know, it was his farewell speech for the nation, this is the speech that you hear quoted about the warning against the industrial, the military/industrial complex. But listen to what Eisenhower said, he said, "There will be crisis," remember, this is in the middle of a cold war, "There will be crisis here and they will be meeting them, foreign and domestic, and there will be a challenge." But he says, "The record of many decades stands as proof that our people and their government have, in the main, understood these truths and have responded to them well in the face of stress and threat." He's talking about the balance between the private and the public, economy. "But," then he says, "But, threats, new in kind or degree constantly arise, and I mention only two. The vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that not potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction. "Our military organization today there's little relation to that known by any of my predecessors in peace time, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea."

"Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armament industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense. We have been compelled to create a permanent armament industry of vast proportions. Added to this, one point five million people, men and women, are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annual spend on military security more than the net income of all the United States corporations." And he's talking about the "conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence-- economic, political, and spiritual--is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. Yet we must recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society. In the councils of

government w must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." And that's the source of this.

And by this, as a footnote to this, nobody ever reads the next five paragraphs. Well, I pulled out the speech and I read the next five paragraphs. And do you know what he was also warning about. Scientific research that's 95% funded by the government that becomes politically oriented research, and this is what in my field has happened in climate studies. A very insightful speech.

But here it all is, God told Samuel this was going to happen; this always happens this way. So now the second warning, a bloated bureaucracy will require confiscation of private wealth to maintain itself. So notice in verse 14, it says, "He will take the best of your fields," he will take "your vine yards, and your olive groves and give them to his servants." Oh, so now he doesn't confiscate just anything, he takes the best things, probably a progressive tax on the most wealthy and most productive people, the "best" of the vineyards, and your olive groves, and then he turns around and gives them to his servants, who probably don't know how to pick an apple off the apple orchard. So there goes the vineyards, there goes the orchards because they're not being maintained by people who know how to maintain them.

[15] "He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. [16] And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest" it says "your finest young men," but actually the Hebrew looks like it's cattle, "and your donkeys and put them to his work. [17] He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants." And of course, that's the grand end of the whole thing, it is that the citizenry, once the king starts the citizenry becomes the king. This is Rushdoony's comment on the thought processes involved in what goes on when this happens in a nation:

"The politics of the anti-Christian will inescapably be the politics of guilt. In the politics of guilt man is perpetually drained in his social energy and cultural activity, of his overriding sense of guilt and his masochistic activity. He will progressively demand of the state a redemptive role. What he cannot do personally to save himself he demands that the state do it for him. So the state, as man enlarged, becomes the human savior of man. The politics of guilt, therefore, is not directed as the Christian politics of liberty to the creation of the state. The politics of guilt cultivates the slave mind," ... cultivates the slave mind! "In order to enslave men and to have the people themselves demand an end to liberty, slaves, true slaves, want to be rescued from freedom. Their greatest fear is liberty. Even as a timid, fearful child dreads dark, so does the slave mind fear liberty. It is full of the terrors of the unknown. And as a result the slave mind clings to status or state slavery, cradle to grave welfare care, as a fearful child clings to its mother. The advantage of slavery is precisely this, security in the master or the state."

Now do you see the paragraph, why Moses is saying don't return to Egypt. It wasn't just physically going down to Egypt, it was the whole mentality of the pagan theory of government. So we have... and by the way, one of the commentators, Gary North, has pointed out the tax; see where it says

"tenth" in here, they're going to take ten percent... here is his comment: To get back to a mere tenth, which Samuel warned was tyranny, most of the civil governments of the modern world would have to cut their budget by three-quarters. To get back to the tax level of tyrannical Egypt under Joseph, modern welfare states would have to cut their taxes by at least half. So when you think about it, we are in a far, far more totalitarian government type situation than was ever dreamed of in the times of Scripture.

Okay, let's go back and finish up chapter 17. Moses concludes this section by giving us the qualifications that were necessary for a king. So we go back, Deuteronomy 17, and he says in verse 15, there's basically three things here; he says he can't be a nokree, he's got to be a citizen, he's got to be a citizen of the country in order to hold the office of king. We have the same provision in the American Constitution, Article I and II require that we have a natural born citizen as the king, or as a President or as the House of Representatives, or Senator. [16] He shall not multiply horses for himself, nor return to Egypt. The idea of the horse was the horse was considered the equivalent of today's armor. The problem, of course, with the horses is that Israel didn't have a problem with the horses because they lived in the hills, they lived in areas where the Egyptian cavalry, the horses, they always were along the coastline, they didn't go up into the hills with them. But they wanted it, so here we go.

