

DEUTERONOMY 15: RELEASE

- Laws concerning care for the poor and needy
- ***Shmittah*** = release, remission
- Release involves cancellation of debts
- Release is a cornerstone principle of Salvation



HOW TO CARE FOR THE POOR

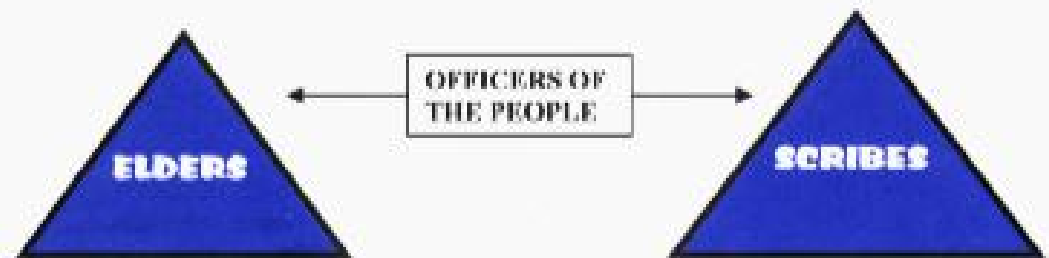
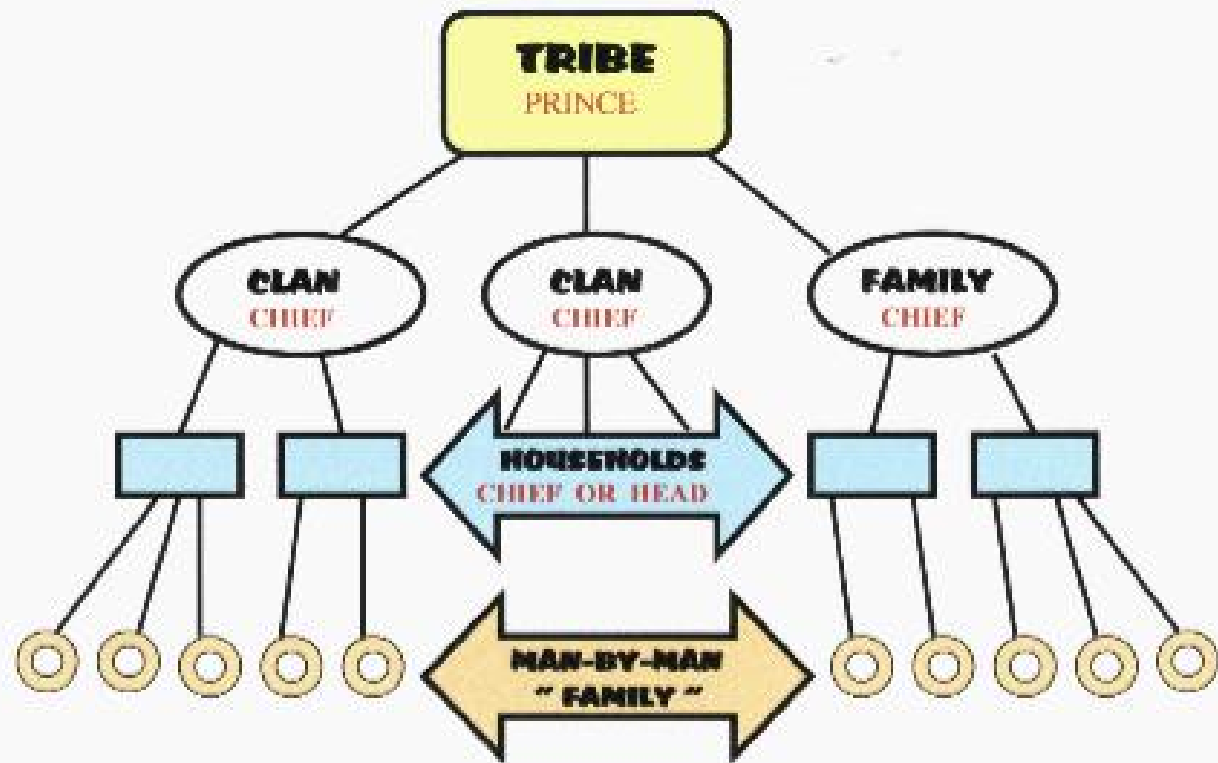


- 3 provisions for caring for the needy:
- 1) ability to obtain a loan
- 2) how to pay off that loan
- 3) indentured servitude
- Debt and release dealt with in Exodus 21 – 23 and in Leviticus 25
- Laws of Deuteronomy and Exodus are very similar, but Leviticus is different

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP OF ISRAEL

NATION OF ISRAEL

12 TRIBES



➤ Deuteronomy and Exodus concerned about the individual

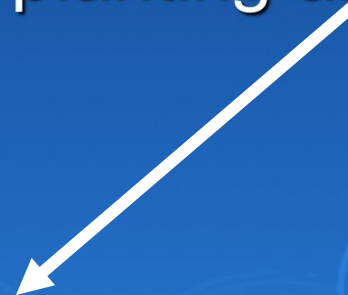
➤ Leviticus concerned about families, clans, and tribes

IN JUBILEE, LAND OWNERS HAD TO RETURN LAND TO FORMER OWNER



- Once each 50 years, the original owners could reclaim their land without cost!
- The 50 year Jubilee also meant TWO years in a row, there was no planting and no harvest!

