From The Hog Pen

Exodus 22:25-27, gives us a basic requirement concerning proper action toward the poor. As we read this law, on the surface it appears to say that all poor are to be helped at all times. Deuteronomy 15:9 & 10 would appear to say that it is wicked not to help any poor that would come to us. And if we do not, the Lord will be against us. We could base some very ungodly welfare programs on this misunderstanding.

The poor which the law requires help for is not referring to someone who has squandered away his money, misused people or is too lazy to work. The illustration which the Lord gave would be the prodigal son, Luke 15:11-32.

The boy demanded his share of the inheritance, which he got. He then wasted his substance with riotous living. Then there arose a mighty famine in the land; and he began to be in want. He had to take the most demeaning of jobs, feeding pigs. He was further reduced to eating what the pigs ate, and no man gave unto him. Then he was remanded of the goodness of his father, so he repented and went home. This gives us these points.

First, it is obvious that he was reduced to the lowest state of poverty because of his sin. He wasted his substance with riotous living. He was poverty stricken because of his rebellion and hardness.

Second, the Lord did not say that in his poverty he was to be helped. In fact, quite the opposite. In his poverty, no man gave unto him. His poverty was a result of evil on his part. His poverty forced him to come face to face with his sin, because no one would give unto him. He had no place to turn to for aid.

Third, the result of no man giving to him in the hog pen: He came to himself. He repented and made things right with God and man. The result was that he was restored to his father and his needs were met.

Our point is this: His poverty forced him to come to himself and face up to his sin. It forced him to make things right with his father.

Now, I'll have to admit that it is extremely difficult to watch someone reduced to the place that they must feed the hogs and eat what the hogs eat, even though it was their own wasting of their goods that put them in this place. We want to rush in and help them get something better to eat. But experience has proven over the years that almost without fail, when someone's wasting of their substance, lack of discipline, rebellion, stubbornness and hardness (sin) reduces them to poverty, any help given to them only prolongs the day of reckoning. Whereas, if they were left in the hog pen the first time, they would have come to their senses and returned to the Father.

When it is known and intentional sin that has reduced them to the hog pen (poverty), any help given to them this side of when he came to himself, will only return them to the wasting of their substance and the sin that got them there in the first place. This gives us these conclusions:

First, today's welfare programs at all levels of government (civil, personal, family, church, & c.) are based on aiding the person on this side of when he came to himself. The result is that the person is financed so he can return to the sin that got him in the hog pen in the first place. It is because no man will give unto him that he will come to himself. It is foolish to think that the prodigal son would have come to himself if someone would have given to him before he came to himself in the hog pen.

Second, there is a key word, gave unto him. The owner of the hogs paid him for working at feeding the hogs. Thus, when the one in need is required to work for whatever they get, they are not being financed in their sin. They are being paid for their labour.

Third, when a person's poverty is not a result of their waste and intentional sin, all the commands of the word of God concerning the care of the poor are theirs.

As always, the Lord tells us in His word who is to be helped in their need, how and when, as well as gives all the details of this help. He also tells us who is not to be helped. When we allow our emotions to override the facts of God's word, only chaos can develop as people are further hardened in their sin.

How many people miss the message of God to repent and return to Him because good sincere people obey their emotions instead of the word of God?
Responsibility & Restitution
(Salvation requires the law of restitution.)

Ex. 21:33, 34, contains a very basic principle which would come under the sixth commandment, thou shalt not kill. Restitution is basic to God's law. There are two more equally important points in this chapter: Something is not unlawful until it happens, and someone is always held responsible, vs. 35, 36. The Lord argues from two points which all of that day could identify with; an ox which every farmer would have, and a pit (cistern or well) which every property owner would have.

It was not unlawful to have the pit open, but if the man who opened it left it unprotected and someone or something fell into the unprotected pit, the owner had to make restitution. Now, obviously, if he took reasonable precautions to cover or protect the pit and the ox fell in, he would not be responsible. (Precaution and responsibility would be determined by the elders or judges.)

