



## A Jazz Homily: How Old Testament Law Shapes Beautiful Communities



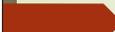
## Old Testament "Law Codes"

- Exodus 20:22–23:19
- Leviticus 17–25
- Deuteronomy 12–26
  
- Ten Commandments
  - Exodus 20:1–17
  - Deuteronomy 5:6–21



## Understanding the Exodus Event

- Slavery in America and the birth of Black American Music
  
- Slavery in ancient Egypt and the birth of biblical law.



### Old Testament Law: Example #1

Prohibition against taking a widow's garment in pledge:

- "You shall not take a widow's garment in pledge. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this."

Deut 24:17b–18

## Old Testament Law: Example #2

The Eighth Commandment:  
"You shall not steal."

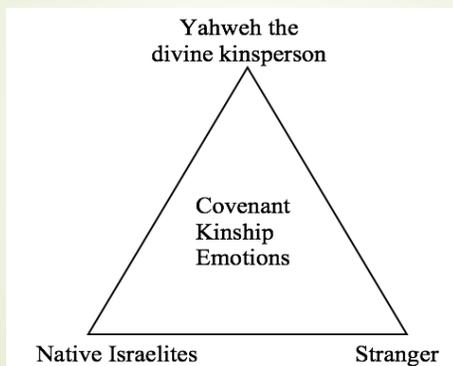
- ▶ This command, "You shall not steal," was given to restrain the rich.
- ▶ Land law was the main protection against poverty in Israel.
- ▶ God owns it all and wants all people to be able to enjoy some of it (Craig Blomberg)

## Old Testament Law: Example #3

"Love the stranger," Deut 10:17-19

- ▶ "The Lord executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and *loves* the stranger, giving them food and clothing. *Love* the stranger, therefore, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Deut 10:18-19)
- ▶ "Yet the Lord set the Lord's heart in *love* on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day" (Deut 10:15).

## Triangle of Loves (Deut 10:17-19)



## The Purpose of Biblical Law

- ▶ Example 1: Widows garment—**compassion**
- ▶ Example 2: "Do not steal"—there's enough for everyone to **share**;
- ▶ Example 3: "Love the stranger"—God's covenant commitment to refugees (**solidarity**)

**In sum: Compassion, sharing, and solidarity**

- ▶ This law was forming a renewed community where every person can flourish, especially the most vulnerable.



## Today: Communities of Tenderness

- ▶ How can you and your household embody Christ's compassion, sharing, and solidarity?
- ▶ Who do you eat with?
- ▶ What are you modelling to your young people?
- ▶ What's God's invitation?