

The Cycles of Seven III

God Isn't Fair, God is Righteous

Michael Heiss—September 30, 2015

This morning we're going to continue more or less where we left off, but I have to back up and partially apologize.

Yesterday, I finished up the presentation on the Sabbath and I left some stuff hanging. So, we're going to go back and rehash that.

Before I do, there's a basic, fundamental principle that we all need to realize and that is this: When you look at the statutes of God, His judgments and His ordinances as you find them in the books of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Exodus, remember one thing, *they all reflect the mind of God!* Not my mind, not your mind, but they reflect the mind of God. This how He sees it and we need to learn to see things as He sees them, and that is not always easy.

God is unlimited. He is all-powerful, but He has limited Himself. In a way it reminds me of a comment once made by Peter the Great, one of the great Czars of Russia, at least he's reported to have said this—maybe he didn't say it, maybe it was falsely attributed to him, but I can see him saying it—'I don't rule Russia; 10,000 clerics rule Russia.' Meaning, of course, no matter how hard he tried, and he was a pretty autocratic Czar, he couldn't get things through to the far-flung provinces. There were just too many people. He couldn't get anything done. Look at Congress. Do you think they can get anything done? That's just the way it is, human nature.

So, God has limited Himself in that he's working through human beings. When God gives His Law—His statutes, ordinances, judgments—He knows human nature. He knows how people generally react. He's trying to:

1. improve a condition
2. promote a condition
3. reduce, lessen or eliminate an excessive negative

When you read them, ask yourself these questions:

- What is God getting at?
- What is He trying to accomplish?
- What is He trying to do through this particular ordinance?

I think that one of the best ways to illustrate this is through a presentation I gave on the death penalty, to see what God did with that and how He also limited it. God was concerned about something, very much.

Gen. 9—this is the time period right after the Flood. God blesses Noah and his sons (v 1) and talks about

Genesis 9:2, God is speaking: "And the fear of you and dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth..."

Verse 5: "And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed by man—for He [God] made man in the image of God" (vs 5-6):

- there is our principle
- there is the statement
- you commit a capital crime
- you commit murder
- you die

No explanation! That's just a general statement. God limited Himself in that, because He put a condition upon that. You will see the mind of God at work:

Deuteronomy 17:2: "If there is found among you, inside any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in breaking His covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the forces of heaven, which I have forbidden, and if it is told you, and you have heard and inquired diligently, and, behold, it is true and the thing is certain, that such abomination is done in Israel; then you shall bring forth that man or that woman who has committed that evil thing to your gates, even that man or that woman, and shall stone them with stones until they die.... [the limitation] ...At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death" (vs 2-6).

Consider this: God is concerned and His concern somewhat reflect the philosophy of the American judicial system. We say, 'Better that a hundred people should go free, even though they've committed a crime, than one man should be unjustly convicted. God is not getting at that so much. What He's getting at is: Did this person actually commit the crime? How do you know that he committed the crime?

If you've ever watched any of the series of 48 Hours or Dateline, you will see all kinds of crimes committed and how they go about trying to

prove who did what. If you don't have a direct witness there is no death penalty. You must have two witnesses. Many states have abolished the death penalty because they found that people on death row—with the advent of DNA, CSI procedures—they're innocent. They didn't do it. Therefore, they're eliminating the death penalty.

God knew that could happen. I haven't studied all those cases. I can't lay claim to the hundreds of cases that have come about, but the ones that I have read is considerable, and not one of those cases listed two or more witnesses. It was either circumstantial evidence, or you had conflicted evidence, but it was enough evidence to convict the person. Really, according to God's rule, not enough to impose the death penalty. The death penalty should never have been imposed or have tried to be imposed, in the first place. You've got to have two or three witnesses.

What about the condition? Somebody enters the house, stabs a person to death or shoots him, whatever it is, and unbeknownst to him there's a family member hiding in the house. Someone else is in the house he doesn't know about. He sees it and he testifies in a court of law, *I saw him do it. I saw him stab the man to death.* One witness, no good, not enough for the death penalty. Why? Because how do you know he's telling the truth?

Of course, several witnesses could lie, that's true, but God crossed the line with two. When you read this you realize that God is thinking, 'Okay, I'm dealing with these human beings. There's a lot less chance for two witnesses to be mistaken than there is for one.' God is willing to forego the death penalty in order to make sure an innocent man is not convicted and executed. That doesn't mean that you can't convict a man of a crime. It doesn't mean you can't punish him some other way, but not the death penalty.

