

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Deuteronomy: Moses' Great Appeal For Israel To Obey God For Blessing

Part V: Specific Treaty Stipulations Of The Great King, Deuteronomy 12-26

H. The Cities Of Refuge: Heeding God's True, Settling Justice Over False, Unsettling Injustice (Deuteronomy 19:1-13)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We live in a world today that is often marked by unsettling injustices:

(1) The recent rollout of the "ObamaCare" individual mandate has been a "catastrophe" according to The Wall Street Journal October 17, 2013 lead editorial, p. A14 ("ObamaCare's Black Box"). "HHS [Health and Human Services] concedes there were built-in information technology and structural defects" and the government "wants to show consumers only their net out-of-pocket premiums minus subsidies, not the true underlying cost of insurance . . . because those all-in quotes are so much higher than what's available on the individual market." (Ibid.)

Nevertheless, "the IRS" is set to start "fining Americans for not having insurance" though the "administrative-bureaucratic tangle" becomes "more complex as more people enroll, providers start billing insurers" and "patients show up in doctors offices thinking they have coverage they don't." (Ibid.)

(2) This problem impacts us directly locally: last Thursday, one of our Church members loaned me a booklet about a Christian medical group cost-sharing program he is seriously considering for his wife now that ObamaCare is causing her to need to acquire health insurance at much higher monthly premiums.

His concern is validated by Jim DeMint's op-ed, "We Won't Back Down on ObamaCare," in the journal October 18, 2013, Ibid., p. A14: DeMint reported "that premiums are going up due to ObamaCare -- Americans are getting notices in their mailboxes every day."

(3) However, my greatest concern is the sheer wickedness and injustice of it all: even Senate Majority Leader, Democratic Senator Harry Reid "recently claimed that ObamaCare will lead to a single-payer health-care system." (Ibid.) Mr. DeMint reports that our country will then "deteriorate into a two-tier health system" where "the well-off can still buy quality coverage, but most Americans are consigned to poor care through the exchanges and Medicaid." (Ibid.) Thus, the current administration really doesn't mind if ObamaCare fails, for such failure will only lead to what its collectivistic-Marxist ideology has always wanted -- full government control of our health care.

Yet, collectivism that counters individual liberty and welfare was espoused by Alice Bailey (1880-1949), an idea she got from a demonic source as reported in Brannow Howse's Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 15-18. Thus, a godless ideology from Satan is pushing on us the current health care promotion, a great, evil injustice!

Need: *So we ask, "In view of the unsettling ways injustice is often promoted, how does God want us to live?!"*

I. Deuteronomy 19:1-13 taught Israel to HEED God's TRUE, *SETTLING JUSTICE* over *UNSETTLING, UNJUST* paganism by a SENSIBLE, CAREFUL series of actions that EDIFY all involved (as follows):

- A. Deuteronomy 19:1-13 is part of the Deuteronomy chapters 12-26 specific treaty stipulations (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 260) that were not an exhaustive list of God's laws, but instructed Israel on specific spiritual challenges she would face upon entering the land of Canaan (Ibid., p. 283; Deuteronomy 4:10).
- B. As such, Deuteronomy 19:1-13 set a **pattern** for **heeding God's true, settling justice** to *guard Israel from the coarse applications of God's laws typical of paganism, applications that only foment disorderly unrest:*
 1. Ancient Near Eastern pagans often reacted to manslaughter in emotionally-charged, irrational extremes:
 - a. On the one hand, people throughout the Ancient Near East would regularly slay in vengeance one who had accidentally slain a relative, a fact illustrated in the need for even Israel to institute cities of refuge.
 - b. On the other hand, many Ancient Near Eastern pagans had long provided special shrines for criminals to seek safety even from just punishment for heinous crimes, Zon. Pict. Ency. of the Bible, v. One, p. 869.
 2. However, such unjust extremes were grossly unedifying: (1) they fueled unrest and more vengeance from family members of parties unfairly abused by both extreme practices, leading to disorder in pagan society that was not conducive to righteousness and peace. (2) Such injustices also failed the basic intent of capital punishment given by God to the human race in Genesis 9:6: human life was made in God's image, so **all human life** was to be *valued*, be it the **life** of the *slain* OR the **life** of the *non-malicious manslayer!*
 3. Accordingly, God established the cities of refuge to which a manslayer could flee and find refuge from his avenger until a **fair, reasonable, settled** trial determined his *just* innocence or guilt, Numbers 35:9-34.

