

# Leviticus 25 Commentary

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 Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[Another Overview Chart of Leviticus](#) - Charles Swindoll  
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<b>LEVITICUS THE BOOK OF SANCTIFICATION AND WORSHIP</b> <a href="#">Adapted and modified from C. Swindoll</a>	
Leviticus 1-17	Leviticus 18-27
The Way to God Access	The Walk with God Lifestyle
<b>The Approach:</b> Offerings	Practical Guidelines
<b>The Representative:</b> Priest	Chronological Observances
<b>The Laws:</b> Cleansing Physically & Spiritually	Severe Consequences Verbal promises
Ritual for Worship Worshipping a Holy God	Practical for Walking Living a Holy Life
<b>Location:</b> Mt Sinai for one full year	
<b>Theme:</b> How sinful humanity can approach and worship a holy God	
<b>Key Verses:</b> Lev 17:11, 19:2, 20:7-8	
<b>Christ in Leviticus:</b> In every sacrifice, every ritual, every feast	
<b>Time:</b> about 1446BC	

## Key words:

**Holy** - 90x/76v (with forms of the root for holy 152x) more than in any OT book (Lev 2:3, 10; 5:15f; 6:16f, 25-27, 29f; 7:1, 6; 8:9; 10:3, 10, 12f, 17; 11:44-45; 14:13; 16:2-4, 16f, 20, 23f, 27, 32f; 19:2, 8, 24; 20:3, 7, 26; 21:6-8, 22; 22:2-4, 6f, 10, 14-16, 32; 23:2-4, 7f, 20f, 24, 27, 35-37; 24:9; 25:12; 27:9f, 14, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32f);

**Atonement** - 51x/45v - (Lev 1:4; 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 30; 7:7; 8:15, 34; 9:7; 10:17; 12:7f; 14:18-21, 29, 31, 53; 15:15, 30; 16:6, 10f, 16-18, 24, 27, 30, 32-34; 17:11; 19:22; 23:27f; 25:9)

**Offering** - 326x/199v (Lev 1:2-4, 6, 9f, 13f, 17; 2:1-16; 3:1-3, 5-9, 11f, 14, 16; 4:3, 7f, 10, 14, 18, 20f, 23-26, 28-35; 5:6-8, 15f, 18f; 6:5f, 9f, 12, 14f, 17f, 20f, 23, 25, 30; 7:1f, 5, 7-11, 13-16, 18, 20f, 25, 29f, 32-35, 37f; 8:2, 14, 18, 21, 27-29, 31; 9:2-4, 7f, 10, 12-18, 21f, 24; 10:12-17, 19; 12:6, 8; 14:10, 12-14, 17, 19-22, 24f, 28, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15, 24f, 27; 17:4f, 8; 19:5, 21f, 24; 21:6, 21; 22:12, 18, 21-23, 25, 27; 23:8, 12-14, 25, 27, 36-38; 24:7, 9; 27:9, 11)

**Tent of meeting** - 43x/41v (Lev 1:1, 3, 5; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4f, 7, 14, 16, 18; 6:16, 26, 30; 8:3f, 31, 33, 35; 9:5, 23; 10:7, 9; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7, 16f, 20, 23, 33; 17:4ff, 9; 19:21; 24:3)

**Law** - 16x/16v; (Lev 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1, 7, 11, 37; 11:46; 12:7; 13:59; 14:2, 32, 54, 57; 15:32)

**Sacrifice** - 41x/34v; (Lev 3:1, 3, 6, 9; 4:10, 26, 31, 35; 7:11-13, 15-18, 20f, 29, 32, 34, 37; 9:4, 18; 10:14; 17:5, 7f; 19:5; 22:21, 24, 27, 29; 23:19, 37)

**Anoint** - 17x/15v; (Lev 4:3, 5, 16; 6:20, 22; 7:36; 8:2, 10-12, 30; 10:7; 16:32; 21:10, 12)

**Sin** - 111x/90v (Lev 4:2f, 8, 14, 20-29, 32-35; 5:1, 5-13, 15-18; 6:2-4, 17, 25f, 30; 7:7, 37f; 8:2, 14; 9:2f, 7f, 10, 15, 22; 10:16-19; 12:6, 8; 14:13, 19, 22, 31; 15:15, 30; 16:3, 5f, 9, 11, 15f, 21, 25, 27, 30, 34; 19:17, 22; 20:20; 21:21; 22:9; 23:19; 24:15; 25:1, 27; 26:18, 21, 24, 28, 46; 27:34)

**Iniquity** - 10x/8v (Lev 7:18; 16:21f; 19:8; 26:39-41, 43)

**Death** - 17/16v (Lev 16:1; 19:20; 20:2, 4, 9-11, 15f, 27; 24:16f, 21; 27:29)

**Die** - 15x/15v (Lev 7:24; 8:35; 10:2, 6f, 9; 11:39; 15:31; 16:1f, 13; 17:15; 20:20; 22:8f)

**Blood** - 86x/65v (Lev 1:5, 11, 15; 3:2, 8, 13, 17; 4:5-7, 16-18, 25, 30, 34; 5:9; 6:27, 30; 7:2, 14, 26f, 33; 8:15, 19, 23f, 30; 9:9, 12, 18; 10:18; 12:4f, 7; 14:6, 14, 17, 25, 28, 51f; 15:19, 25; 16:14f, 18f, 27; 17:4, 6, 10-12; 18:6, 12f, 17; 19:26; 20:18f; 25:49)

