

Generous Justice, Tim Keller
Class #4. Justice and the Old Testament?
From Chap. 2. Pg. 19-32

Preliminary Issues:

Keller opens with some interesting and familiar (especially to churches of Christ) comments on the change of covenant between the old and the new. He writes that ceremonial laws of the OT are fulfilled in Christ and that the civil laws of the OT reveal God's character, values, and abide now in principle. (pg. 19-23).

Other early bullet point notes:

*Though it was Israel under covenant, even non-believing nations and kings are held accountable for injustices. (Dan. 4:17; Amos 1:3-2:3)

*Bribery (cf. with modern day large campaign contributions) is considered heinous to God because it marginalizes power from the poor. (Ex. 23:6-8). (pg. 23-24)

Survey the laws of...

*release from debt and Jubilee (Deut. 15)

*gleaning (Lev. 19:9-10, 23)

*laws of tithing (Deut. 14:28-29)

The practice of all of these was not merely to hand out benevolence to the needy, but to enable the poor to provide for themselves with the ultimate goal of, "There should be no poor among you." (Deut. 15:4). (pg. 25-28).

The kind of benevolence initiated by God among the Israelites in the time of their need was the daily gift of manna supplied in such a way that there was equitable distribution so that no one either hoarded or did without. Compare Ex. 16:18 and 2 Cor. 8:13-15. (pg. 31). How was this applied to first century benevolence among Christians?

Keller notes the divide in current political models on the subject of redistribution. He concludes, "In the end, what the Bible says about social justice cannot be tied to one political system or economic policy. If it is possible, we need to take politics out of this equation as we look deeper into the Bible's call for justice...The rules for the use of land in the Biblical laws challenge all major contemporary economic models." (pg. 32).