

## Nation's Decline in Moral Conduct VI

Have you ever considered the questions David asked of the God in Psalm 15, i.e., "Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"

David addressed these questions: 1) Negatively, i.e., characteristics an individual should not have, and 2) Positively, i.e., characteristics an individual should have.

This article addresses the fourth negative characteristic, i.e., "putteth not out his money to interest."

When the Law was given to Israel, Moses said, "Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother; interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of anything that is lent upon interest: unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest, that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all that thou putteth thy hand unto, in the land whither thou goest in to possess it" (Deuteronomy 23:19-20). This injunction was intended to keep the children of Israel from taking advantage of one's poverty, as the Law further stated, "If thou lend money to any of my people with thee that is poor, thou shalt not be to him as a creditor; neither shall ye lay upon him interest. If thou at all take thy neighbor's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him before the sun goeth down: for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? And it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious" (Exodus 22:25-27).

Under the Law of Moses, those who refused the injunction of God concerning the poor were worthy of death: "If he beget a son that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and that doeth any one of these things, and that doeth not any of those duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbor's wife, hath wronged the poor and needy, hath taken by robbery, hath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath committed abomination, hath given forth upon interest, and hath taken increase; shall he then live? he shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18:10-13). Thus, those who practiced such would not sojourn in Jehovah's tabernacle, nor dwell in Jehovah's holy hill.

When the Law of Moses was given, covetousness was kept in check by a law requiring free and cordial lending. Such an attitude would reap the blessings

of God. As you seek to find Jehovah's favor, do so, recognizing that it can be affected by how you deal with others.

Solomon said, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, When it is in the power of thy hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, And to-morrow I will give; When thou hast it by thee. Devise not evil against thy neighbor, Seeing he dwelleth securely by thee" (Proverbs 3:27-29).  
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