

220119-4 Deu 15, The Year of Release–CThurman

In the fourteenth chapter there are four divisions which fall under the idea 'Ye are the children of the LORD your God,' therefore:

- You shall not cut yourselves or make baldness for the dead. (vss.1, 2)
- You shall eat no abominable thing: clean & unclean meats. (vss.3-21)
- You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk. (v.21)
- You shall tithe of all the increase and bring it to the appointed place. (vss.22-29) Never to be used for unclean purposes. (cf. Deu.26.14)

In the 15th chapter the LORD instructs the creditor to release the indebted Israelite at the end of the 7th year (vss. 1-6), to help the poor without regard to the time of release, to open wide their hand to help them, (vss.7-11), that in the 7th year they that were sold into servitude were to be released unless the servant desired to remain, but if not he was not to be released empty, (vss.12-18), and the dedication of every firstling of the herd and flock to the LORD's. (19-23).

Release of Debt:

1 ¶ At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

at the end of, masc. sing. noun of קֵץ, qehtz, tss. *in process of, the end of, at the end of, after, the end, till the end.*

shall make a release, a Hebrew fem. noun שְׁמִיטָה, sh'-mit-tah, *release* (5) and the noun is only in Deuteronomy (15.1, 2 [twice], 9; 31.10); the verb שָׁמַט, sha-mat, is tss. *to discontinue, to rest, to release, to shake, to stumble, to throw down, to be overthrown. vss. 2, 3 is the verb in Hiphil (causative act.).*

At the end of every 7th year is a time for complete debt relief. Every one of the nation of Israel was to be released from all debt. This was to be observed during the Feast of Tabernacles, which shall be observed in the city of Jerusalem. (cf. Deu.31.9-13)

2 And this is the manner of the release:

every creditor that lendeth, כָּל־בַּעַל מַשֶּׁה יָדוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂה, cal-ba-al mash-shehl, lit. every master of the lending of the hand;

creditor, מַשֶּׁה, a masc. sing. noun of מַשָּׂה, mash-sheh, and only this once in the OT., but is of the verb נָשָׂה, nah-shah (see below).

This is how the Lord's release shall work.

Every creditor that lendeth [ought] unto his neighbor shall release it;
practices usury at all
adv. ought, supplied sense

lendeth, Hiphil (causative act.) fut. of the verb נָשָׂה, nah-shah, tss. *to lend on usury, to be a usurer, to lend* (Deu.24.10, 11), *to exact, to be a creditor, to be an extortioner.*

Every creditor shall release what he lent to his neighbor.

he shall not exact it of his neighbor,

shall exact, Qal fut. of the Hebrew verb נָגַשׁ, na-gas, tss. *to exact, to be a taskmaster, to be an oppressor, to be a driver, to be an exactor*, and in Niphal (simple passive) is tss. *to be distressed, to be oppressed; vss. 2, 3, to exact*, both Qal fut. verbs.

neighbor, a masc. noun Hebrew noun רֵעִי, reh-ah[g], tss. *another, friend, fellow, other, thy brother, a companion, a lovers, an husband.*

He shall not exact it – that is to oppress him to pay. This does not mean that the borrower might not rightfully make full restitution of that which he borrowed. After all, on the other hand the LORD would correct some *borrowers* that abuse the kindness of them that would help.

Ps 37:21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

or of his brother; because it is called the LORD'S release.

it is called, Qal pret. קָרָא, qah-rah, to call, to name, to proclaim, to read, to invite, to cry, etc.; v.2, it is called, 9, and he cry.

brother, a Hebrew masc. noun אָח, ahch, tss. brother, brethren.

Because it is called the LORD'S release, he shall not exact the lent [outstanding portion] from his neighbor or brother.

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

foreigner, an adj. נָכְרִי, nok-ree, tss. strange, stranger, alien, foreigner; 15.3; 23.20.

You may exact [that outstanding portion lent] from a foreigner: your hand shall release [that outstanding portion lent].

4 Save when there shall be no poor among you;

poor, אֶבְיֹן, ev-yohn, an adj. tss. needy, beggar, poor.

You shall release the poor in this way, unless of course there are no poor among you. If there are no poor then there the procedure has no application.

for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

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.

So, if Israel obeys the word of the LORD then the numbers of poor among you should be few.

6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow;

lend, borrow, Qal fut. verb עָבַט, [g]a-vat, Deu.6 (twice, borrow, lend), 8 (twice, surely lend); 24.10, to fetch; Joel 2.7, to break; Hab.2.6, a masc. noun is tss. thick clay and so perhaps refers to an accumulation of debts (Benjamin Davidson).

and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

to reign, a Hebrew verb, מָשַׁל, ma-shal, tss. to reign, to rule, to have dominion, to have power, to be governor.

As a result of obeying the LORD Israel should be blessed so that they do not borrow of the Gentiles, but the Gentiles may borrow of them.

