

Rel 121 – Guidelines for the 3 - 4 page Paper on the Social Welfare System of Ancient Israel.

Do all four sections. Approximate section length is given in parentheses. Feel free to rearrange the sections if you want. You should be precise, organized, comprehensive, and creative. Cite texts throughout your paper to support your statements. Cite biblical texts in this form: "According to Deut 15:11, blah blah blah." Or, "The Israelites were to blah blah blah (Deut 15:11)." You do not need to quote actual passages unless it's necessary to your argument. You may have been trained to write papers with a thesis statement and the idea that you have to argue and prove the thesis. Such an approach is not necessary in this paper. The Israelites had a social welfare system. The paper should be a description and analysis of how it worked. You do not need to do any library research for this paper. I want you to grapple with the texts yourself.

- I. Analyze and discuss the social welfare system of ancient Israel. According to the selected texts listed below, who is to do what to whom for what reason? Do not simply list, describe, or rephrase the text(s). Categorize, analyze and discuss. Strive to keep answering the question "why?" Why do they do this? Why do they do that? Think theologically, but also economically, sociologically, politically, and psychologically (approximately 2 pages; but you can write more if you want to)
- II. Explain why it is necessary for there to exist within the covenant community a mechanism of social welfare. Think in terms of the distinction between the pre-fall (prelapsarian/pre-sin) and post-fall (postlapsarian/post-sin) relational structure. Why does the intrusion of sin into the world make a system of social welfare necessary? How are the curses which are inflicted upon Adam and Eve involved in this? (approximately 3/4 [three-quarters] page; but you can write more if you want to)
- III. Analyze and discuss Israel's success or failure to implement the social welfare system. Do they succeed or fail to fulfill its requirements? What do the prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Amos) accuse Israel of doing? (approximately 3/4 [three-quarters] page; but you can write more if you want to)
- IV. Discuss whether these precepts apply today. Should the church be involved in social welfare? Should the civil government be involved in social welfare? (approximately 1 paragraph)

Selected Texts

Exodus 22:21-27
Exodus 23:10-12
Leviticus 19:9-10, 15
Deuteronomy 14:28-29
Deuteronomy 15:1-11
Deuteronomy 23:19-20
Deuteronomy 24:10-22
Deuteronomy 26:12-15
Ruth 2
Isaiah 3:13-15
Isaiah 10:1-2
Isaiah 58
Jeremiah 22:1-5
Ezekiel 22:29
Amos 5:11-12, 24

SEE OTHER SIDE

If you know of other relevant texts in the Old Testament, feel free to use them. However, do not use any texts from the New Testament.

Five other notes:

1. The Levites that are mentioned in some texts are the priests/workers at the Temple. They have no land of their own.
2. The foreigners that are mentioned in some texts are non-Israelite seasonal/migrant workers or immigrants who are living in the land of Israel.
3. A "pledge" is collateral for a loan.
4. You can write more than 3-4 pages if you want to and/or need to.
5. The paper should be double-spaced and single-sided.