When you read this statute, you realize what God is getting at. You talk about witnesses, I'll show you where even two or more witnesses can get it all fouled up. Let's take a look at the trial of Jesus. You want to talk about false witnesses, come turn with me to the Gospel of Mark. If you can read between the lines, you will see that Jesus had to use connivance to get Himself convicted to be crucified. If He hadn't done it, He might not have been crucified and the whole plan of God could have gone awry.

Mark 14:55: "And the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were trying to find testimony against Jesus, to put Him to death; but they did not find *any*. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.... [they couldn't

get their act together] ...And some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying, 'We heard Him say, "I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands."' But neither did their testimonies agree with one another" (vs 55-59).

They could not get two witnesses to agree. You have to remember that the high priest understood that law. The Sanhedrin understood that law. Even though they were not the most righteous of men, they did try to obey that particular aspect of the law. They could not convict and execute a person or send him to Pilate to be executed, unless they had two or more witnesses.

Verse 60: "Then the high priest stood up in the center *and* questioned Jesus, saying, 'Have You nothing to *say in answer to* what these are testifying against You?' But He remained silent and answered nothing..." (vs 60-61). He didn't say a word! All the way through the trial He didn't say much of anything.

"...Again the high priest questioned Him, and said to Him, 'Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'" (v 61). You can just picture Jesus thinking to Himself, 'I've got my Father's plan in mind here. We've got to get this done. I came to die for the sins of the world. If I don't give them an excuse, if I don't give them something to hang their hat on to convict Me and send Me to Pilate, it's all going to go down the tubes. I can't let that happened.' So, what did He say?

Verse 62: "And Jesus said, 'I AM. And you shall see the Son of man sitting at *the* right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven'... [look at the results] ...Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments *and* said, 'What further need do we have of witnesses?'" (vs 62-63).

We don't need witnesses for this. We all heard Him. This us utter blasphemy. That's all, in their minds, that they needed, but they understood that you had to have two or more witnesses. They couldn't even get two witnesses.

Yes, you can have lying witnesses, but God wanted to do His best. He wasn't like Zeus, throwing his thunderbolts. Every time a tribunal met, every time you had a case coming before the Sanhedrin or a local court and a bad decision was rendered, God wasn't like Zeus hurling thunderbolts and said, 'Bad decision!' He didn't do that. He lets *man* do that. That's why He put the safeguards in.

With that in mind, Exo. 21 is where they said we're talking about a cycle of seven because this is six years out of seven.

Exodus 21:1: "And these *are* the judgments which you shall set before them. If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years. And in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.... [you will let him go] ...If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself. If he *was* married, then his wife shall go out with him.... [here comes the crux where we left off yesterday] ...**If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself**" (vs 1-4). I remember first reading this and I thought: something's wrong here. This isn't right. This is not just. As I have said before: this is not fair.

I did give one message based on fairness and I tried to point out that there is no word for *fair* in Hebrew. The Bible doesn't have the word *fair* in it. God is never declared to be *fair*. He never calls Himself *fair*.

- God is kind
- God is merciful
- God is good
- God is righteous
- God is Holy

But He never calls Himself *fair*! What is *fair*? What is fair to thee and what is fair to me may not be fair to the guy behind the tree. You've heard the old saying. What is fair?

This administration, like Mr. Obama using *fairness*; everything is *fairness* with him. I remember in 2008 when the campaign was getting going and Charlie Gibson of ABC News nailed Mr. Obama on this one. Mr. Obama did not have an answer, except for *fairness*. He wanted heavy taxes and Charlie Gibson pointed out, 'Mr. Obama, history has shown that every time you reduce the capital gain tax:

- money flows in
- the economy perks up
- money flows to the economy
- jobs are created

Why do you want to raise the capital gain tax?' Obama kind of stammered and said, 'Fairness, it's a matter of fairness. It's not fair that some people should pay a high tax rate of 35% or 30%, or whatever it is, while some of these rich guys only 15% or 10% or whatever it is for capital gain.' It's the only answer he had. He said that the American people want a 'fair shot.' They want a fair shake. I'm saying, 'I don't know what that means.' I kiddingly said, but it's true.

I'm a great baseball fan. I love the game of baseball. I know what fair means in baseball. I know that if a batter drives a line-drive shot down the left

field line, if that ball falls on the left side of the line it's a foul ball. Back batter, back to the plate, redo, reset. But if that ball falls on the line or inside the line, fair ball, in play. I know what that means, but I don't know what *fair* is. It's an American institution. It's an American phenomenon. Kid's all love a baseball diamond or a football game:

- Hey, it's not fair!
- You're hitting!
- It's not fair!
- You interrupted with him!
- That's just not fair!
- It's not fair he got that job!
- It's not fair, he won the lotto!
- It's not fair!

