

## March 18 Answers

- 1) Moses' Second Sermon — Part 2b (Deut 15–18: Specific covenant obligations). Moses continued to explain God's covenant laws in detail so the people would know how to live a holy life that was pleasing to Him. The law of the **Sabbatical** year commanded all creditors to grant a **release** of whatever they had **loaned** to a fellow Israelite (Deut 15:1–2; cf. Exod 23:10ff). God urged the people to be **generous** and give their neighbor whatever they might need. This teaches us that it's our responsibility to **care** for the poor and needy in our community. Moses pointed out that there *didn't need to be* any poor among the Israelites, for if they would love and obey God, He would bless and prosper them (Deut 15:4–6). However, God knew this **ideal** would not be realized; inevitably the **sin** of some would affect the lives of all, and thus the poor would never cease from the land (Deut 15:11). This law was *not* telling the people to give aid to the **wicked** who had incurred God's wrath (cf. 2 Chr 19:2; Amos 4:7). Rather, it was encouraging Israel to care for those who had been adversely affected by the results of the fall and the sin of others. If we aid those who are poor as a result of their own sin without confronting them about their need for repentance, we become an **enabler** of their sin. Our obligation is to **open** our hand to the poor, while at the same time exercising **discernment** toward the root cause of that poverty.