



Tight Fists or Open Hands?: Wealth and Poverty in Old Testament Law

David L. Baker

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Any Christian response to today's ever-growing problem of poverty around the globe must be firmly rooted in biblical teaching. While books on various aspects of wealth and poverty in the Old and New Testaments have been published, so far there has been no thorough study of Old Testament law on the topic. David Baker argues here that an understanding of that law is not only fundamental for interpreting the entire Old Testament, but it is also assumed by the writers of the New Testament. *Tight Fists or Open Hands?* fills this gap in Old Testament scholarship and lays a foundation for considering the relevance of these laws to everyday life in the twenty-first century.

The heart of this book is a study of all the biblical laws concerned with wealth and poverty. Baker groups these laws together by topic, considering the similarities and differences between the Decalogue, Book of the Covenant, Holiness Code, and Deuteronomic laws. He then places these in the context of ancient Near Eastern law in order to make clear which attitudes are distinctly biblical and which are held in common with other civilized peoples.

Each section of *Tight Fists or Open Hands?* includes an extended conclusion that summarizes the main ideas, considers relationships with other biblical texts, and points to the significance of the laws for today's world. Such thorough exegesis and modern application make this book relevant to pastors, scholars, and students in a variety of courses.

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