We say it all the time. God doesn't care about fairness. *He cares about righteousness! He cares about justice!* Sometimes His justice... We don't see justice as He sees it. We have to learn to see things as He sees them. Sometimes that can be hard. It can be difficult. It could be a 'hard' saying.

Let's take a look at a 'hard' saying, that some of Jesus' disciples couldn't take. Then we will see where God talks about His mind and His thoughts vs our mind and our thoughts.

All of this is being set up to explain what we have here, in Exo. 21. Then we will pull a Paul Harvey. Remember Paul Harvey? *Now you know the rest of the story!* The rest of the story is not in Exo. 21. The rest of the story is in Deut., and when we see what the rich landowner had to give the man when he went out. We will see why God said what he did.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is talking to His disciples, some of those people who were following Him. He wasn't saying this to the scribes or the Pharisees or the Sadducees.

John 6:51: "I am the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, 'How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?' Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me. This is the Bread, which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever.' These

things He said in *the* synagogue as He was teaching in Capernaum. Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said, **'This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear it?'**" (vs 51-60).

Drink the blood of the Son, eat His flesh. This is barbarism! This is cannibalism! This is what they were saying. 'I can't take this.' They didn't understand.

Verse 61: "But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, 'Does this offend you? What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before? It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. **The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life**'" (vs 61-63).

Verse 66: "From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, 'Are you also desiring to go away?' ... [Simon Peter gave the right answer] ... Then Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life'" (vs 66-68). *The Author of the judgments in Exo. 21 has the words of eternal life!*

I would think that this man got a wife from the master, had kids and he ought to be able to go out with his wife. After all, he worked hard. You don't want to separate families—do you? *No!* Then, why would God do this?

Let's see what God says to me in my impudence, in my arrogance, in my ignorance. This is what God declares:

Isaiah 55:8: **"'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'"** (vs 8-9). *You need to see how I see it and I will show you why I judge this way!*

Now that we have that in mind, let us see what is going on here. In Exo. 21 this person got sold to a master, he served him six years. Whether he was married or single, he can go out in the seventh year. ***There's our cycle of seven. The seventh year was the year of freedom!*** If the master ***gives him a wife*** and she has bore him sons, then no! Why is God saying that?

In essence, you can see the mind of God at work: 'You're single and you want to get married, then you go get a grubstake. Go work for someone, earn money, then you go out and get a wife. Don't think that you can go work at free room and board, the master gives you a wife and you can go and leave with that woman. You can't do that. I'm telling you, the way you get a wife is that you go and

work for money and then you have money to support a wife.'

We're about to see the rest of the story. Those words may be somewhat harsh to the laborer, not fair to the laborer, but notice what God says to the rich landowner to the master; see what God commands him to do:

Deuteronomy 15:12: **"If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.** And when you send him out free from you, you shall not let him go away empty. You shall **liberally** bestow upon him from your flock, and from your grain floor, and from your winepress; with what the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him" (vs 12-14).

Goats, maybe sheep, cattle, dry food, whatever it is, this man is going out with some substance. No, he's not going to be rich in gold and silver and cattle, that's true, but he's going to go out with substance.

God tells the master, 'You don't send him out with nothing. You give to him.' If the laborer did that and left, he now has substance. He now has a grubstake. He now can go out and afford a wife. In reality God is fair after all! He doesn't use the word *fair* but He's righteous, but He's setting down parameters. He says:

1. None of the socialist stuff. You don't go in there, take from the government, in this case take from the master, and leave with the master's possessions (wife he gave you) and those kids.
2. No, you don't do that because you didn't earn that wife.

Granted, Jacob did. Jacob did agree with Laban to serve. That's different, that was a separate contract. This is not a contract. He just married one of the master's women that were there in his empire, so to speak; it's his landmass.

Notice what God says to the master, v 15: "And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you. Therefore, I command you this word today." So, you better give to him. Now, sometimes, the man doesn't want to leave, he doesn't want to leave the master. 'I don't want to go out and earn a living. I don't know.'

It's sort of like the homeless. There's so many homeless people. I feel for the homeless people, I really do. I'm not a hard taskmaster down on the homeless. Anybody remember Mitch Snyder? He was the hero of the homeless. The one who was the crusader to help the homeless. Years and years

ago they asked Mitch, 'Mitch, how many homeless are there?' He said, 'I don't know.' 'Come on Mitch. Give us a number.' 'I don't know. I'll say there are three million.'