Deuteronomy 22:8, gives more about this. In that case, it was unlawful not to have a protective railing around the roof of a house. The roofs of the Israelitish houses were flat, and often used as living quarters. Remember Peter? He was on the roof when he saw the vision.

Therefore, God's law required a protective railing around the roof to prevent anyone from falling off, but there was no penalty for not having the railing. If someone fell off, then restitution was required, Exodus 21:24. Now, if the railing was built and someone did fall off, the builder would not be guilty of blood. On the other hand, if it was not built and someone did fall off, the builder would be responsible. I would say that the present owner, though not the builder, would also be held responsible. He should not be living in such a house.

Throughout God's law, this principle of responsibility and restitution is evident. Notice Exodus 21:20, if a man smite another. The law does not forbid smiting or even striving together with another. It recognizes that sinful men will strive together. What it does is lay a penalty on the one who injures another, centering around responsibility and restitution. The Lord establishes responsibility and just restitution by giving us some sample cases. If the one is hurt, the one who hurt him is responsible for paying for his recovery and lost time. If the other is killed in the strife or under the smiting, the killer is put to death. (Or, in the case of a master smiting his servant that he die, the master is punished according to the judgment of the judges.)

Also contained within Exodus 21 is the instruction for the cities of refuge. Unintentional killing, killing with no guile involved, is protected by the cities of refuge. Killing with guile involved (which is another study) required life for life. The elders of the city made the determination.

V. 29, and he hath not kept him in, would tell us that the owner tried to restrain the ox, but he got away, or someone got into the pen. Therefore, the killing was an accident, and the owner did not have to flee to the city of refuge. The law was clear-cut. If he had been warned about the ox and the owner does not restrain the ox and it kills someone, then either the owner was put to death or he could pay an amount assessed by the judges. The godly judges were to make the determination concerning the guilt of the owner of the mean ox. The spilt blood had to be atoned for, and the Lord established that atonement. This would be a great incentive to get rid of an uncontrollable ox, maybe eat him. Observe:

First, the individual is careful, takes all precautions and heeds the just warnings of others, yet something still happens (note v. 13, but God deliver him into his hand): he is held guiltless. At times he had to flee to a city of refuge if someone died. Second, he was careless and his carelessness caused an injury: he paid for the results of his carelessness. Third, in a fit of emotion he injured another: the law required restitution, even his death. (This also applied to the fighting in vs. 22, 23.) Fourth, someone was always held responsible for an injury or death, either an animal or a person. Sometimes responsibility was shared, vs. 35, 36. Someone or something had to pay the price.

Exodus 21:24, 25, gives us the premise of God's law, eye for eye, & c. Someone was always held responsible, and restitution was to be made according to the damage done, no more-no less. Obviously, the Lord is not requiring a literal eye for eye, but stating a principle of just recompense. Also to be taken into consideration was the spirit behind the damage. Guile toward the one who was accidentally killed, though out of sight of others, carried the death penalty against it.

Now, we need to trace this into the NT, Matthew 5:38-48.

Our Lord's words of vs. 38, 39, must be understood in their context. Israel was a captive nation under Rome. They had a large amount of self-rule, but were by no means autonomous. Whereas Exodus chapters 21 & 22 spoke to the ones who were about to establish their nation, its laws and their enforcement, Matthew chapter 5 speaks to those who were under authority to a foreign power, with very little actual control over the law of the land. Our Lord spoke on an individual level, telling the individual how to respond when he is under oppressive authority (turn to him the other cheek).

A quick look at the context of our Lord's words will show this.

Matthew 5:11, the ones this is addressed to are going to be persecuted for the Lord's sake; they will be falsely accused and reviled. The source of persecution would be from the same ones who persecuted the prophets, the Jewish religious leaders, v. 12 (cf. Mt. 23:29-39). The required restitution must be made before any peace with man or God can be obtained, vs. 23, 24. Christ tells His hearers to agree quickly with someone they might have
a conflict with because there is a chance that person might drag them into court, vs. 25, 26. But it is not a court system of justice. Rather there will be corrupt responsibility and no proper restitution. Therefore, they will not find justice, but jail.

