

New Testament's undergirding of the law. We cite therefore, first, the basic principle, second, the case law, and, third, the Pauline declaration of the application of the law:

1. Thou shalt not steal (Ex. 20:15). The basic law, declaration of principle.
2. Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn (Duet. 25:4). Illustration of the basic law, a case.
3. For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope... Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel (1 Cor. 9:9, 10,14; the entire passage, 9:1-14, is an interpretation of the law).

For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward (1 Tim. 5:18, cf. v. 17; the illustration is to buttress the requirements of "honour," or "double honour" for presbyters of elders, i.e., pastors of the church). These two passages illustrate the requirement, "Thou shalt not steal," in terms of a specific case law, revealing the extent of that case in its implications. In his epistle to Timothy, Paul refers also to the law which in effect declares, by case law, that "labourer is worthy of his reward." The reference is to Leviticus 19:13, "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy bretheren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates (cf. v. 15). This is cited by Jesus, Luke 10: 7, "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

If it is sin to defraud an ox of his livelihood, then it is also a sin to defraud a man of his wages: it is *theft* in both cases. If theft is God's classification of an offense against an animal, how much more so an offense against God's apostle and minister? The implication then is, how much more deadly is stealing from God. Malachi makes this very clear:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have a have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? in tithes and offerings, Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in

mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of the hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground: neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all the nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts (Mal. 3:8-12).

This example of case law illustrates not only the *meaning* of case law in Scripture, but also its *necessity*. Without case law, God's law would soon be reduced to an extremely limited area of meaning. This, of course, is precisely what has happened. Those who deny the present validity of the law apart from the Ten Commandments have as a consequence a very limited definition of theft. Their definition of theft usually follows the civil law of their country, is humanistic, and is not radically different from definition given by Moslems, Bud-dists, and humanists. But, in analyzing later the case laws illustrative of the law, "Thou shalt not steal," we shall see how far-reaching its meaning is.

The law, then, *first* asserts principles, *second*, it cites cases to develop the implications of those principles, and, *third*, the law has as its purpose and direction *the restitution of God's order*.

This *third* aspect is basic to Biblical law, and it illustrates again the difference between Biblical law and humanistic law. According to one scholar, "Justice in its true and proper sense is *a principle of co-ordination between subjective beings*." ²⁹ Such a concept of justice is not only humanistic but also subjective. Instead of a basic *objective order* of justice, there is instead merely an *emotional condition* called justice.

In a humanistic law-system, restitution is possible and often exists, but again it's not the restoration of God's fundamental order but of man's order. Restitution then is entirely to man. ³⁰ Biblical law requires restitution to the offended person, but even more basic to the law is the demand for the restoration of God's order. It is not merely the courts of law which are operative in term of restitution. For Biblical law, restitution is indeed, *a*), to be required by courts of law of all offenders, but, even more, *b*), is the purpose and direction of the law in its entirety, the restoration of God's order, a glorious and good creation which serves and glorifies its Creator. Moreover, *c*), God's sovereign court and law operates in terms of restitution at all times, to curse disobedience and hamper thereby its challenge to and devastation of

God's order, and to bless and prosper he obedient restoration of God's order. Malachi's declaration concerning tithes, to return our illustration, implies this, and, indeed, states it explicitly: they are "cursed with a curse" for robbing God of His tithes. Therefore, their field are not productive, since they work against God's restitutive purpose. Obedience to God's law of tithe, honoring instead of robbing God, will deluge His people with blessings. The word "deluge" is appropriate: the expression "open... the windows of heaven" recalls the Flood (Gen. 7:11), which was a central example of a curse. But the purpose of curses is also restitution: the curse prevents the ungodly from overthrowing God's order. The men of Noah's generation were destroyed in their evil imaginations, as they conspired against God's order (Gen. 6:5), in order to institute the process of restoration through Noah

But to return to our original illustration of Biblical law, "Thou shalt not steal." The New Testament illustrates restitution after extortion in the form of unjust taxation in the person of Zaccheus (Luke 19:2-9), who was pronounced a saved man after declaring his intention of making full restitution. Restitution is clearly in view in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:23-26). According to one scholar,

In Eph. iv. 28, St. Paul shows how the principle of restitution was to be extended. He who had been a robber must not only cease from theft, but must labour with his hands that he might restore what he had wrongfully taken away, but in case those whom he has wronged could not be found, restitution should be made to the poor. ³¹

This fact of restitution or restoration is spoken of, in its relationship to God, in three ways. *First*, there is the restitution or restoration of God's sovereign law-word by proclamation. St. John the Baptist, by his preaching, restored the law-word to the life if God's people. Jesus so declared it: "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not" Matt. 17:11,12). There is then, *second*, the restoration which comes by subjecting all things to Christ and establishing a godly over the world (Matt. 28:18-20; II Cor. 10:5; Rev. 11:15, ect.). *Third*, with the second coming, there is the total, final restoration which comes with the second coming, and towards which history moves; the second coming is the total and culminating rather than sole act of "the times of restitution" (Acts 3:21).

