

DO NOT FORGET

TEXT: (Proverbs 22:22-23, NIV)

²² Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court,
²³ for the LORD will take up their case and will exact life for life.

INTRODUCTION

1. “Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this” (Deuteronomy 22:17-18, NIV).
2. “Thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15, KJV).
3. “If any of your people—Hebrew men or women—sell themselves to you and serve you six years, in the seventh year you must let them go free. And when you release them, do not send them away empty-handed. Supply them liberally from your flock, your threshing floor and your winepress. Give to them as the LORD your God has blessed you. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you. That is why I give you this command today” (Deuteronomy 15:12-15, NIV).

I. DO UNTO OTHERS

1. “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:27-31, NIV).
2. “When you make a loan of any kind to your neighbor, do not go into their house to get what is offered to you as a pledge. Stay outside and let the neighbor to whom you are making the loan bring the pledge out to you. If the neighbor is poor, do not go to sleep with their pledge in your possession. Return their cloak by sunset so that your neighbor may sleep in it. Then they will thank you, and it will be regarded as a righteous act in the sight of the Lord your God” (Deuteronomy 24:10-13, NIV).

A. Respecting Your Fellow Man

1. “When you make a loan of any kind to your neighbor, do not go into their house to get what is offered to you as a pledge” (Deuteronomy 24:10, NIV).
2. “Stay outside and let the neighbor to whom you are making the loan bring the pledge out to you” (Deuteronomy 24:11, NIV).

B. Items Which Must Never Be Taken

1. “Do not take a pair of millstones—not even the upper one—as security for a debt, because that would be taking a person’s livelihood as security” (Deuteronomy 24:6, NIV).

C. Why Such a Law?

1. “If the neighbor is poor, do not go to sleep with their pledge in your possession. Return their cloak by sunset so that your neighbor may sleep in it” (Deuteronomy 24:12, NIV).

2. "Then they will thank you, and it will be regarded as a righteous act in the sight of the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 24:13, NIV).
3. "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you. That is why I give you this command today" (Deuteronomy 15:15, NIV).

II. TREAT EMPLOYEES FAIRLY

A. Pay People What They Are Worth

1. "Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns" (Deuteronomy 24:14, NIV).
2. "The buyer haggles over the price, saying, 'It's worthless,' then brags about getting a bargain" (Proverbs 20:14, NLT)!
3. "Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for *them*. Add up God's Law and Prophets and this is what you get" (Matthew 7:12, MSG).

B. Timely Payments

1. "Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin" (Deuteronomy 24:15, NIV).

III. HELP THE POOR

A. Purposeful Oversight

1. "When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it" (Deuteronomy 24:19, NIV).

B. Blessings for Ruth

1. "Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow" (Deuteronomy 24:19-21, NIV).
2. "Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.
And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, 'Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor.'
Naomi said to her, 'Go ahead, my daughter.' So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek" (Ruth 2:1-3, NIV).
3. "Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, 'Who does that young woman belong to?'" (Ruth 2:5, NIV)?

C. Why Help the Poor Succeed?

1. "Otherwise they may cry to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin" (Deuteronomy 24:15, NIV).
2. "Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, for the LORD will take up their case and will exact life for life" (Proverbs 22:22-23, NIV).

3. "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I command you to do this" (Deuteronomy 24:22, NIV).

CONCLUSION

1. "When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required" (Luke 12:48, NIV).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the Golden Rule? (Luke 6:31) (Matthew 7:12)
2. Come up with some examples of application of the Golden Rule.
3. Reread Deuteronomy 24:6-22. Come up with ways you can apply these Scriptures to those who are less well off than you.
4. What does the LORD not want us to forget?