

## Leviticus Chapter 25

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- In this chapter we'll see that both the people and the land belong to God, they are His.

**Genesis 12:7** “And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, unto thy seed will I give this land:...”

**Genesis 15:18** “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, say, unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

- There were three things were to dictate or govern what the people did:
  1. Appreciation for God's blessings & provision.
  2. Appreciation for God's deliverance from Egypt.
  3. Simple obedience to God's word.
- These same things should be what motivates us today.

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V: 1-7 Moses and the people are still at Mount Sinai, all of this is still instruction for the near future when they cross into the promise land.

- A Sabbath for the land:
  1. Six years of sowing and reaping the harvest.
  2. The 7<sup>th</sup> year is a year of rest.
  3. No sowing, no pruning, no harvesting.
  4. <sup>1</sup>A year of rest for the owner, the servants.
  5. <sup>2</sup>An opportunity for the poor to eat freely from the fields and vineyards.
  6. <sup>3</sup>To increase the long term productivity of the land.
  7. <sup>4</sup>To teach the people to be dependant upon God for their provision.

Regarding the poor:

**Exodus 23:10-11** “<sup>10</sup>And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: <sup>11</sup>But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy olive yard.”

Regarding increased productivity:

- Every 7<sup>th</sup> year was to be a Sabbath for the land, it was to lie fallow.
- A season of rest and replenishment for the land.
- Farmers today use fertilizers and crop rotations in an attempt to accomplish the same thing; to replenish the land so that it will still produce – without rest.

Regarding God's faithfulness to provide what the people needed:

**Philippians 4:19** "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

**2 Corinthians 9:10** "Now he that ministereth / gives seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;"

- There was also a release for debts in the 7<sup>th</sup> year:

**Deuteronomy 15:1-2** "<sup>1</sup>At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. <sup>2</sup>And this is the manner of the release: every creditor that lendeth aught unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the Lord's release."

- As the land rested so did the people and during that time they were to be refreshed in God's word:

**Deuteronomy 31:9-13** "<sup>9</sup>And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. <sup>10</sup>And Moses commanded them, saying, at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, <sup>11</sup>When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. <sup>12</sup>Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: <sup>13</sup>And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it."

- Food for the people would be provided from the crop that grew on it's own, but they weren't to harvest the crop.
- The rest was left for the free use of the people.
- The increase of the cattle will be meat / food for the people.

V: 8-9 After 7 Sabbaths for the land, the next year – the 50<sup>th</sup> year shall be a year of jubilee.

- "trumpet (shophar) of jubilee (yowbel)" – jubilee 15X's in this chapter – the blowing of the ram's horn, sounding the alarm
- It is significant that the year of jubilee began with the Day of Atonement; in a sense, prior to release there was or had to be repentance.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> year of the 7<sup>th</sup> Sabbath was normally a Sabbath year.

- The 50<sup>th</sup> year of jubilee was also a Sabbath year, this meant a two year break, or rest for the land, and for the people.
- Notice the 7<sup>th</sup>ness, 7 feasts, 7<sup>th</sup> year / Sabbath, 7 – 7's for the jubilee, then the 8<sup>th</sup> year was a new beginning.

V: 10-11 The jubilee was to be holy, and in it they were to proclaim liberty throughout all the land.

**Exodus 21:2** “If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.”



- The Liberty Bell was originally forged in 1753.
- The inscription at the top of the Liberty Bell running around it's circumference is a direct quote from V: 10 “...*Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.*”
- In the year of jubilee everything reverted back to it's original ownership. The clock was reset, slaves were set free, returning to their families.
- Lands reverted back to their original ownership.
- All debts were cancelled.
- And just like the Sabbath year, the land was not to be sown or reaped; it was a season of rest.

V: 12 That which grows of itself you can eat, but not to harvest. Gathering enough for your family.

V: 13 Each tribe, and each family within each tribe was given an allotment of land.

- This was to be perpetual, they could sell it, but it really amounted to a lease, because every 50 years it reverted back to the original owner.
- In this there is restoration.
- As far as we know this law was never observed; the reason was probably that no one wanted to give back what they had.

**Matthew 6:21** “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Jim Elliot: “*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.*”

V: 14-17 The price of the land was to be changed according to how much time the new “lessee” would actually get to use the land, pro-rating it according to the time left until the jubilee.

V: 18-19 If you do these things you shall dwell in the land safely.

- Part of the blessing for obedience is dwelling in safety and security.
- This is primarily an issue of faith.

**Romans 10:17** “So then, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God.”

Then as now:

**2 Corinthians 5:7** “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

- God will take care of them: Another blessing of being obedient to God’s word is God bountiful provision.

**Psalms 37:25** “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”

- All of this brings a relevance to what Jesus taught us:

**Matthew 6:11** “Give us this day our daily bread.”

- Unfortunately the people were not obedient to this command.
- Upon entering the land they began to plant and harvest without ever giving the land its Sabbath.
- After 490 years without a rest for the land, the Lord intervened to give the land its rest / Sabbath.
- The Babylonians came in and took the nation captive, removing the people – and the land had its rest, which was how Daniel came to the 70 years of captivity.
- 1 year for every 7 that had been neglected. After that they were restored to their land.