Vs. 38-42, would be spoken to those under authority. It would prohibit seeking an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth from the ones in authority as they persecute them for their stand for Christ, v. 10.

Matthew 5 is also given against the background of the Pharisees and all they stood for and their corruption of the law. All ten of the blessings given here would be in stark contrast with what these corrupt teachers were saying.

To set the Lord’s words of v. 39, apart from these facts will strip the law of its meaning, which the Lord Himself said that He was not here to do, v. 17.

Humanistic law attempts to prohibit any dangerous situation from arising (speed limit, 65). This can only lead to tremendously oppressive and restrictive laws, as well as large armies of police to inspect every area of society, every roof, every hole in the ground and every domestic animal. On the other hand, Biblical law establishes basic principles to build on. It is based upon responsibility and restitution for the damage done. If my negligence and irresponsibility in any area causes harm to man or beast, I must be held responsible to make restitution, even to life for life.

The removal of Biblical law is drowning us under an ocean of laws and ‘law enforcement officials.’ Why? Because it takes an ocean of laws to restrict every unsafe practice and animal. (Who defines unsafe? Is the same practice unsafe for everyone?)

This would go into every area. I understand that China found the answer to the drug problem. They put to death the drug pushers. This was enforced a few times and the problem was brought under control.

Obviously, the goal of civil government today is not to bring crime under control, but to increase their control of every person under heaven and every aspect of life and thought.

There is another devastating result when humanism removes this principle of restitution from the law of God (Ex. 21:23-25). If, as the antichrist theologians say, just restitution is no longer required under the new covenant, then you have no need for a Sinless Substitute to make restitution in place of the sinner before the Holy Father in heaven. I do not know what kind of a religion this leaves, but it is not Christianity (Gal. 1:6).

In other words, all of God’s law, including Salvation, is based upon the principle of life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Without this principle, a gospel (which is no gospel) can be presented which falsely offers Salvation based upon, “Asking, accepting Jesus into your heart and life, and trusting him to do that,” or, “Turning your life over to the lord,” or, “Committing you life to Christ,” or any of many false teachings along this line. There is death in that pot to all who refuse to avoid it.

Salvation is impossible unless the sinner is slain by the law of God, Romans 7:7-13. How can the need of a Sinless Sacrifice to pay the penalty for the sinner be taught, if there is no teaching and understanding of the requirement of restitution?

May God see fit to shine His light upon these false teachers of death.

Love of Slavery
The Lord’s Freeman

In Exodus 15 we find Israel redeemed out of Egypt, and now in the wilderness. The wilderness was not the barren land that we would think of today (result of sin). It was a lush place which provided for the flocks and herds which the people had gathered over the past 400 years captivity.

The conflict with Pharaoh had been over letting the people go three days into the wilderness to serve God. They get three days out into the wilderness and rather than serve the Lord, they murmur because of the water. Moses cries unto the Lord and the Lord heals the water.

After He healed the water, the Lord gives them some instructions, Exodus 15:26. These instructions consisted of hearing the word of God and doing it. The promise was that if they would follow the Lord’s instructions, they would be delivered from the dreaded things of Egypt. (Even though this was some time before their arrival at the Mount where the law was given, they were required to abide by it. This shows us that the law was written in their hearts and they were accountable before God for it.)

They continue on in their journey, and in forty two days, they murmur again, this time over food. This second murmuring was different from the first, in that it had with it a desire to return to Egypt. This desire will be expressed many more times by this generation before Israel enters into land of Canaan.

The first murmuring appears to be overlooked by the Lord. They were fresh out of slavery, so what would we expect? But the second murmuring carried against it a powerful reproof by both Moses and the Lord. The answer had already been given to them in response to their first murmuring; hear and do the word of God. The second murmuring showed that they paid no attention to the instruction. Rather than seek the Lord’s face and advice through His spokesman, Moses, they murmured and desired to return to Egypt.

This is a strange desire. Israel had been in terrible bondage in Egypt, yet every time difficulties arose, rather than following the instructions they had been given, they desire to return to that bondage.


