

Second Mosaic Speech: Specific Covenant Stipulations – Part 2 (February 1406 BC)

Deuteronomy 15–18

The Sabbatical Year

15:1 “At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.

2 And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD’s release has been proclaimed.

3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand shall release.

4 But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess—

5 if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.

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

7 “If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother,

8 but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

9 Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.

10 You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.

11 For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’

12 “If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.

13 And when you let him go free from you, you shall not let him go empty-handed.

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

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 today.

16 But if he says to you, ‘I will not go out from you,’ because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you,

17 then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.

18 It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired worker he has served you six years. So the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

Firstborn Animals Consecrated to Yahweh

19 “All the firstborn males that are born of your herd and flock you shall dedicate to the LORD your God. You shall do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.

20 You shall eat it, you and your household, before the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose.

21 But if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any serious blemish whatever, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

22 You shall eat it within your towns. The unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as though it were a gazelle or a deer.

23 Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

Spring Feast – The Passover (14th of First Month: Nisan) – Good Friday

16:1 “Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.

2 And you shall offer the Passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose, to make his name dwell there.

Spring Feast – The Feast of Unleavened Bread (15th-22nd of First Month: Nisan) – Easter

3 You shall eat no leavened bread with it. Seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt.

4 No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning.

5 You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you,

6 but at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt.

7 And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents.

8 For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD your God. You shall do no work on it.

Spring Feast – The Feasts of Weeks – Pentecost

9 “You shall count seven weeks. Begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain.

10 Then you shall keep the Feast of Weeks to the LORD your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand, which you shall give as the LORD your God blesses you.

11 And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite who is within your towns, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there.

12 You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Fall Feast – The Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (15th-22nd of Seventh Month: Tishri)

13 “You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress.

14 You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are within your towns.

15 For seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.

16 “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

Appointment of Judges and Officers

18 You must appoint judges and civil servants for each tribe in all your villages that the LORD your God is giving you, and they must judge the people fairly.

19 You must not pervert justice or show favor. Do not take a bribe, for bribes blind the eyes of the wise and distort the words of the righteous.

20 You must pursue justice alone so that you may live and inherit the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Forbidden Worship Practices

21 You must not plant any kind of tree as a sacred Asherah pole near the altar of the LORD your God which you build for yourself.

22 You must not erect a sacred pillar, a thing the LORD your God detests.

Prohibition of Defective Animal Sacrifices

17:1 You must not sacrifice to him a bull or sheep that has a blemish or any other defect, because that is considered offensive to the LORD your God. [cf. [Mal 1:6–9](#)]

Death Penalty for Idolatry

2 Suppose a man or woman is discovered among you—in one of your villages that the LORD your God is giving you—who sins before the Lord your God and breaks his covenant

3 by serving other gods and worshiping them—the sun, moon, or any other heavenly bodies which I have not permitted you to worship.

4 When it is reported to you and you hear about it, you must investigate carefully. If it is indeed true that such a disgraceful thing is being done in Israel,

5 you must bring to your city gates that man or woman who has done this wicked thing—that very man or woman—and you must stone that person to death.

6 At the testimony of two or three witnesses they must be executed. They cannot be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. [[Matt 18:16](#); [Heb 10:28](#)]

7 The witnesses must be first to begin the execution, and then all the people are to join in afterward. In this way you will purge evil from among you. [[1 Cor 5:13](#)]

The Jurisdiction of the Central Tribunal

8 If a matter is too difficult for you to judge—bloodshed, legal claim, or assault—matters of controversy in your villages—you must leave there and go up to the place the LORD your God chooses.

9 You will go to the Levitical priests and the judge in office in those days and seek a solution; they will render a verdict.

10 You must then do as they have determined at that place the LORD chooses. Be careful to do just as you are taught.

11 You must do what you are instructed, and the verdict they pronounce to you, without fail. Do not deviate right or left from what

they tell you.

12 The person who pays no attention to the priest currently serving the LORD your God there, or to the verdict—that person must die, so that you may purge evil from Israel.

13 Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and not be so presumptuous again.

Laws Pertaining to Kingship

14 When you come to the land the LORD your God is giving you and take it over and live in it and then say, “I will select a king like all the nations surrounding me,”

15 you must select without fail a king whom the LORD your God chooses. From among your fellow citizens you must appoint a king—you may not designate a foreigner who is not one of your fellow Israelites.

16 Moreover, he must not accumulate horses for himself or allow the people to return to Egypt to do so, for the LORD has said you must never again return that way.

17 Furthermore, he must not marry many wives lest his affections turn aside, and he must not accumulate much silver and gold.

18 When he sits on his royal throne he must make a copy of this law on a scroll given to him by the Levitical priests.

19 It must be with him constantly and he must read it as long as he lives, so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and observe all the words of this law and these statutes and carry them out.

20 Then he will not exalt himself above his fellow citizens or turn from the commandments to the right or left, and he and his descendants will enjoy many years ruling over his kingdom in Israel.

Laws Pertaining to Levitical Inheritance

18:1 The Levitical priests—indeed, the entire tribe of Levi—will have no allotment or inheritance with Israel; they may eat the burnt offerings of the LORD and of his inheritance.

2 They will have no inheritance in the midst of their fellow Israelites; the LORD alone is their inheritance, just as he had told them.

3 This shall be the priests’ fair allotment from the people who offer sacrifices, whether bull or sheep—they must give to the priest the shoulder, the jowls, and the stomach.

4 You must give them the best of your grain, new wine, and olive oil, as well as the best of your wool when you shear your flocks.

5 For the LORD your God has chosen them and their sons from all your tribes to stand and serve in his name permanently.

6 Suppose a Levite comes by his own free will from one of your villages, from any part of Israel where he is living, to the place the LORD chooses

7 and serves in the name of the LORD his God like his fellow Levites who stand there before the LORD.

8 He must eat the same share they do, despite any profits he may gain from the sale of his family’s inheritance.

Divination and Sorcery Forbidden

9 When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn the abhorrent practices of those nations.

10 There must never be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, anyone who practices divination, an omen reader, a soothsayer, a sorcerer,

11 one who casts spells, one who conjures up spirits, a practitioner of the occult, or a necromancer.

12 Whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD and because of these detestable things the LORD your God is about to drive them out from before you.

13 You must be blameless before the LORD your God.

14 Those nations that you are about to dispossess listen to omen readers and diviners, but the LORD your God has not given you permission to do such things.

The Coming Prophet—Christ

15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you—from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him. [[Acts 3:22–23](#)]

16 This accords with what happened at Horeb in the day of the assembly. You asked the LORD your God: “Please do not make us hear the voice of the LORD our God any more or see this great fire any more lest we die.”

17 The LORD then said to me, “What they have said is good.

18 I will raise up a prophet like you for them from among their fellow Israelites. I will put my words in his mouth and he will speak to them whatever I command.

19 I will personally hold responsible anyone who then pays no attention to the words that prophet speaks in my name.

Identifying False Prophets

20 “But if any prophet presumes to speak anything in my name that I have not authorized him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die.

21 Now if you say to yourselves, ‘How can we tell that a message is not from the LORD?’—

22 whenever a prophet speaks in my name and the prediction is not fulfilled, then I have not spoken it; the prophet has presumed to

“speak it, so you need not fear him.”

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