

~EXTORTION (147)

- The act or practice of taking or obtaining anything from an unwilling or reluctant person by illegal use of fear, whether by force, threats, or any other undue exercise of power. The basic sense of the Greek word rendered extortioner, *har'pax* is snatcher. **Int**
- Not meaning entirely with the fornicators of this world or the greedy persons and **extortioners** or idolaters. Otherwise, you would actually have to get out of the world. (**1 Corinthians 5:10**)
- The Bible repeatedly warns against any seeking of unjust gain, particularly on the part of those in responsible or official positions.
- But you yourself should select out of all the people capable men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating **unjust profit**, and you must set these over them as chiefs over thousands, chiefs over hundreds, chiefs over fifties and chiefs over tens. (**Exodus 18:21**)
- Many are the paths of everyone making **unjust profit**. It takes away the very soul of its owners. (**Proverbs 1:19**)
- The one making **unjust profit** is bringing ostracism upon his own house, but the hater of gifts is the one that will keep living. (**Proverbs 15:27**)
- Nevertheless, under Roman rule over Palestine, Jewish tax collectors were often guilty of **extortion**. Their position provided them with wide opportunities to enrich themselves unjustly, and undoubtedly their Roman masters also, at the expense of the people.
- In an illustration Jesus may have alluded to this when he spoke of a self-righteous Pharisee praying alongside a tax collector and commending himself to God as not being an **extortioner**.
- The Pharisee stood and began to pray these things to himself, O God, I thank you I am not as the rest of men, **extortioners**, unrighteous, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. (**Luke 18:11**)
- The tax collectors who came to John the Baptizer asking what to do were counseled;

- He said to them; Do not demand anything more than the tax rate. (**Luke 3:13**)

- When Zacchaeus, a rich chief tax collector, was entertaining Jesus as a guest in his home, he repented and turned from his bad course, saying, Whatever I **extorted** from anyone by false accusation I am restoring fourfold.

- Now here there was a man called by the name Zacchaeus, and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. (**Luke 19:2**)

- But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord; Look! The half of my belongings, Lord, I am giving to the poor, and whatever I extorted from anyone by false accusation I am restoring fourfold. (**Luke 19:8**)

- The Law, however, required in such cases of repentance and admission of guilt that only 120 percent be restored to the defrauded one.

- In case a soul sins in that he does behave unfaithfully toward Yehowah and does deceive his associate about something in his charge or a deposit in hand or a robbery or he does **defraud** his associate. (**Leviticus 6:2**)

- Or he does find something lost and is actually **deceptive** about it and does swear falsely over any of all the things that the man might do to sin by them. (**Leviticus 6:3**)

- Then it must occur that in case he sins and indeed becomes guilty, he must return the robbed thing which he has robbed or the **extorted** thing which he has taken by fraud or the thing in his charge which was put in his charge or the thing lost that he has found. (**Leviticus 6:4**)

- Or anything at all over which he might swear falsely, and he must make compensation for it in its full amount, and he will add to it a fifth of it. To the one whose it is he will give it on the day his guilt is proved. (**Leviticus 6:5**)

See Also ACCUSATION

- **Extortion** is listed in the **Christian Greek Scriptures** along with **fornication, adultery, idolatry, greediness, thievery, drunkenness, reviling, and homosexuality** as things that will prevent the one who makes a practice of them from entering the Kingdom of God.
- The apostle Paul, writing to the congregation at Corinth, said that formerly some of them had done such things, but were now washed clean.
- Therefore, although they could not avoid some contact with these kinds of persons in the world, they must quit associating with any of such ones claiming to be a brother, and they must remove them from the congregation.
- In my letter I wrote you to quit mixing in company with fornicators. (**1 Corinthians 5:9**)
- Not meaning entirely with the fornicators of this world or the greedy persons and **extortioners** or idolaters. Otherwise, you would actually have to get out of the world. (**1 Corinthians 5:10**)
- But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an **extortioner**, not even eating with such a man. (**1 Corinthians 5:11**)
- What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled! Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men. (**1 Corinthians 6:9**)
- Nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor **extortioners** will inherit God's kingdom. (**1 Corinthians 6:10**)
- And yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God. (**1 Corinthians 6:11**)
- The Christian attitude toward paying **extortion** in the form of a bribe is illustrated in the apostle Paul's case. The Roman governor Felix attempted to extort money from Paul by prolonging Paul's detention in prison for two years. Of this, Paul was aware, but he

offered Felix nothing. Eventually Felix was succeeded in office by Governor Festus.

- **At the same time, though, he was hoping for money to be given him by Paul. On that account he sent for him even more frequently and would converse with him. ([Acts of Apostles 24:26](#))**
- **But, when two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and because Felix desired to gain favor with the Jews, he left Paul bound. ([Acts of Apostles 24:27](#))**