Verse 17a, he is not to multiply wives to himself, because as I point out in the outline, two problems, royal marriages were conducted to seal treaties. We've seen that in modern European history, so and so married off his daughter to some king, because then it's kind of an assurance that that king isn't going to come war because his daughter is over there. So these girls were traded around with kings in order to lock in the idea of treaties. Well, was Israel supposed to make treaties? No. That's a violation of trust in Yahweh. So he shouldn't even have been involved in treaties, so there was no need for royal weddings and royal intermarriage.

The second thing is, what do you suppose these gals would bring to the Jewish family? Other gods. Now think about a king having five wives, one of them is a Baalist, one of them is from the priesthood of Egypt, and he's trying to run the house. By the way, he has kids with both, now basically what you've got now is a polygamy has resulted in polytheism. So in order to keep the family peace you've all of a sudden got a family run polytheistically. We've got her and my momma is a Baalist, well, my momma comes from Egypt. And so we have to respect and get along, so the only way you can get along in a polygamist marriage type situation is respect all the gods, and so here we go, and Solomon is a good illustration of this. By the way, four kings, remember, God says I'll discipline to the third and fourth generation, how many kings were there? Saul, David, Solomon and what was the last king before the split? Rehoboam. It only took three to four generations, the number is consistent.

Well, how would God pick these kings. I list for you all the picks; they were picked by prophets, and it goes all the way to Jesus. That's why the Gospels don't start with Jesus, they start with John the Baptist because John the Baptist was the prophet who would pick the king, and the picking

was the word mesach, from which we get the Hebrew term Messiah. The Messiah was the one who was anointed. And this is where it comes from, that's what the meaning of the word is, it means Jesus is the anointed one, He is the chosen one by John, the prophet.

And then, he's not to increase his silver and gold because that basically confiscates the wealth from the people, and then it endues the government to be in the position of all kinds of projects. Babel is a good example of the first attempt to do this. But notice, after all that's said and done, verse 18, we come to the last part of this qualification, notice, he isn't just to go to the priests and read the Law. What do you notice and observe in the text here? What is the action of the king? Does he just go to the priest and say Hey, Bud, what does the Law say? It's not that casual, it says: "he shall write for himself a copy of this law...." What does that tell you? What qualifications does that show you the king has to be? Literate, remember, everybody wasn't literate in this day and age. If you could see some of the language you'd realize why there was illiteracy, if you see the complex structures. This king had to be literate, not some goof ball being the king here, he had to be literate enough to go back down there and if he didn't do it he had some secretaries copy him a copy from where? He could not get the original, the original wasn't part of the king, it wasn't part of the civil authority, the Word of God was part of the ecclesiastical authority. And he had to come to the ecclesiastical authority to obtain the Word of God.

And once obtaining it, then [19] "it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD," and then three things, [20] "his heart is not to be lifted up above his brethren," he's not to have a mental attitude of arrogance, which is just a career vulnerability of every politician. "...his heart must not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandments," in other words, he is to be constantly under the authority of the Word of God. And the third thing is that "he may prolong his days," which goes back to the pattern of the fifth commandment, the prolongation of his dynasty was contingent upon his obedience.

So we have three conclusions to this section. The office of the king was an "add-on" by the permissive will of God to an unbelieving nation, it was unnecessary and it caused all kinds of heartburn. And if you want to read the heartburn read 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 6 Chronicles, six books of the Bible tell you about what happened.

Second, it teaches the dangers of centralized power and the unnecessary expansion of civil government by showing the sinful dynamics at work, the loss of freedom and property, and the enormous cost.

And finally, God worked through the monarchy to create expectation of the Ideal King, it was this experience, with centralized power fun amuck, that caused the people to yearn for a leader who would be a Savior, and the Messianic prophecies start getting details from this point in history on. And the reason is people are struggling with the fallout of centralized power, because what centralized power did was breed an overt manifestation of the sin of man and people say well, we've got to have a leader, we're looking for the ideal leader and the ideal leader is set up so that when Jesus Christ came upon the scene, when Christ was incarnated, when he

came to His public ministry, the monarchy was the background, and when they said, like John, the Gospel of John says, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, we have to get the full impact of that statement. He was asking us to believe that that man, Jesus, is the Mesach, He is the One who is anointed, that automatically carries the picture He is the ideal King. And He is the One who is qualified to do all these things.