1)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
2)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
3)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
4)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
5)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
6)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR
7)	YEAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	SABBATH YEAR (49 TH YR.) → 50 TH YEAR SABBATH



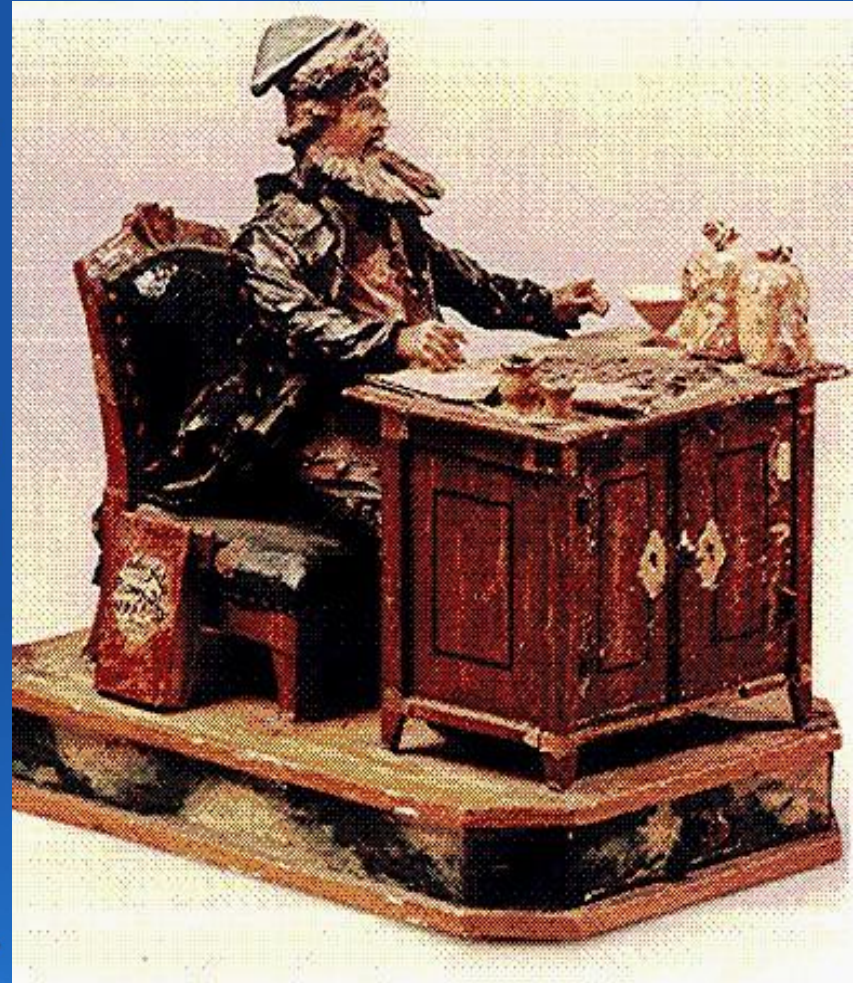
THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LENDING AND BORROWING



- Among the Hebrews, until the era of the Kings, lending money was about helping the poor
- Often was in the form of food or seed grain
- **NO INTEREST** could be charged
- Lending money was the cornerstone of the ancient Hebrew welfare system
- Lenders for profit were looked down upon as thieves

BABYLON CHANGED THE SYSTEM

- In the 6th century BC the Jews were exiled to Babylon
- When they returned they began to embrace lending money for profit as a business
- There was little interest in loaning money to the poor at NO PROFIT!
- Today borrowing and lending is all about the wealthy getting wealthier
- The poor, who need it the most, can't get loans
- The whole God-based purpose for lending has been turned upside down



GOD'S IDEAL: NO POOR IN ISRAEL



- These laws about debt and repayment **ONLY** include Israelites, **NOT** foreigners
- God gave everything to Israel, therefore no need for any Hebrew to be poor
- This did **NOT** include the lazy and foolish
- IF Israel will follow laws of lending and release THEN God will bless Israel

DEBT IS ENSLAVING

- USA is hated in many regions because we lend money to those in need, and fully expect repayment
- The Lord's principle of "release" is intended for the wealthiest to help the poorest by cancelling their burdensome debts
- The Lender is dominant over the borrower
- Lending and borrowing is not sinful, per se



“THE CURSE OF THE LAW”

- Yehoveh tells Israel that IF they will obey, they will be greatly blessed
- BUT.....IF they disobey they will receive the curse of the Law
- **The Law itself is not the curse**
- The curse is the divine consequence of disobedience (sin) to God's Laws
- The ultimate SPIRITUAL curse is eternal death
- Intermediate PHYSICAL curse is discipline and punishments (usually by human government)
- Believers are spared the ETERNAL SPIRITUAL consequence (curse of the Law) but NOT the earthly physical consequences of the curse

A CAUTION ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE LENDER

- The 7-year and 50-year cycles of release were fixed in the Hebrew Calendar
- As a loan was made nearer the ends of the cycles, the lender stood to have to forgive more debt
- The Lord says if a lender stops loaning money for this reason he will be guilty
- God also says: ***“Get used to it, there will never cease to be needy in your land....”***



THERE WILL ALWAYS BE POOR



- The Torah and the Law are God's IDEAL justice system
- Due to mankind's corrupted state it is a practical impossibility not to sin
- Jesus quoted the OT principle: **John 12:8** *"For the poor you always have with you....."*
- Indentured servants can choose NOT to be released
- They are given a "mark" (ear pierced) to identify them as having CHOSEN to remain with their master

THE LAW OF FIRSTLINGS

- The first of all things belongs to God
- ONLY after the firstlings are offered as a sacrifice may the worshipper partake
- MUST be brought to the Tabernacle for sacrifice
- Sacrifice must be the BEST and the MOST valuable
- Animals which COULD have been sacrifices EXCEPT they had defects may be killed for their food value