Pr 22:7 The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

Hab 2:6 ... Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!

Thick clay is the Hebrew noun, עֲבָטִית, [g]av-teet], only this once in the OT. The verb form of this is עָבַט, [g]a-vat and translated both to lend and to borrow. Thick clay is an allusion to an accumulation of debt. The idea that comes to mind is the Israelites in cruel bondage making bricks for the Egyptians. Little has changed today, indebtedness is a very cruel taskmaster. 'The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.' (Pv.22.7) Being increased with substance that is not ours, but the creditor's, and the accumulation of debt brings men into servitude. I'm not sure that we can avoid all debt, but a key to keeping clear of great

debt is in this: *'Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.'* (He.13.5)

Helping the Poor

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:

harden, אָמַץ, ah-matz, tss. to be strong, to be stronger, to be of good courage, to be courageous, to prevail, to be obstinate, to establish, to confirm, to fortify, to harden, to increase, to make speed, and steadfastly minded.

Piel Pret., Deu.2.30, to make obstinate – Piel Imper., Deu.3.28, to strengthen – Piel fut., Deu.15.7, to harden – Qal imper., Deu.31.6, to be of a good courage

shut, Qal fut. of the verb אָפַק, qah-phatz, tss. to stop, to shut, to shut up, to take out of the way, to skip.

within thy gates – proximity. It is most difficult to prove whether one is poor that does not live around us. In our day it would be wise to direct unknown, professing brethren, which claim to be poor and in need, to the brethren and churches that are in their area and *in their gates*. This rule would reduce abuses by them that are covetous and prey on your generosity to help others.

Brethren are not to harden their hearts or close their hands to helping the poor *of their brethren*. Notice also in the NT, perhaps the stealing referenced in Eph.4.28 is understood to be on account of extreme poverty.

Eph 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Sometimes brethren need a helping hand to meet obligations. Yes, they can be encouraged by the outpouring of support. And yes, them that will not work, should not eat.

2Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

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

want

needs

surely, open, wide, the Hebrew verb פָּתַח, pah-thach, tss. to open, to draw, to draw out, to be wide, to set forth, to loose, to ungird, to go free.

Qal infin., Deu.15.8, 11, *wide* – Qal fut., Deu.15.8, 11, *to open*

Qal pret., Deu.20.11, *to open* – Qal fut. Deu.28.12, *to open*

sufficient, a masc. noun דָּי, dahy, enough, sufficient, to be able, a sufficiency.

wanteth, Qal fut. of the verb חָסַר, chah-sehr, tss. to lack, to want, to be decreased, to be abated, to fail, to need, to lower, to bereave.

9 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart,

matter

Belial

beware, שָׁמַר, shah-mar, to guard, keep, etc.

saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother,

at hand, the verb קָרַב, qah-rav, tss. to come near, is at hand, draweth near, to approach, to stand by, to be ready to bring, etc.

and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

cry, Qal pret. אָרָא, qah-rah, to call, to name, to proclaim, to read, to invite, to cry, etc.; **v.2, it is called, 9, and he cry.**

The time for release of debt was a national observance. Everyone observed it at the same time. So, it could be that for knowing the time of the release of all indebtedness was near one might be prone not to help someone to the extent that he should and that because the year of release was near.

1Jn.3.16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him:

shall ...be grieved, אֵרָע, yah-ra[g], tss. to be grieved (Deu.15.10), to be displeased, to be evil (Deu.28.54, 56), to do harm, to be ill.

Pr 22:9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putttest thine hand unto.

putttest, a Hebrew masc. noun מִשְׁלַח, mis-lach, tss. as a verb to put, set, to send forth.

For obedient giving, for giving with a right motive.

2Co 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

(Read Lk.6.27-38; Mt.5.38-48, [not resisting evil] highlights Lk.6 text:)
Lk.6.30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

...

34 And if ye lend (Deu.15.8, letting the poor borrow) to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again (trust them to keep their word); and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 ¶ Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, from among

*cease, חָדַל, cha-dal, tss. to cease, to leave, to forbear, to be unoccupied, to fail; **Deu.15.11, to cease; 23.22, thou shalt forbear.***

out of, a masc. noun קֶרֶב, qeh-rev with a prefixed preposition מִן, from, tss. within, therein, among, before, in, in the midst, inwards, etc.

saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother,

The year of release should have no bearing on the help which the Israelite should give to the poor.

to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

Lending to the brother is to let them borrow what they need. It is giving to others what they need to help them to get on their feet. That doesn't mean that the borrower should not think to repay the kindness. But if he never does the lender should *release* it to the LORD. Above all lending to the poor, to them in need is not to be with usury.

