

# I&A Class Schedule

- Today and Next Week: *What Does the Bible Teach About Social Justice?*
- Oct 23 – Jim and Linda Maiorino – *Christian Ed Mission to the Navajo Indians*
- Oct 30 – Open
- Nov 6 – Elder Steve Landis
- Nov 13 – Elder Stan Ott



# What does the Bible say about Social Justice?

And how is it defined today?

Dave Reich, MA Christian  
Apologetics

October 9-16, 2016

Week 1



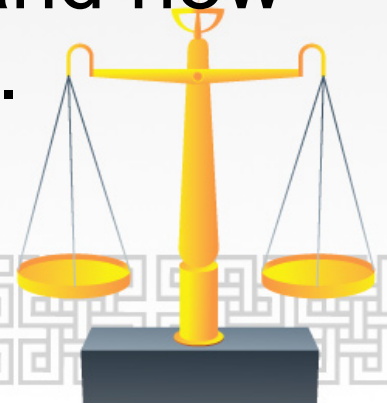
# Caveats/Resources

- I am not a Hebrew scholar
- Marvin Olasky, “*Going Beyond Social Justice to Righteous Justice*”, Lecture at Southern Baptist Seminary
  - Available free on-line
  - Olasky is a former Atheist-Marxist and is a Jewish Christian
  - Editor of *World Magazine*



# Why this topic?

- The Bible-believing Evangelical Church is in agreement on:
  - Pro-Life
  - Marriage
  - Ten Commandments
- However, we are all over the map on the issues of justice and compassion and how we are to go about implementing it.



# Opening Question

- What comes to YOUR mind when you hear the term, “Social Justice”?



# Examples of how SJ is used

- NY Times Examples
- The “Pirate Tree”
- Our presuppositions
  - Karma
  - Secular egalitarianism
  - “There is something fundamentally wrong and dangerous about a society in which so few have so much and so many have so little.”  
- Bernie Sanders
- Then, what about the Cubs?
  - Last World Series Won 1908



# Findings

- Marvin Olasky studied how the phrase, “social justice”, is used in the NY Times and found that it is used as a euphemism for “we like it”.



# Old Testament and Justice

“Mishpat”

צֶדֶק





# Old Testament and Justice

- Mishpat occurs over 150 times in the OT
- Tim Keller:
  - To treat people equitably.
  - Acquitting or punishing people on the merits of the case
  - Anyone who does the same wrong should be given the same penalty.



# OT Meaning of Justice

- Means giving people what they are due, whether punishment or protection or care.
- Often a synonym for “righteousness” and even “faithfulness”.



# Types of Justice in the OT

- Legal Justice

Deuteronomy 16:19:

*You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous.*



# Legal Justice

2 Chronicles 19:7:

*Now then let the fear of the Lord be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe.*



# Types of Justice

## No Partiality

Leviticus 19:15:

*You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.*

Exodus 23:2:

*You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert justice.*



# Types of Justice

## Law & Order

- Status is irrelevant; character counts
- Ez 22:29: *The people of the land have practiced oppression and committed robbery, and they have wronged the poor and needy and have oppressed the sojourner without justice.*
- Wronging the poor and the sojourner is injustice.



# Government Corruption

- Proverbs 29:4 - *The king gives stability to the land by justice, but a man who takes bribes overthrows it.*



# Distributive Justice

## Helping Those in Need

- Isaiah 1:17: *Learn to do good, seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.*
- Psalm 140:12: *I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and justice for the poor.*





# Distributive Justice

## Helping Those in Need

- Proverbs 29:7: *The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, the wicked does not understand such concern.*
- God cares about the spiritually and physically needy.



# Righteous

# Tzedek

צְדִיק



# Linkage of “Justice” and “Righteous”

- 60 of the OT verses that have the word “justice” (mishpat) also have the word, “righteous” (tzedek).
- Genesis 18:19 - *For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”*



# Mishpat and Zedok

- Deuteronomy 32:4: *The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He.*
- I Kings 10:9: *Blessed be the Lord your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.*



# Justice and Righteousness

- Deuteronomy 16:20: Justice (mishpat), *and only* justice (tzedek), you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
- The two Hebrew words for justice and righteousness are translated (in the NASB) “justice”.
- They are synonymous



# What does God think of these?

- Psalm 33:5: *He loves righteousness (tzedek) and justice (mishpat); the earth is full of the loving kindness of the Lord.*
- Psalm 72:1: Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king's son.



# What does God think of these?

- Psalm 89:14: *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; loving kindness and truth go before You.*
- Psalm 99:4: *The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.*
- Psalm 103:6: *The Lord performs righteous deeds and judgments for all who are oppressed.*



# Parallelism in Hebrew Poetry

Example: Psalm 24:3

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord?

