

Doctrine of Usury

1. The term “usury” generally refers to interest of any kind upon money.
2. The Law did not allow the charging of interest upon money loaned from one Hebrew to the next.
 - *Exodus 22:25 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.*
3. No Israelite was to profit in any way by taking advantage of the need of a fellow brother.
 - *Leviticus 25:36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. 37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.*
 - *Deuteronomy 23:19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:*
4. Interest could be charged on foreigners.
 - *Deuteronomy 23:20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.*
5. The Lord God promised to bless the Israelites that honored the financial principles of the Law.
6. During the Babylonian Captivity some Jews began to violate the Law and charged their brothers interest. Nehemiah rebuked the nobles and the rulers who were doing this following the captivity.
 - *Nehemiah 5:7 Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them.*
9. While he was willing to use social shame, Nehemiah appealed to the Jews to stop charging their brethren usury.
 - *Nehemiah 5:10 I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury.*

10. A blessing awaits those who will help the need without charging them for the service.
- *Psalms 15:5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.*
11. Because God hates extortion and covetousness He will from time to time take ill-gotten gains and leave them to those who have compassion on the poor.
- *Proverbs 28:8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.*
12. In times of divine judgment upon a nation, those who have taken usury will not be spared despite whatever riches they might have gained.
- *Isaiah 24:2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.*
13. By the time of the prophets those who loaned money were charging a high rate of return, up to twelve percent interest. So notorious was the practice that being money changer was viewed in a negative light.
- *Jeremiah 15:10 Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me.*
14. Not taking usury was a sign of righteousness.
- *Ezekiel 18:8 He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man,*
15. In Hebrew history, God was more inclined to spare individuals who did not charge usury and judge those who did.
- *Ezekiel 18:13 Hath given forth upon usury, 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 18:17 That hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.*
16. Capitalism is based in a large part upon money making money. Jesus did not condemn the principle or the practice but encouraged it as a form of wisdom and good stewardship.

- *Matthew 25:27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.*