Ex 22:25 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

usury, נִשָּׂה, nah-shah, tss. to lend (Deu.15.2; 24.10), to lend on usury (Jer.15.10), to be a usurer (Ex.22.25), to be a creditor (2Ki.4.1; Is.50.1), to exact [usury] (Ne.5.7, 10, 11), to extort (Ps.109.11), to take usury (Is.24.2),

Le.25.35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

38 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

usury, נִשְׁךְ, neh-shek, a masc. noun, always tss. usury (11). Deu.23.19, below; but also note the verb form.

*Deu.23.19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:
20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may*

bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

usury, נִשְׁךְ, nah-shak, under every other verb form (Qal, and Piel) it all but once tss. to bite (see, Deu.23.19, Qal fut. lent upon usury; otherwise it is twice in Hiphil (causative act.) fut. and tss. lend upon usury (3).

Lu 6:34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

Lk.6.35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

6-yr. Servitude

12 ¶ And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman,

a daughter, Ex.21.7

be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

be sold, Niphal (simple pass.) fut. of the verb מָכַר, mah-kar, and always tss. with the English verb to sell.

free, Hebrew adj. חָפְזִי, choph-shee, tss. free (15), liberty (1); vss. 12, 13, 18.

I cannot say for sure, but perhaps some men might sell themselves or their daughters into a six year commitment of service. This service would be preferable being only for six years, as opposed to a service 49-year service as stipulated Jubile stipulation (of 49 years) in Leviticus ch.25. Certainly some were sold into a 6-yr. service commitment for committing a criminal

act which was not punishable with death. Several such reasons could be cited where this was necessary to recover damages.

i.e., Ex 22:3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

Perhaps bodily injury, Ex.21.19; injury causing a woman with child to miscarry, Ex.21.22; through negligence ox causes death, Ex.21.30; through negligence one ox kills another man's ox, Ex.21, 35, 36); stealing, Ex.22.1, 3, 7, 9; man feeds his livestock off your fields, Ex.22.5; lost of control of fire, Ex.22.6; etc.

Of the Jubile:

It could be that a person's indebtedness was so great or his poverty so harsh that he would sell himself for the entire duration that he would lose his all of his possessions, for 49 years. The Jubilee appears to be concerned with brethren that fall into hard times, so that they have to sell their possessions, and finally even themselves. (Lev. ch. 25) Under this stipulation his kinsmen could redeem him and his possessions, if they can, anytime during this 49-year period. If not redeemed by then it would all be released in 50th year. This is a time when there was a national reset so that every man was restored to his own possession.

Lev.25.25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

...

35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

...

39 ¶ And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:

40 But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile:

...

48 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:

But there does not appear to any shortening of the 6-yr. commitment. The Hebrew man or woman is bound to serve six years and then released in the 7th.

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

empty, Hebrew adv. רֵיקָן, reh-qahm, tss. *empty* (Deu.15.13; 16.16), *without cause, void, in vain*.

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor,
richly bestow on him,
Inter. Bible,

shalt furnish and *liberally*, of the Hebrew verb עָנַן, [g]ah-naq, tss. *compasseth as a chain* (Ps.73.6), and these two times in Deu.15; the masc. noun עֲנָן, [g]^a-nak, is tss. *chains* ([decoratively] about the neck).

and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

When this brother's service is complete he is to be given enough to start his own life, if in fact he desires to strike out on his own once again. The same for the daughter.

15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt,

bondman, a Hebrew masc. noun עֶבֶד, [g]eh-ved, tss. *a servant, a bondman, bondage.*

and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

redeemed, a Hebrew verb פָּדָה, pah-dah, tss. *to redeem, to deliver, to rescue, to ransom.*

And when the time comes to release him ...

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;

17 Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door,

aul, מַרְצֵעַ, mar-tzeh-a[g], twice in the OT., Ex.21.6; Deu.15.17, and tss. *aul.*

Ex.21.6 Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant

always

for ever, a masc. noun עוֹלָם, [g]oh-lahm, tss. *for ever, perpetual, always, everlasting, ever, in old time, long, long time, world without end, old, eternal, ancient.*

thou shalt do likewise.

Both have opportunity to leave and return to their own houses.

But if his or her desire is to go out free ...

**18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free
in your eyes**

*hard, the Hebrew verb קָשָׁה, qah-shah, tss. cruel, sore, hard, fierce,
grievous a hard thing, stiffened.*

from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee, in serving

*double, a masc. noun מִשְׁנֵה, mish-neh, tss. second, double, twice as
much, a copy, next, second order.*

thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

A man that loves serving his master is worth two hired servants. (Read
Ex.21.1-11)

Firstlings dedicated to the LORD

**19 ¶ All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt
sanctify unto the LORD thy God:**

In other words, separate the firstlings of the herd and flock to the
LORD thy God.

**thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of
thy sheep.**

**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.**

This is part of that which the Israelite brought with him when he came up
to the appointed place with his tithe and offerings.

**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.**

**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.**

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

