

Christian Generosity

Key Verse: “*When you are reaping in the field, and you overlook a sheaf, don’t return to get it. Let it remain for the foreigner, the orphan, or the widow, in order that the LORD your God may bless everything you undertake.*”

—*Deuteronomy 24:19, International Standard Version*

Selected Scripture:
Deuteronomy 24:14-22

and in need. Instead, they were to purposely allow them to glean, for their own use, what had been left behind in the fields. The reason for this instruction was because they, too, had been helpless and in need when they were slaves in Egypt. The lesson is consideration for others. This is an aspect of Godlikeness, because God himself has applied this principle, for in his plan he has considered the poor and helpless human race.

When the perfect human Adam willingly disobeyed

The Book of Deuteronomy records the final message Moses gave to the Israelites shortly before his death. The objective of this message was to admonish them to remember and apply the instructions God had given to their nation in the past. One of these instructions is recorded in our Key Verse. An explanation for this requirement is found in the prior verse. “Remember to observe this because you were slaves in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there. That is why I am commanding you to do this.”—vs. 18, *ISV*

The Israelites were not to ignore those who were helpless

God's instruction in the Garden of Eden, the penalty handed down was death, which in turn was inherited by each successive human generation thereafter. (Gen. 2:16,17) Since all humans were born in sin and imperfect, no one could "by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Ps. 49:7; 51:5

Only a sinless, perfect, human life could satisfy God's justice—a perfect human life, Jesus, for the disobedience of the perfect human life of Adam. (Exod. 21:23; Rom. 5:12,19) God redeemed each member of the human race by sending his only begotten Son into the world as a perfect man, who then willingly gave his life "a ransom for all," thus satisfying God's justice.—John 3:16,17; I Tim. 2:5,6; I Pet. 3:18

Just as God freed the nation of Israel from the slavery of Egyptian bondage, so too he has freed footstep followers of Christ from the slavery of sin and death. (John 8:35,36; I Cor. 15:22) We should always remember this; we should show love and mercy toward those who have either not yet heard the Gospel or who have not yet believed in it.

There are times we come in contact with people who, although not religious at all, are having difficult life experiences such as illness or the death of a loved one. (Rom. 8:22) We should consider them like the "foreigner, orphan, or widow" in this instruction which God gave to Israel. Such individuals might not have had the opportunity to hear or believe God's Word, or their mind may be blinded to it.

We should have love and sympathy for them. If possible, we should also share with them some "seeds" of Truth. Thus, we may give them the scriptural basis for having faith in a resurrection for all and the wonderful kingdom blessings which will soon come upon the whole earth. (I Cor. 15:21,22; Rev. 21:1-5) They may either accept the good news now, or we may be planting seeds of truth and hope, which will sprout in their hearts in Christ's kingdom. ■