Who may stand in his holy place?





# Parallelism

## Justice and Righteousness

- Psalm 106:3

*How blessed are those who keep justice  
Who practice righteousness at all times!*

- Isaiah 1:27

*Zion will be redeemed with justice  
And her repentant ones with righteousness.*



# Isaiah 5:7

## Parallelism

For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel

And the men of Judah His delightful plant.

Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed;

For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress.



# Isaiah 32

## Parallelism

- 32:1 - *Behold, a king will reign righteously  
And princes will rule justly.*



# Righteousness & Justice

- Proverbs 21:3 - *To do righteousness and justice is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.*
- Jeremiah 23:5 - *Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land.*



# Justice and righteousness for all

- Ezekiel 45:9 - *‘Thus says the Lord God, “Enough, you princes of Israel; put away violence and destruction, and practice justice and righteousness. Stop your expropriations from My people,” declares the Lord God.*



# In Sum

- General refrain over and over is mishpat and tzedek.
- Justice, in short, equals righteousness.
- All justice is based on the character of God.
- We are to rejoice over justice because it points to God.
- Why, for example, do we have just weight and measures?



# Justice in commerce

- *Leviticus 19:36 - You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin; I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt.*
- *Proverbs 2:15 - The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous, but is terror to the workers of iniquity.*



# Isaiah 26:9b-10

- *For when the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. **Though** the wicked is shown favor He does not learn righteousness; He deals unjustly in the land of uprightness, And does not perceive the majesty of the Lord.*
- Visit to Elizabeth NJ Prison Fellowship





# Welfare

- *Welfare is too expensive?*
  - *Treats people as beasts of burden, not people made in God's image*
- *Welfare is not expensive enough?*
  - *No personal interaction*



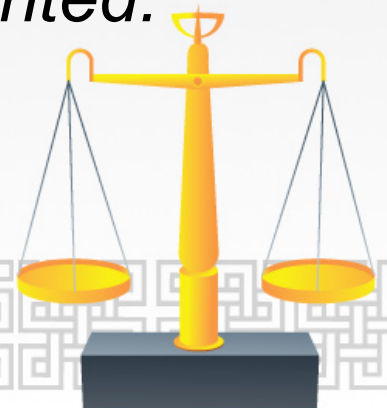
# What does it mean to be righteous?

Genesis 15:6 - *Then he (Abraham) believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.*

Faith and righteousness go together

David speaks to King Saul:

1 Samuel 26:23: *The Lord will repay each man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the Lord delivered you into my hand today, but I refused to stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed.*



# Righteousness

- Ezekiel 18:9 - “*if* he walks in My statutes and My ordinances so as to deal faithfully—he is righteous *and* will surely live,” declares the Lord God.
- So, when we are faithful, God restores our righteousness.
- Impartiality to rich and poor; justice for all:
- Proverbs 18:5 - *To show partiality to the wicked is not good, nor to thrust aside the righteous in judgment.*



# Faithfulness

- Proverbs 18:5 is also criticizing depriving the faithful of their faith
- As God instills faith, God instills righteousness on earth
- Psalm 23:3 *He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.*



# Psalm 85:11

- *Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky*

God is the sun, we are the moon reflecting God's righteousness.

If our desire is for God's love, then our goal is righteousness.



# Attaining Righteousness

- Proverbs 15:9 - *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but He loves one who pursues righteousness.*
- So, how do we attain righteousness?
- *Through faith in God who is righteous*



# Isaiah 48:18

Faithfulness leads to more righteousness:

*“If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.”*



# Isaiah 30:18

- *Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.*

God is the God who is faithful; blessed are they who are faithful.





# Justice, Righteousness relation to Faithfulness

- Psalm 42:3 – “He will faithfully bring forth justice” could easily be translated “He will faithfully engender faithfulness.”
- Proverbs 18:5 – “When it is wrong to deprive the righteous of justice” could be “deprive the faithful of their faith”.



# Purpose of Justice

- Ezekiel 13:22 - *Because you disheartened the righteous with falsehood when I did not cause him grief, but have encouraged the wicked not to turn from his wicked way and preserve his life.*

The purpose of *justice* is to increase righteousness, because when we see *righteousness* our faith in God increases and our desire is to glorify Him.

Injustice works against faith in God.



# Implications

- Whatever decreases faith in God is unjust.
- Programs make people dependent on government and not on God are unjust.
- Programs that make politicians into God-replacements are unjust.
- Ho Chi Minh story of “new faith” in government among students.



# Discussion



# Next Week

- “Let’s Play Two” - Ernie Banks
- NT References on Justice, Righteousness and Faithfulness
- Practical Applications for us