Hog Pen, Love of Slavery & Plan Ahead
The choice had been given to them; slavery and security, or freedom according to their faithfulness to their responsibility to hear and do the word of the Lord. They chose slavery as they said, "If we were still slaves in Egypt, all of these things would be provided for us by our masters."

Obviously, slavery offers security and very little responsibility. A slave doesn't have to worry about water and food. He doesn't have to worry about health-care and job security. He doesn't have to worry about anything except what he will do with his free time. Every other decision and responsibility of life is taken care of by his master. If things get too difficult, all he has to do is cry out to his master.

(Exodus chapter 21, 22, deals with the forfeiture of responsibility to the master for the security of servitude. It also shows the loss of freedom which goes with servitude. We chose between freedom and responsibility, or servitude with no responsibility. Citizens who reject responsibility and sacrifice will be irresponsible slaves, whether they profess Christ or not.)

As Israel moves out of Egypt, the Lord starts to prove His people. Even though they had been delivered from the bondage of Egypt, they were still slaves at heart. He is starting to break their slavery with things easily understood; water, food and personal care.

This gives us some points to develop.

First: Slavery. The slave desires that his needs and wants be fulfilled without his having to fulfill responsibilities. The slave seeks freedom and security without responsibility, resulting in more bondage. It is strange how human nature prefers slavery with its cradle to grave security over freedom with its sacrifice and responsibility.

The slave mentality which had been developed by these people would be impossible to remove. The only way this nation could get over this was by death. It took a new generation to claim freedom under God.

Second, slavery can be in many areas; anger, procrastination. In fact, the slavery was to their lusts, Numbers 11:4. Thus, slavery is to the lusts of the flesh. Slavery offers fulfilled lusts, and as the slave serves his lust, the bonds of slavery increase.

True freedom is contentment with what one has. Freedom is from lust and covetousness, not from trials and tribulations. Trials and tribulations are what God used to deal with the desire for slavery.

Fourth, the Lord brought these circumstances about to prove that they were slaves at heart. He proved that their commitment to the word of the Lord was very little if any, 15:25. He proved that their commitment to slavery was powerful, 16:4. He proved that they would rather be secure slaves doing their own thing, than to be free men responsible to do only that which was right in His sight, 15:26.

Thus, the true 'Freeman' is the one who has been born again and is free from the hold of sin over his life, John 8:32-36. The 'Freeman' is the one who is applying all of the Law of Liberty to every area of life, James 1:25; 2:12. According to the word of God, 'Freeman' has nothing to do with the bondage which evil men might place over him. (The pagan definition of 'Freeman' borders on anarchy, free from any authority.) The Lord's freeman is the one who keeps the commandments of God in spite of the bondage of men, 1 Corinthians 7:19-24. Therefore, the true Freeman is the one in bondage to Christ and the commandments of God.

Fourth, the Lord brought these circumstances upon them because He loved them. He desired to free them from the slavery which they had grown to depend upon. When the practical implications of their new-found freedom started to be worked out, they decided they loved the security of slavery more than the responsibilities of freedom. (Forced labor is not really responsibility. The Military is a good example of this.)

God, because of His love and because of the promise to their father Abraham, drove them out of slavery into freedom, Deuteronomy 4:37; 7:8 (all of chapter nine).

Fifth, the bad news: It was the difficulties and near-death experiences that removed the slave mentality. The good news; the Lord provided for His people anyway. These people did not deserve His redemption and complained against it at every opportunity. Nor did they deserve the food which the Lord supplied. They rebelled against it at the first chance. Yet God in His mercy and grace, provided for them. They paid the price; death.

God realized they were slaves, and that it was going to take a lot of tribulation to break them of that slavery, Psalms 103. Thus, we can claim His grace and supply because of His mercy, not because of any good which we have done. We make this claim through the merit of Christ. Although known rebellion and presumptuous sin, will lead to death, Numbers 11.

But, sadly, even though they were delivered from the presence of slavery, they remained slaves at heart. They came to the promised land and refused to take it. Their slave mentality demanded that the Lord give it to them without their having to fulfill their responsibility and fight for it according to His every word, Joshua 1:7-9. It took a new generation to undo what had been done over hundreds of years.

