

Deut. 15:1 ¶ At the end of *every* seven years thou shalt make a release.

Deut. 15:2 And this *is* the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth *ought* unto his neighbour shall release *it*; he shall not exact *it* of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD'S release.

In this chapter Moses continues a discussion of other issues pertaining to finance. Any person who loans money to a friend must release that friend of any obligation to repay him at the end of every year designated as a release year. This is clarified by the instruction in verse 9 below. This is to be done in honor of the Lord because it fulfills His desire and pictures His character.

Deut. 15:3 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact *it again*: but *that* which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;

Deut. 15:4 Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for an inheritance to possess it*:

Deut. 15:5 Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

There is a distinction to be made regarding loans made to foreigners and fellow Israelites. Foreigners may be held accountable for loans made to them without regard to the 7-year release; the release of debt is an act of mercy towards a fellow Hebrew. Verse 14 is basically saying that this should become a mute point since there should be no poor in the nation because God is going to bless them so abundantly if they will keep their covenant and follow Him in faith and obedience.

This is one of those verses that declare the heart of God as it acknowledges His omniscience. His desire is to abundantly bless His people. In His omniscience, however, He is establishing principles that will be necessary because they will fail to keep covenant.

Deut. 15:6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

Moses again declares God's desire and intention to bless them so abundantly that other nations will seek to borrow from them, but they will have no need to borrow from any other nation. They will be positioned as having authority over many other nations, but no nation would have the rule over them. Again, this is all dependent upon their keeping covenant with God as stated in verse 5 above.

Deut. 15:7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

Deut. 15:8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, *in that* which he wanteth.

If, however, there should be a poor man among the people of Israel, you are to show compassion and lend him whatever it takes to meet his need. This is making provision for someone while allowing them to maintain their dignity and encouraging them to make a better life for themselves. It is reference to

lending with expectation of repayment. What you lend hopefully puts them in a better position to be able to help themselves.

Deut. 15:9 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

Deut. 15:10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

Deut. 15:11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

God knows our wicked hearts, so He includes a warning against allowing your actions to be influenced by the nearness of the 7-year release. (This indicates that it is a designated rotation of time.) The closer it is to a release year, the less likely are the prospects of receiving repayment for your loan. God is saying that this should not influence your response to a brother in need in any way. You should loan to him with compassion from a generous heart. God is basically saying that you can't out give Me; I will see to it that you are blessed for your generosity.

Verse 11 is a statement of recognizing reality. There will always be poor in the land. We know that it is God's intent to bless the people of Israel, but there will always be "outsiders" in the land who will be poor and needy. They are not to discriminate in lending to the poor according to their need. Israel has been set apart to a position of privilege, but God has always intended to be a deliverer for ALL people.

Deut. 15:12 ¶ And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

Deut. 15:13 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty:

Deut. 15:14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: *of that* wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

Deut. 15:15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

Another method by which people paid off their debts was to indenture themselves as servants or to be sold as servants by their creditors. If you purchase such an individual who is a Hebrew, you are to release them after six years of service; they are to be freed in the seventh year. When he/she is given freedom, you are also to provide sufficiently for them to be able to make a fresh start in life. In doing so you are recognizing that your abundance comes from the hand of God; you are only giving from what you have been given.

This is also to serve as a reminder that Israel's roots as a nation began as slaves in the land of Egypt. Your freedom is a gift from God, just as the freedom being

granted your servant is to be recognized as a gift from God. Moses reminds the people that this is not a suggestion; it is a command of God.

(8/08) I just made the connection that just as the Lord had provided for His people when they left Egypt through the gifts of the Egyptians, they were to provide for those who were being released from servitude.

The Lord is very consistent in preserving the typology of the Sabbath rest. It is another one of the very compelling reasons I feel that the time for the establishment of His millennial kingdom is at hand. After 6,000 years under the rule of Satan as the “god of this world,” the world is due a Sabbath rest under the rule of the Savior for 1000 years.

Deut. 15:16 And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee;

Deut. 15:17 Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust *it* through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.

If after six years of service, however, the servant asks to remain part of your household because you have been such a good master and he/she feels like part of the family, you are to pierce his/her ear against the door as a sign that this servant is to remain yours for his/her lifetime.

Again, this is a picture that examples the heart of one who has willingly chosen to become a servant of the Lord as declared by faith, repentance and obedience to God in light of the provision that was made for him through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. He/she realizes that there is no better place to be than in position to serve his/her Lord.

Deut. 15:18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant *to thee*, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

Moses now resumes the instruction regarding the release of the one who has served for six years and is to be released in the seventh. You shouldn't regret the release; you should send him/her away with thanksgiving for the blessing that person has been to your family. A servant who has served as a member of your household has benefitted you twice as much as one who serves as a hired hand. Again, the added blessing—God will bless you for honoring Him through obedience to His command.

Deut. 15:19 ¶ All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

Deut. 15:20 Thou shalt eat *it* before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

Moses now reminds the people to acknowledge God as Lord by remembering that all firstborn males of herds and flocks are set apart as belonging to YHWH. These cattle are not to be used for any work or the sheep sheared for wool. They are to be taken yearly to the place God designates (the tabernacle or temple) and

sacrificed and eaten as a family meal of fellowship and thanksgiving before the Lord.

Deut. 15:21 And if there be *any* blemish therein, *as if it be* lame, or blind, or *have* any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.

Deut. 15:22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean *person shall eat it alike*, as the roebuck, and as the hart.

Deut. 15:23 Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

If, however, the firstborn male from herd or flock is lame, blind, or blemished in any way, it is not to be sacrificed to YHWH. Every sacrifice to God was to be without blemish—a picture of the ultimate sacrifice of the perfect Son of God. They are, however, allowed to use it as part of a special meal at home. When the animal is slaughtered, they are to ensure that it is drained of its blood by pouring it out on the ground like water.

As I continue to think about this instruction, I am reminded that the Lord declares that the blood represents the life and that we are made from the dust of the ground. So maybe this is another reminder of God's authority over life. A verse from Genesis comes to mind.

Gen. 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.