4. However, **applied** to the *burden* of the **book of Deuteronomy**, Moses *repeated* this provision with *added* comments on **FAIRNESS** to **COUNTER** a **COARSE, UNSETTLING APPLICATION** of God's **Law**:
 - a. Deuteronomy 19:1-13 repeats much of the provisions of the cities of refuge given in Numbers 35:9-34.
 - b. However, Moses **added MORE settling** provisions for **MORE peaceful order**: (1) Moses directed that when Israel entered Canaan and set up three cities of refuge there as Moses had set up three such cities in Transjordan (Deut. 19:1-3 with Deut. 4:41-43), she was to "prepare" (*kun*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 465-467) the "road" (*derek*, Ibid., p. 202-204), i. e., adequate roads to each city so a manslayer could **quickly** flee there, Deut. 19:3a. (2) Then, Israel was to "divide into three parts" (*shilesh*, Ibid., p. 1026) lit. "the border of your land," i. e., split Israel into three equal parts and put a city of refuge at the center of each part so a manslayer from any place in Israel could have **reasonable access** to refuge, Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 293; Ibid., Bib. Kno. Com., O. T., p. 297. (3) If God enlarged Israel's borders, giving her all the land promised to the patriarchs, the nation was to add three more cities of refuge in the same way she had added the first three cities for continued settling justice in the land, Deuteronomy 19:8-10.
 - c. A **special feature** of the "cities of refuge" was the **calming down** influence of their **functions**: (1) if a manslayer was found guilty of death, he was turned over to the avenger to be slain, ending the possibility of an ongoing feud among families with its social unrest, Deut. 19:11-13. (2) Yet, if the manslayer was innocent, he **still** had to **stay within the city of refuge to which he had fled to avoid being slain until the death of the high priest**. This provision (a) gave time for the avenger to "cool down" and (b) taught the manslayer his great need to learn to be more careful to avoid accidentally killing again, Numbers 35:25.
5. Evidence of how this law gave social stability comes via the life of Solomon: Shimei who had committed the capital offense of cursing Solomon's father, king David (2 Sam. 16:5-13; Ex. 22:28; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to 1 Kings 2:8) was told by Solomon to build a house and stay in Jerusalem as evidence he was **submissive** to Solomon, David's son, 1 Kings 2:36. However, if Shimei violated the order and left the city for any reason, as in the case of the manslayer who left a city of refuge before the death of the High Priest, Shimei would be executed with only himself to blame, 1 Kings 2:37. Shimei agreed to this arrangement, but then violated it, so Solomon had him executed, a move that solidified the kingdom, 1 Kings 2:38-46.

Lesson: God directed that **OPPOSITE** the **PAGAN world's EXTREME UNJUST REACTIONS** to **SLAYINGS**, **ISRAEL** was to provide an **ACCESSIBLE TEMPORAL HAVEN** for **ALL MANSLAYERS** until an **ORDERLY TRIAL** determined the **JUST VERDICT** by **DUE PROCESS**, that the **GUILTY** be **EXECUTED** and the **INNOCENT STAY** in the **CITY of REFUGE** for a **TIME** set by **GOD** (the death of the High Priest) to "cool down" the avenger and teach the manslayer to be more careful for **SETTLED JUSTICE** and **SOCIAL ORDER**.

Application: May we (1) trust in Christ for salvation from sin and its chaos, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we believers **FOCUS** on the **INTENT** of God's **SCRIPTURE COMMANDS** in **APPLYING** them to live the **SETTLED, PEACEFUL, ORDERLY LIVES** our Lord desires **VERSUS** the **RESTLESS INJUSTICES** of our **LOST WORLD**.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

My wife and I are directly facing injustice due to ObamaCare: she recently got a notice from her insurance company that the Affordable Care Act is leading it to terminate her policy by the end of the year. She has had a high deductible policy, a \$10,000 family deductible per year, that we acquired to hold down premiums for the Church, and we personally saved up the money to meet that deductible, but The Affordable Care Act is outlawing her policy. She will shortly be recommended a policy that has a far lower deductible but with far higher monthly premiums.

Nevertheless, the Deuteronomy 19:1-13 passage we covered this morning directs us: (1) God does **not** want us to make a radical political scene over the health care law though we view it as a grotesque evil. Instead of reacting in destructive fury as in paganism, we will (2) weigh our options, get the Church Board's advice, and (3) with the Board take the route that **best** fits **God's JUST** way of **order, peace** and **logic**. (4) We see Satan's work in the health law, and we do not want to fall for his "bait" in letting this issue detract us from our calling to expound God's Word at this Church. Rather, we will channel the loathing we feel over the evil being pushed at us to stay even more dedicated to the ministry of God's Word! (5) Also, we are doing our best to keep ourselves healthy to "counter" the evil we face by trying our best not to have to use the health care system, including my not having to use Medicare even at my age, thereby minimizing our exposure to the evil collectivism being promoted in the health care system!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, in reliance on the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16), may we live settled, peaceful, orderly lives as God wants us to live to function in real justice in all we do in living.