God's covenant with Adam required him to exercise

dominion over the earth and to subdue it (Gen. 1:26 ff.) under God and according to God's law-word. This relationship of man to God was a covenant (Hosea 6:7; cp. marginal reading).

But all of Scripture proceed from the truth that man always stands in covenant relation to God. All God's dealings with Adam in paradise presuppose this relation: for God talked with Adam and revealed Himself to Himself to him, and Adam knew God in the wind of day. Besides, salvation is always presented as the establishment an realization of God's covenant...

...this covenant relation is not be conceived as something incidental, as a means to an end, as a relation that was established by was of an agreement, but as a fundamental relationship in which Adam stood to God by virtue of his creation. ³²

The restoration of that covenant relationship was the work of Christ, His grace to His elect people. The fulfillment of that covenant is their great commission: to subdue all things and all things and all nations to Christ and His law-word.

The creation mandate was precisely the requirement that man subdue the earth and exercise dominion over it. There is not one word of Scripture to indicate of imply that this mandate was ever revoked. There is every word of Scripture to declare that this mandate must and shall be fulfilled, and "scripture cannot be broken," according to Jesus (John 10:35). Those who attempt to break it shall themselves be broken. ³³

Notes

29. Giorgio Del Vecchio, *Justice, An Historical and Philosophical Essay*, edited with additional notes by A. H. Campbell (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1956 [1952, 1924 Italian edition]), p. 2.

30. See, for a study of such concept, Dr. Stephen Schafer, *Resitution to Victims of Crimes* (London: Stevens and Sons; Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1960).

31. John Henry Blunt, ed., *Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology* (London: Longmans, Green, 1891), p. 645.

32. Herman Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1966), p. 221f.

33. H. de Jongste and J. M. van Krimpen, *The Bible and the Life of the Christian*, p. 27, recognize this, "That mandate has never been revoked," and then proceeded to revoke it by their amillennial pre-

suppositions by foreseeing the revocation of the mandate by the triumph of the anti-Christ: "There is no room for optimism: towards the end, in the camps of the satanic and the anti-Christ, culture will sicken, and the Church will yearn to be delivered from its distress" (p. 85).

The Direction of the Law

In order to understand Biblical law, it is necessary to understand also certain basic characteristics of that law. First, certain broad premises or principles declared. These are declarations of basic law. The Ten Commandments give us such declarations. The Ten Commandments are not therefore laws among laws, but are the basic laws, of which the various laws are specific examples. An example of such a basic law is Exodus 20:15 (Duet. 5:19) "Thou shall not steal."

In analyzing this commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," it is important to note, a), that this is the establishment, positively, of private property, even as, negatively, it punishes offenses against property. The commandments thus establish and protect a basic area of life. But, b), even more important, this establishment of property issues, not from the state of mind but from the sovereign and omnipotent God. The commandments all have their origin in God, who, as the sovereign lord, issues the law, that any offense against the law is no offence against God. Whether the law has reference to property, person, family, labor, capital, church, state, or anything else, its first frame of reference is to God. In essence, law-breaking is entirely against God, since everything and every person is His creation. But, David declared, with reference to his acts of adultery and murder, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:4). This means the, d), that lawlessness is also sin, i.e., that any civil, familial, ecclesiastical, or other social act of disobedience is also a religious offense unless the disobedience is required by the prior obedience to God. With this in mind, that the law, first, lays down broad and basic principles, let us examine a second characteristic of Biblical law, namely, that the major portion of the law is case law, i.e., the illustration of the basic principle in terms of specific cases. These specific cases are often illustrations of the extent of the application of the law; that is, by citing a minimal type of case, the necessary jurisdictions of the law are revealed. To prevent us from having any excuses for failing to understand and utilize this concept, the Bible gives us its own interpretation of such a law, and the illustration, being given by St. Paul, makes clear the

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