

Loving Your Needy Neighbors

Deuteronomy 15:1-23

The issue at hand is how to treat the poor and needy within the community because there will always be those who fall on hard times or who cannot work, and they are to be loved.

Deuteronomy 15:1-3

At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.

And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor.

He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.

Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.

Deuteronomy 15:4-6

But there will be no poor among you;
for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God
is giving you for an inheritance to possess— if only you will
strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful
to do all this commandment that I command you today.
For the LORD your God will bless you, as he promised you,
and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow,
and you shall rule over many nations,
but they shall not rule over you.

Deuteronomy 15:7-9

If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, “The seventh year, the year of release is near,” and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.

Deuteronomy 15:10-11

You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, “You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.”

Deuteronomy 15:12-15

If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress.

As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today.

Deuteronomy 15:16-18

But if he says to you, “I will not go out from you,” because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same. It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired worker he has served you six years. So the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

Deuteronomy 15:19-23

All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.

But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God. You shall eat it within your towns. The unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or a deer. Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

Main Idea

Remembering your neediness and God's provision will move you to love your needy neighbors by fulfilling your duty to make provision for needs.

Apparent Contradiction

Deuteronomy 15:4-5

But **there will be no poor** among you;
for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God
is giving you for an inheritance to possess— if only you will
strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful
to do all this commandment that I command you today.

Deuteronomy 15:11

For **there will never cease to be poor** in the land.

The *Ought to Be*

Deuteronomy 15:4-5

But there will be no poor among you;
for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God

is giving you for an inheritance to possess — **if only you will**

strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful
to do all this commandment that I command you today.

Deuteronomy 15:11

For there will never cease to be poor in the land.

VS. The *Will Be*

Deuteronomy 15:4-5

But there will be no poor among you;
for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God
is giving you for an inheritance to possess — **if only you will
strictly obey** the voice of the LORD your God, being careful
to do all this commandment that I command you today.

Deuteronomy 15:11

For **there will** never cease to **be poor** in the land.

Loving Your Needy Neighbors

Who are the needy?

Who are the needy?

Those who lack the means of production.

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.

Because he is landless.

At the end of every three years you shall bring out
all the tithe of your produce in the same year

and lay it up within your towns. And **the Levite,**

**because he has no portion or
inheritance with you,**

and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow,
who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled,
that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work
of your hands that you do.

Because he would also be landless

At the end of every three years you shall bring out
all the tithe of your produce in the same year
and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite,
because he has no portion or inheritance with you,

and **the sojourner**, the fatherless, and the widow,

who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled,
that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work
of your hands that you do.

Landless and Laborless

At the end of every three years you shall bring out
all the tithe of your produce in the same year
and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite,
because he has no portion or inheritance with you,

and the sojourner, **the fatherless, and the widow,**

who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled,
that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work
of your hands that you do.

Who are the needy?

Those who lack the means of production.

Those who suffer circumstantial losses.

Deuteronomy 15:7

If among you, one of your brothers should become poor,
in any of your towns within your land that
the LORD your God is giving you.

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If among you, **one of your brothers should
become poor,**

in any of your towns within your land that
the LORD your God is giving you.

Equal Opportunity Losses

2 Corinthians 8:1-2

Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that **in a great ordeal of affliction** their abundance of joy and their **deep poverty** overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

In a broken world, things *and* people get broken.

Who are the needy?

Those who lack the means of production.

Those who suffer circumstantial losses.

Those who are sinfully foolish.

Deuteronomy 15:7

If among you, **one of your brothers should
become poor,**

in any of your towns within your land that
the LORD your God is giving you.

Poverty can be the produce of sin

Proverbs 6:26

For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread.

Proverbs 19:15

Laziness casts into a deep sleep,
And an idle man will suffer hunger.

Proverbs 23:21

For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty,
And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-11

For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat.

For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

Loving Your Needy Neighbors

Who are the needy?

What are your duties in respect to need?

What are your duties in respect to need?

You have a duty to make
personal provision.

The duty to work.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-11

If anyone will not work, neither let him eat.
For we hear that some among you are leading an
undisciplined life, doing no work at all...

The original duty to husbandry

Genesis 2:15

Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to **cultivate it** and keep it.

Genesis 3:23

The LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to **cultivate the ground** from which he was taken.

The duty to faithful husbandry goes beyond simple hard work and extends into matters of efficiency and frugality that make generosity possible.

The expectation of produce

Deuteronomy 14:28

At the end of every three years you shall bring out
all the tithe **of your produce** in the same year
and lay it up within your towns.

The duty to provide

Deuteronomy 14:28

At the end of every three years you shall bring out
all the tithe of your produce in the same year

and **lay it up within your towns.**

A continuing duty

1 Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not **provide for his own**,
and especially for those of his household, he has denied
the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

The duty to labor

Ephesians 4:28

Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather **let him labor**, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.

Making provision to share

Ephesians 4:28

Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor,

performing with his own hands what is good, in order **that**

**he may have something to share
with him who has need.**

What are your duties in respect to need?

You have a duty to make personal provision.

You have a duty to provide *subsistence*.