**2 Chronicles 36:21** “To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years.”

- It is a basic principal of life that whatever we rob from God, we can never keep and enjoy ourselves.
- Generally, people who rob God of their tithes and offerings end up paying extra money for medical bills or car repairs, something will always come up.
- It’s always an issue of faith and obedience.

1. By disobeying the law of the Sabbath year, the Jews robbed themselves not only of spiritual blessings but also of the strength of the land and of their servants and farm animals.
2. By working the same land year after year they got their harvests, but they lost the renewal that comes from allowing the land to lie fallow and the workers to rest.
3. They also lost the blessings that come from sharing with the needy, and they robbed God of the glory that He would have received as the other nations saw how much He blessed His people.

V: 20-22 Basically the question is, if we don't sow & reap, what are we going to eat? How will we survive.

- God will command His blessing upon them in the 6<sup>th</sup> year so that they will have enough to get through the next 3 years.
- God is faithful; He provides when we just don't understand how it could happen:

**1 Kings 8-16** Elijah – widow woman, handful of meal, cruze of oil – wasted not.

**Malachi 3:10** “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

V: 23-24 There shall be a redemption for the land because it belongs to the Lord.

- They could buy and sell their land, engage in free enterprise for 49 years, but in the 50<sup>th</sup> everything was returned back to the starting point. This would prevent monopolization and exploitation.

V: 25-28 The laws of redemption & the kinsman redeemer, dealing with the poor:  
V: 25, 35, 39, 47.

<sup>1st</sup> the redemption of land:

- If after selling his property, a man is later able to buy it back, then he has the right to do so. Otherwise it is restored to him in the year of jubilee.
- The redemption price is adjusted or pro-rated according to the number of years until the jubilee. The closer it gets the prices goes down.

V: 29-34 Exceptions and special circumstances:

- If a man sells a house within a walled city, he has a year to redeem it. After that it is permanently the property.
- A house in an un-walled city or village is subject to the same conditions as a field in the open country.
- The house of a Levite can be redeemed at any time.
- The Levites could sell their house & redeem it at any time, but they could not sell the land, because it wasn't theirs to sell.

Redemption of the poor – 3 scenarios:

V: 35-38 The laws regarding lending money.

- They weren't allowed to take advantage of another brother who was in need – 0% loans, principal only.
- Strangers were a different story:

**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.”

V: 39-55 The laws regarding slaves & servants.

V: 39-41 If an Israelite has fallen on hard times and is sold to another Jew.

- They can't be forced to become “bondservants” – but as a “hired” servant and a “sojourner” – meaning temporary.
- He is to be paid a fair wage and treated well.
- Then in the year of jubilee he is to be set free and released from his debt.

V: 42 We are given the reason:

1. They / we belong to God.
2. Remember when we were all slaves and how God redeemed us.

V: 43 The Egyptians abused the Jewish slaves, ruled over them with “rigour” – meaning they were treated harshly, unfairly.

- The Jews were not to do that to each other – for the fear of God.

V: 44-46 Foreigners and strangers can be bought and sold as slaves, but not the children of Israel.

- The foreigners and strangers who were slaves, property of the Hebrews were not subject to the release during the jubilee.

V: 47-54 Now if things were reversed and a Gentile was well off and Jew sold himself into slavery he could be redeemed by a kinsman, or if he was able he could redeem himself.

- The price of a servant who was to be redeemed was to be pro-rated according to the original price and the number of years until the jubilee.
- In either event he was to be set free in the year of jubilee along with his children.
- Ultimately they all belong to the Lord who delivered them out of bondage in the land of Egypt.

V: 55 A reminder that the Israelites and their land belonged to the Lord and that He should be recognized as the rightful owner.

- Neither God's people nor God's land could be sold permanently.

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When Jesus was teaching in Nazareth:

**Luke 4:16-21** <sup>16</sup>And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. <sup>17</sup>And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup>*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,* <sup>19</sup>*to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* <sup>20</sup>And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. <sup>21</sup>And He began to say unto them, *this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*"

- Jesus is reading / quoting **Isaiah 61:1-2a** and is a reference to the year of jubilee.
- Jesus is not only the Passover, and the Sabbath, He is the Jubilee as well!

**John 8:36** "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Ruth & Boaz – kinsmen redeemer:

Why did Jesus become a man?

- Jesus became a man so that He could be our kinsman.

**Hebrews 4:15** “For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

- Jesus then died on the cross, paying the price to redeem us.
- As the Passover lamb was killed, a priest would blow a shofar – the trumpet of jubilee at that moment to indicate that the Passover had been slain.
- At that same moment Jesus uttered his last words from the cross “tetelestai” – it is finished, paid in full.
- Then He dismissed His Spirit. The veil between God and man was torn, no more separation.
- And where are we? We are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, our kinsman redeemer.