

## Hebrew Scripture Responsive Reading: Open Your Hand to the Poor

*Deuteronomy 15:11 (NRSV)*

**Leader:** If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor.

**People:** You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.

**Leader:** Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, “The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,” and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing.

**Women:** Your neighbor might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.

**Men:** Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.

**Leader:** Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.”

## Epistle Responsive Scripture Reading: Faith and Good Works

*James 2:14-24 (ERV)*

**Leader:** My brothers and sisters, if a person claims to have faith but does nothing, that faith is worth nothing. Faith like that cannot save anyone. Suppose a brother or sister in Christ comes to you in need of clothes or something to eat. And you say to them:

**People:** God be with you! I hope you stay warm and get plenty to eat.

**Leader:** But you don't give them the things they need. If you don't help them, your words are worthless.

**People:** It is the same with faith. If it is just faith and nothing more—if it doesn't do anything—the faith is dead.

**Leader:** But someone might argue:

**People:** Some people have faith, and others have good works.

**Leader:** My answer would be that you can't show me your faith if you don't do anything.

**People:** But I will show you my faith by the good I do.

*(continued on back)*



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## Gospel Responsive Reading: Caring for Those In Need

*Matthew 25:35-40 (NRSV)*

**Leader:** For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.

**People:** Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?"

**Women:** And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?

**Men:** And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?

**Leader:** And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."