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DEUTERONOMY 15:1 At the end of every seven years, you shall cancel debts.

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The Sabbatical year of release, Deu 15:1. The manner in which this release shall take place, Deu 15:2-5. Of lending to the poor, and the disposition in which it should be done, Deu 15:6-11. Of the Hebrew servant who has served six years, and who shall be dismissed well furnished, Deu 15:12-15. The ceremony of boring the ear, when the servant wishes to continue with his master, Deu 15:16-18. Of the firstlings of the flock and herd, Deu 15:19, Deu 15:20. Nothing shall be offered that has any blemish, Deu 15:21. The sacrifice to be eaten both by the clean and unclean, except the blood, which is never to be eaten, but poured out upon the ground, Deu 15:22, Deu 15:23.

Verse 1

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release - For an explanation of many things in this chapter, see the notes on Exodus 21 (note), Exodus 23 (note), and Leviticus 25 (note).

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DEUTERONOMY 15:2 This is the way it shall be done: every creditor shall release that which he has lent to his neighbour. He shall not require payment from his neighbour and his brother; because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.

DEUTERONOMY 15:3 Of a foreigner you may require it; but whatever of yours is with your brother, your hand shall release.

DEUTERONOMY 15:4 However there shall be no poor with you (for the LORD will surely bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance to possess it)

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Verse 4

There shall be no poor - That is, comparatively; see Deu 15:11.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:5 if only you diligently listen to the LORD your God's voice, to observe to do all this commandment which I command you this day.

DEUTERONOMY 15:6 For the LORD your God will bless you, as he promised you. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. You will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

DEUTERONOMY 15:7 If a poor man, one of your brothers, is with you within any of your gates in your land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your poor brother;

DEUTERONOMY 15:8 but you shall surely open your hand to him, and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need, which he lacks.

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Verse 8

Thou shalt open thine hand wide - Thy benevolence shall be in proportion to his distress and poverty, and thy ability. Thou shalt have no other rule to regulate thy charity by.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:9 Beware that there not be a base thought in your heart, saying, "The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand"; and your eye be evil against your poor brother, and you give him nothing; and he cry to the LORD against you, and it be sin to you.

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Verse 9

Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart - לבבך בליעל lebabecha beliyaal, thy belial heart, that is, thy good-for-nothing or unprofitable heart; See on Deu 13:13 (note).

And thine eye be evil - An evil eye signifies a covetous disposition. See the same form of expression used by our Lord in the same sense, Mat 6:23. If thine eye be evil - If thou be a covetous person. Evil eye is by our Lord opposed to single eye, i. e., a person of a liberal, benevolent mind. Covetousness darkens the soul; liberality and benevolence enlighten it.

And he cry unto the Lord against thee - What a consolation to the poor and the oppressed, that they have a sure friend in God, who will hear their cry and redress their grievances!

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DEUTERONOMY 15:10 You shall surely give, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him; because that for this thing the LORD your God will bless you in all your work, and in all that you put your hand to.

DEUTERONOMY 15:11 For the poor will never cease out of the land. Therefore I command you to surely open your hand to your brother, to your needy, and to your poor, in your land.

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Verse 11

For the poor shall never cease out of the land - To this passage our Lord appears to allude Mar 14:7 : For ye have the poor with you always. God leaves these in mercy among men to exercise the feelings of compassion, tenderness, mercy, etc. And without occasions afforded to exercise these, man would soon become a Stoic or a brute.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:12 If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, and serves you six years; then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

DEUTERONOMY 15:13 When you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty.

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Verse 13

Thou shalt not let him go away empty - Because during the time he served thee, he made no property for himself, having been always honest towards thee; and now when he leaves thee, he has nothing to begin the world with.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:14 You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your wine press. As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him.

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Verse 14

Thou shalt furnish him - out of thy flock - Thou shalt give him some cattle to breed with; out of thy floor - some corn for seed and for bread; and out of thy wine press - an adequate provision of wine for present necessity.

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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 thing today.

DEUTERONOMY 15:16 It shall be, if he tells you, "I will not go out from you," because he loves you and your house, because he is well with you;

DEUTERONOMY 15:17 then you shall take an awl, and thrust it through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also to your female servant you shall do likewise.

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Verse 17

Thou shalt take an awl - See the note on Exo 21:6.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:18 It shall not seem hard to you, when you let him go free from you; for he has been double value of a hired hand as he served you six years. the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

DEUTERONOMY 15:19 You shall dedicate all the firstborn males that are born of your herd and of your flock to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.

DEUTERONOMY 15:20 You shall eat it before the LORD your God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, you and your household.

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Verse 20

Thou shalt eat it - in the place which the Lord shall choose - Thus God in his mercy made their duty and interest go hand in hand. And in every case God acts thus with his creatures; well, therefore, might Satan ask, Doth Job serve God for naught? No! nor does God design that any man should.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:21 If it has any defect, is lame or blind, or has any defect whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

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Verse 21

If there be any blemish - See the notes on Lev 22:20. God will have both a perfect priest and a perfect offering.

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DEUTERONOMY 15:22 You shall eat it within your gates. The unclean and the clean shall eat it alike, as the gazelle, and as the deer.

DEUTERONOMY 15:23 Only you shall not eat its blood. You shall pour it out on the ground like water.

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