God's people can become hardened in slavery. They can become so hardened in their demand for security without sacrifice and responsibility to the word of God, that God will lay them aside. We must raise up another generation that is willing to take responsibility before God. Only then will we have true freedom and liberty. We are freed from slavery that we might conquer everything for His kingdom.

Sixth, when this slave generation was faced with trying circumstances in the wilderness, they murmured, complained and wished for the security of slavery. Contrast this with the new generation under Joshua in Canaan. When Israel lost her power before her enemies,
they fell on their faces before the Lord, 7:6. This is true freedom. Freedom will seek God's face as to where we have failed in our responsibility. Slavery will seek to avoid responsibility, blaming others or God for failures, and cry out for our human masters (the state) to do something.

We live in a very evil age. The people, both in and out of the covenant, have been ingrained with the slave mentality. They love the security of slavery. In fact, we see an even stronger desire for more slavery in the call for socialized medicine.

God's answer to slavery is responsibility and faithful observance to His every word. If this plan is refused, then terrible circumstances will arise. If this doesn't cause people to return to the law of liberty, only death awaits them.

But, sadly, not many want to hear this message. Human nature wants one of two messages, absolute freedom or slavery. The fallen nature does not desire to know what the Lord says and how to apply His law of liberty. Rather people want one of two messages: How to be happy slaves, able to claim the security offered by slavery with a clear conscience before God, or how to be freed slaves with no responsibility to God's law.

The offer of freedom without responsibility to the law of God, will draw committed followers. This gives us three types of people.

First, we have people who make no profession of Christianity. They will band together and commit their time and finances to try to keep freedom in this country. They see the answer as political, yet their effort is totally without having to serve God. It is doomed to failure.

Second, we have what we could call the "Christian Patriots." This would be those who have the same desire as the non-Christians. They desire to obtain freedom without the responsibility of applying the law of God to every thought and action. It is strange how the pagans and many of God's people will invest their time, money and energy in political answers, but see no need of investing in God's answers. Many of these people cannot get past the basic principle of tithing and submission to proper authority. (Certainly, this does not include all who identify themselves as "Christian Patriots.")

They look for a short cut to freedom and liberty without having to apply the principles of the law of liberty to everything. They do not even see their occupation as a god-given responsibility to claim for the kingdom of God. They have no long-range goal or hope that faithfulness to the principles of Exodus 15:26, will overcome all the evil around them. This lack of faith strips the word of God of its power, reducing it to little more than a soul-saving word. To these people, the only hope is political; revolt and revolution. The end result will be more loss of liberty.

There is a third group who desires freedom from all the cares of the world with no responsibility to the law of liberty. They look for the rapture to provide their freedom.

The slave mentality is clearly seen in the children of Israel within their first 45 days of freedom. When things didn't go to suit the slaves, rather than seeking to change those things by going to the Lord or to Moses for instructions from God as to what to do, they murmured and complained. The slave mentality destroys any desire to work and to be responsible. It expects everything to be handed to them on a platter at their request with no sacrifice or responsibility on their part.

This is all around us today. Rather than situations which arise causing a person to examine his relationship with the law of the Lord and letting his request be made known to God, the slave complains and gripes, but not for long. He will move on to where he feels comfortable in his slavery. He will go where he feels no responsibility to deal with things which his flesh enjoys. Or they will elect a person who will lead them back into Egypt with promises that "Big Brother" will supply all their needs.

Amos chapter three contains a sad warning by the Lord. The anger of the Lord is proclaimed against His people because they have departed from His way. They are led in this departure by their religious leaders, 2:4. The Lord warns them that their departure prohibits Him from walking with them, 3:3. Their path is leading to destruction by the lion, vs. 5, 6. (See Pro. 28:13-15 & 1 Pe. 5:8.) But, He will not deliver them to judgment and destruction without first warning them of the impending danger, vs. 5-8. He reveals the impending destruction and what to do to avoid it, to his servants the prophets, v. 7. (Note that the answer is not revealed to the state, nor to others, but to his servants the prophets. Therefore, Christians should be extremely cautious about who they accept answers from.) The Lord warns and warns, but they know not to do right. The result is judgment and destruction, vs. 10-15.

