### Deuteronomy

## Chapter 15

1‘Every 7 years you must cancel all debts… 2And these are the rules:  
  
 ‘You must cancel any debts that your neighbor owes you personally, and you must not ask to have them paid back, because this is a cancellation [of debts] to Jehovah your God.  
  
 3‘You may ask strangers to pay whatever they owe you, but not your brothers… You must cancel their debts! 4That way, there won’t be any poor people among you and Jehovah your God will surely bless you in the land that He’s giving to you as your inheritance.  
  
 5‘Now, if you listen to the voice of your God Jehovah and obey all these Commandments that I’m giving you today, 6Jehovah your God will bless you (as He told you), and then you’ll lend to many nations. However, you must never borrow from them, nor may you rule over them… But then, they won’t rule over you either.  
  
 7‘If you find a poor man among your brothers in your city in that land which Jehovah your God is giving to you, you must not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted with your brother who’s in need… 8You must reach out to him and lend him as much as he needs!  
  
 9‘Now, be careful not to secretly say in your hearts:  
  
 ‘The 7th year (the Year of Release) is getting close!’  
  
 ‘...then allow your eyes to look wickedly at your brother who’s in need and not lend him anything. For then he’ll call out to Jehovah about you, and you’ll be guilty of a serious sin!  
  
 10So, you must be sure to lend Him as much as he needs with no grudge in your hearts. For, because of your good deeds, Jehovah your God will bless everything that you do and everything that you touch.  
  
 11‘There’ll always be poor people in your land, and that’s why I’m telling you to do this. You must reach out to your poor brothers and to anyone who’s having a hard time in your land.’  
  
  
 12‘And if your brother (a Hebrew man or woman) should be sold to you, he may serve you for 6 years; but in the 7th year, you must set him free. 13And when you set him free, don’t send him away empty-handed!  
  
 14‘You must give him provisions from your flock, from your grain, and from your wine… As Jehovah your God has blest you, that’s how you must treat him! 15Don’t forget that you were once slaves in the land of Egypt before Jehovah your God brought you out of there… That’s why I’m telling you to do this!  
  
 16‘However, if [the slave] should tell you that he doesn’t want to leave you because he loves you and your family... If you approve of this, 17you must take an awl and punch a hole through his ear against the door. Then he will be your servant throughout the age… And female servants should be dealt with in the same way.  
  
 18‘[None of] this will create hardship for you.  
  
 ‘For even though such people will only serve you for 6 years as hired hands, Jehovah your God will bless you in everything that you do.’  
  
  
 19‘Now, when it comes to the firstborn among your oxen and sheep, you must offer the males as holy to Jehovah your God. You may not work a firstborn calf, and you may not shear a firstborn sheep.  
  
 20‘You and your household must eat them before Jehovah each year in the place that Jehovah your God will choose. 21However, if it’s lame, or blind, or deformed, you must not sacrifice it to Jehovah your God.  
  
 22‘Both the clean and the unclean among you may eat it in your cities, the same as you’d a male or female deer. 23But you must not eat its blood… You must pour it out on the ground like water!’