All of a sudden the word went forth, three million homeless. There never were three million homeless. There weren't even 500,000 homeless. In fact, one of the men, one of the homeless people who actually froze to death, made headlines. His brother said, 'No! He had a home. He had a room. He could come here and live any time he wanted. We could not get him to stay with us.' You couldn't commit him to an institution. You just can't go out there and incarcerate him in an institution some where. We couldn't do that. So, he froze to death of his own free will and volition. Some people just don't like that freedom. There are three types of freedom:

1. national freedom
2. political freedom
3. personal freedom

We in this country believe that everybody wants freedom. Everybody believes in freedom. No, that's not true. Down through the ages that's not been proven true. What is the most fundamental desire? *Power, that's what's desired!* There are many countries where people aren't free and they don't mind it because:

- they get food
- they have a bed to sleep on
- they get a job guaranteed them by the government

They don't want freedom, as long as you:

- feed the belly
- give me food
- warm me up

I don't care!

Political freedom? *They don't care about political freedom!* It's like China today and even Russia. Historically these countries never had freedom. The people don't care for freedom. National freedom? Oh, yeah. National freedom they have. Look at Mr. Putin. He has national freedom and many Russians back him up for national freedom. Political freedom? No, they don't have political freedom. Political freedom means that you can choose your rulers, you can vote, you can argue against certain policies—you'd better not.

If you want your own economic freedom—whether it's in imperialist China or imperial Russia—the chairman will say, 'God bless you my son.' They don't believe in God. Go make lots of money for China. They don't care. Be a butcher, baker, or candlestick maker, build a better

mousetrap. Don't bad mouth the government; don't criticize any government policies, but you can do whatever you want. They had freedom like that. But the majority of people don't want that freedom.

That's why God says, 'If the person doesn't want to leave, then you bore the ears through with an awl and he shall be your servant forever till the day he dies.' He chose that.

My point here is that this judgment of God was to show that:

1. don't look for something for nothing
2. don't try to get something from your master that wasn't yours in the first place

If you go in by yourself, you're entitled to go out by yourself. If your wife and you go in together, you're entitled to go out together. Don't expect to marry someone in the master's harem, or the master's group of women or however he has it lined up and expect to go out free. That woman was part of the master's realm.

I wouldn't necessarily think that way, but God thinks that way. If anybody has a problem with it, you got to realize you got a problem with God. I had to come to terms with it until I understood what God was saying. That's the way it is. Then God says, 'However, if he's by himself or with his wife, and he goes out, you feed him, you give him grain, you give him wine, you give him of your flock.'

You see, God put restrictions on everybody. ***These judgments reflect the mind of God!*** That's why it is in Exo. 21 that if you go in and you take a wife from your master, you can't take your wife with you. Don't do that. ***That's the lesson, don't do that!*** Go in, save enough money then you'll have your wife.

Does anybody remember the name, Josiah Wedgwood? Chinaware? the fine china? There's a fascinating story about him. He had smallpox growing up. He was from a potters field in Burslem, England—filthy, gritty, grimy. One day a rich relative, a squire, came by and his beautiful daughter was there. They fell in love at first sight. Here was this pot-marked, Josiah Wedgwood and there was the beautiful daughter Sarah. They fell in love. She brought him books to read. He wanted to marry her, but he couldn't marry her. How could he? He didn't have any money.

All of a sudden he said, 'I've got to do something.' He was a potter. Wow, was he a good one! He said, 'One day I'm going to marry her. I'm going to be the best potter England ever saw.' He made good his boast. He created pottery, porcelain.

He sold it for fancy prices to the rich people in London and elsewhere in the realm. He gathered up more money, as much as he could. Finally he had enough money and the rich squire said, 'Well, I guess you've done it. I guess you've earned it.' He had to give his daughter to Josiah Wedgewood.

Remember the Scripture says, 'He who is diligent, he shall stand before kings.' Josiah Wedgewood didn't stand before kings, that's true. He was only knighted by Queen Victoria, the most powerful monarch in England.

That's the thing that God says to do. ***'You go, you earn and you get your wife. You don't go in and try to take a wife from a master and expect to leave with her.'*** To some of us, that may not set right, but if you think it through, you'll see God's wisdom.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 9:5-6
- 2) Deuteronomy 17:2-6
- 3) Mark 14:55-63
- 4) Exodus 21:1-4
- 5) John 6:51-63, 66-68
- 6) Isaiah 55:8-9
- 7) Deuteronomy 15:12-15

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