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do.

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all the tithe of your produce in the same year
and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite,
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and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who
are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled,
that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work
of your hands that you do.

Provisions for Life

Deuteronomy 14:28-29

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and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite,
because he has no portion or inheritance with you,

and **the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow**, who

are within your towns, **shall come and eat and be filled,**

that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work
of your hands that you do.

Current Examples?

What are your duties in respect to need?

You have a duty to make personal provision.

You have a duty to provide subsistence.

You have a duty to provide *assistance*.

Provisions from the Produce

Leviticus 19:9-10

Now when you reap the harvest of your land,
you shall not reap to the very corners of your field,
neither shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.
Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather
the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them
for the needy and for the stranger.

I am the LORD your God.

A Principle of Participation

Leviticus 19:9-10

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neither shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.
Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather

the fallen fruit of your vineyard; **you shall leave them
for the needy and for the stranger.**

I am the LORD your God.

What about the able-bodied poor?

Deuteronomy 15:7

If among you, one of your brothers should become poor,
in any of your towns within your land that the LORD
your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart
or shut your hand against your poor brother,
but you shall open your hand to him and lend him
sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

Help not Harm

Deuteronomy 15:7

If among you, one of your brothers should become poor,
in any of your towns within your land that the LORD
your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart
or shut your hand against your poor brother,

but you shall open your hand to him and **lend him**

sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

Generous, Humble Help

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, “You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.”

Generous and charitable lending
enabled *appropriate* self-sufficiency
and preserved human dignity.

Current Examples?

Loving Your Needy Neighbors

Who are the needy?

What are your duties in respect to need?

How do you love the needy you assist?

How do you love the needy you assist?

How do you love the debtor?

Deuteronomy 15:1-3

At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.

And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor.

He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.

Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.

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Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours
is with your brother your hand shall release.

Deuteronomy 31:10-11

You're a brother not a banker!

Exodus 22:25

If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you,
you are not to act as a creditor to him;
you shall not charge him interest.

Leviticus 25:37

You shall not give him your silver at interest,
nor your food **for gain**.

**Fellow debtors ought not make
themselves creditors.**

How do you love the needy you assist?

How do you love the debtor?

How do you love the defaulter?

Deuteronomy 15:12-14

If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

For debt repayment

Deuteronomy 15:12-14

If **your brother**, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman,
is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh

year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock,
out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress.
As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

Leviticus 25:39

And if a countryman of yours becomes so **poor with regard to you** that he sells himself to you, you shall not subject him to a slave's service.

Deuteronomy 15:12-14

your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman,
is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh

year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock,
out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress.
As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

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is sold to you, **he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.** And when you let

him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

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out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress.

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is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh
year you shall let him go free from you. And when you let

him go free from you, **you shall not let him go
empty-handed.**

You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock,

out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress.
As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

How did you treat him?

Deuteronomy 15:16-18

But if he says to you, “I will not go out from you,” because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.

With love and respect

Deuteronomy 15:16-18

But if he says to you, “I will not go out from you,” because

he loves you and your household, **since he is well-off**

with you, then you shall take an awl, and put it through

his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever.

And to your female slave you shall do the same.

Loving Your Needy Neighbors

Who are the needy?

What are your duties in respect to need?

How do you love the needy you assist?

How do you remember your neediness?

Remembering your neediness and God's provision to you will humble you and enable you to show mercy and compassion in a spirit of love.

How do you remember your neediness?

By regular reflection

Deuteronomy 15:15

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt,
and the LORD your God redeemed you;
therefore I command you this today.

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You shall remember that **you were a slave** in the land of Egypt,
and the LORD your God redeemed you;
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You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt,

and **the LORD your God redeemed you;**

therefore I command you this today.

What about us?

Ephesians 2:12-13

Remember that you were separate from Christ,
excluded from the commonwealth of Israel,
and strangers to the covenants of promise,
having no hope and without God in the world.
But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off
have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Reflect on this!

Ephesians 2:12-13

Remember that you were separate from Christ,
excluded from the commonwealth of Israel,
and strangers to the covenants of promise,
having no hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off
have been brought near **by the blood of Christ.**

How do you remember your neediness?

By regular reflection

By ritual reflection

Deuteronomy 15:19-23

All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.

Deuteronomy 15:19-23

All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock
you shall dedicate to the LORD your God.

You shall do no work
with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your
flock. You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD
your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.

A regular ritual

Deuteronomy 15:19-23

All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock. You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD

your God **year by year** at the place that the LORD will choose.

The firstborn males were the price
of God's redemption when He
delivered His people from Egypt.

The purity of the price to be paid

Deuteronomy 15:19-23

But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind
or has any serious blemish whatever,
you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

The pure price of our redemption

Hebrews 9:13-14

For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself **without blemish** to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

What is our ritual remembrance?

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;
and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said,

“This is My body, which is for you;
do this **in remembrance of Me.**”

In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying,

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood;
do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of Me.”

Concluding Exhortations:

Remember, **you** are needy!

Remember **who** met your need!

Remember the poor and needy!