With this we see that the retention of the slave mentality in spite of all warnings, is a sign of God's judgment against the slaves and against their society. Slavery must be separated from God's people, and it will be.

The slave mentality! Look at what was required to break this loose from these people. According to Exodus 15:26, are we slaves or Freemen?
Planing Ahead 2 Sam. 9

This is one of the sweetest chapters in Scripture. Here we see an undeserved kindness shown to the grandson of a man who tried for many years to kill David, Saul.

This was probably close to the middle of David's reign, because Mephibosheth has a young son at this time, v. 12. Mephibosheth had been only 5 when Saul and his dad, Jonathan, were killed.

In this chapter we see David setting out to keep a pledge that he had made to his best friend, Jonathan, 1 Samuel 20:15, 42. It has been about 20 years since David came to the throne. Why did he wait so long to fulfill this pledge? This is a good question, with no real answer. Maybe he had been so busy that he forgot or maybe he put it off.

The point is that David, after many years, remembers this pledge and sets about to fulfill it. Some things about this pledge. 1. It had been made in secret. No one knew about it except the two of them. 2. It had been made many years before, maybe 30 or 40 years. 3. In looking at the pledge, notice that they were both concerned about their children and grandchildren. They were living in the future; they were concerned about how their present situation could be turned into an advantage for their posterity.

Until people return to a genuine concern about the future generations, we will continue to have the social problems which we have.

For the past several years we have stood against the institution of county-wide zoning in our county, which is primarily agricultural. We have gone to every counsel meeting when we knew this subject would come up. (I am the only Christian [let alone pastor.] The socially active 'christians' are promoting this] in our county, who claims to believe the Bible, who has consistently taken a stand against county-wide zoning. Those who make no claim of Christianity will rally with their time and money to protect this area. Our society is getting just what it deserves, socialism. The indifferent pastors will have to answer to God for the loss of freedom in this nation.)

The last counsel meeting at which this came up was September 6. I was sitting in a place where I could not see the man who spoke, but whoever spoke made the comment that the farmer is only a steward of the land. It is not his but he is holding it in stewardship for the following generations, therefore, he will have more of a concern than the state will have. The speaker said that the state is not the steward, but the family. I was surprised to say the least, but the speaker spoke one of the most basic principles of Scripture. The family is only a steward over the property. God has intrusted that property to it to hold for the following generations.

David and Jonathan were concerned about the following generations and were, in their vow, trying to protect them.

We must pray and work for a return to this kind of thinking.

Pastor Ovid Need Jr.

Letters

Greetings from Philippines in His precious name.

I read your Booklet and I appreciate that your experienced serves as defferent to those who would follow and have followed the same pattern of your false and perverted teaching of SALVATION, (Asking Jesus to come into your heart) syndrome. PRAISE GOD!

Kindly mail to us as many available copies of these Booklets for prayer distribution to our Church members, & also members of other churches in this area (PANAY AREA) Philippines. Also please send us "mail outs" with your purpose of exposing root problems using the WORD OF GOD. (Matt. 3:10)

Should you send these requested necessary copies we will surely appreciate them, & rest assured that we will be praying for your ministry there in the U.S.A.

The Lord Bless You, Your Church as well as your family.

In His Gospel.
Rev. Felicismo G. Vestidas, Pastor
Bible Baptist Church
Jamindan, Capiz
5808 Philippines

Beloved in the Lord:

Thank you so much for continuing to send the letters. Each one is interesting and challenging..

Pastor Edwin Lillebo
Presho, SD

I want to thank you for the Biblical Examiner and thank God that He is waking up His people in the close of this satanic age..

God bless your efforts in bringing His righteous Kingdom.

For God & Country
Mrs. Dorothy Batusic
Siloam Springs AR

Personal!

We hope you had a good Holiday Season and survived OK. We pray that this next year will find us all more faithful to the Master. Needless to say, we would like to hear from you. Drop us a line. It is an encouragement to our folks here who make this possible.

Bro. Need

Hog Pen, Love of Slavery & Plan Ahead