

Deuteronomy 15:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

Analysis

For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee. The promise that YHWH elohekha yebarekhekha (the LORD your God will bless you) grounds Israel's economic prosperity in covenant obedience. The Hebrew *avat* (lend) pictures creditor status, while avoiding *lavah* (borrow/be indebted) preserves independence and dignity.

This economic dominance—lending to nations, ruling over them—reverses the curse of Deuteronomy 28:43-44 where disobedience brings debt and subjugation. The blessing isn't merely wealth but sovereignty and freedom from foreign domination. Proverbs 22:7 notes that 'the borrower is servant to the lender,' so Israel's creditor position represents freedom and authority. Yet this prosperity is conditional on covenant faithfulness (15:4-5)—obedience brings blessing, disobedience brings cursing. The promise anticipates Solomon's wealth and international influence (1 Kings 10:14-29) but was repeatedly forfeited through apostasy.

Historical Context

Written before Israel entered Canaan, this promise anticipates the economic blessings of obedience in the land. Israel's agricultural and commercial success under David and Solomon fulfilled this partially, with tributary nations and international trade. However, Israel's frequent disobedience led to oppression, exile, and foreign domination (Judges, Assyrian and Babylonian captivity). The New Testament spiritualizes such promises—believers' true riches are spiritual (Ephesians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 8:9), though godliness with contentment brings material sufficiency (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does understanding that material blessing flows from covenant obedience shape your view of prosperity?
2. In what ways has debt or financial bondage compromised your spiritual freedom and witness?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	יְהוָה	הִנֵּה	אֱלֹהִים	בָּרוּכָה	כִּאֵשׁ	רַ	דָּבָר	לְ
H3588	For the LORD	H3068	thy God	H430	blesseth	H1288	H834	thee as he promised
								H0
								H1696
תְּعַבֵּט	מִ	בְּגֹויִם	כִּבְיִם	לֹא	וְאַתָּה	לְ		
but thou shalt not borrow		nations	over many	H859	H3808			
H5670		H1471	H7227					
תְּעַבֵּט	וְאַתָּה	מִןְשָׁלָה	מִ	כִּבְיִם	לֹא	וְתָבִעַ	לְ	
but thou shalt not borrow	and thou shalt reign	H4910		nations	over many	H0		H3808
H5670				H1471	H7227			
וְאַתָּה								
and thou shalt reign								
H4910								

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 4:21 (Kingdom): And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

Psalms 37:21 (Parallel theme): The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

Proverbs 22:7 (Parallel theme): The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

Luke 6:35 (Parallel theme): But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Ezra 4:20 (Kingdom): There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them.

Nehemiah 9:27 (Parallel theme): Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

Psalms 112:5 (Parallel theme): A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Psalms 37:26 (Blessing): He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

1 Kings 4:24 (Kingdom): For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.

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