**Sabbath** - 13x/10v (Lev 16:31; 23:3, 11, 15f, 32; 24:8; 25:2, 4, 6)

**The LORD spoke to Moses** - 28x/28v - (Lev 4:1; 5:14; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28; 8:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 20:1; 21:16; 22:1, 17, 26; 23:9, 23, 26, 33; 24:1, 13; 27:1)

**Jubilee** - 20x/18v (Lev 25:10-13, 15, 28, 30f, 33, 40, 50, 52, 54; 27:17-18, 21, 23-24)

**Consecrate** - 24x/23v - (Lev 6:18, 27; 7:35; 8:10-12, 15, 30; 11:44; 12:4; 16:19; 20:7; 21:8, 10; 25:10; 27:14-19, 22, 2)

**Covenant** - 10x/8v (Lev 2:13; 24:8; 26:9, 15, 25, 42, 44f)

**Fat** - 52x/33v (Lev 3:3f, 9f, 14-17; 4:8f, 19, 26, 31, 35; 6:12; 7:3f, 23-25, 30f, 33; 8:16, 25f; 9:10, 19f, 24; 10:15; 16:25; 17:6)

Leviticus 25:1 The LORD then spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying,

- Ex 19:1 Nu 1:1 10:11,12 Ga 4:24,25

## LAWS OF LAND USE

### Leviticus 25:1-55

One might summarize this chapter as "R & R"...

REST and REDEMPTION

## REST for the Land and REDEMPTION of the Land

Here is A C Gaebele's summary outline of Leviticus 25:

1. The Sabbath Year. Leviticus 25:1–7.
2. The Jubilee. Leviticus 25:8–12.
3. The Jubilee and the Land. Leviticus 25:15–28.
4. The Jubilee and the Dwelling Houses. Leviticus 25:29–34.
5. The Jubilee, the Poor and the Bondmen. Leviticus 25:35–55.

An even simpler outline of Leviticus 25 is

- Take Care of the Land - Lev 25:1-34
- Take Care of the Poor & Enslaved - Lev 25:35-55

**Warren Wiersbe** - The focus in chapters 25 and 26 is on Israel in their **land**. In fact, the word "**land**" is used thirty-nine times in these two chapters. If the Israelites were to possess and enjoy their land, they had to recognize and respect some basic facts, the first of which was that God owned the land (Lev. 25:2, 23, 38) and had every right to dispose of it as He saw fit. God also owned the people of Israel (55), because He had redeemed them from Egyptian bondage. Because they belonged to Him, all the Jews were to treat one another as brothers and sisters (vv. 25, 35–38) and not take advantage of one another when it came to personal debts or property claims. The Jews were expected to toil in their fields, but it was God who gave the increase (v. 21) and supplied them with sunshine, rain, and harvests. In other words, the people of Israel had God as their "land Lord" and had to live by faith in His Word. This meant obeying His commandments and trusting His promises. Another important fact emerges from this chapter: God was in control of the calendar. God not only gave His people their land and their food, but He also gave them special "times" to observe so that the land would not be ravaged and spoiled. God is concerned about ecology and the way we treat His creation. Like the ancient Jews, we today are but stewards of God's gifts; we must be careful not to abuse or waste them. Had Israel obeyed these principles, their economic system would have functioned smoothly, the land would have provided all they needed, and everybody would have been cared for adequately. However, they didn't obey the Lord. The result was that the rich got richer, the poor got poorer, and the land was ruined. (See context in [The Wiersbe Bible Commentary](#).)

**Allan Mosley, et al** - **God Tells His People to Worship Only Him, So We Do Not Worship Possessions** In Leviticus 25:2 God says, "Observe a Sabbath to the Lord"—the Sabbath was to be kept "to the Lord." The Sabbath was about Him; it was dedicated to Him. In Leviticus 25:17 God says, "Fear your God, for I am Yahweh your God." Fear God, reverence God, and worship God. Leviticus 25:36 says again, "Fear your God," and in Leviticus 25:38 God says, "I am Yahweh your God." Again, verse 43 says, "Fear your God," and in Leviticus 25:55 God says, "I am Yahweh your God." God wasn't just telling His people how to relate to the land; He was telling them how to relate to Him. The importance of relating to God properly is crucial if we are going to understand Leviticus 25 and most of Old Testament history. Ultimately, the way we think about things and the way we spend money are not about dollars and cents; they are about who is our God. God's people were anticipating leaving the Sinai wilderness and entering the land of milk and honey. They were about to get a big pay raise. This was as close as they could get to winning the lottery. They were moving from slavery to prosperity. God was preparing them for that change by telling them to remember that He is God. The land is not God; don't worship the land. The harvest is not God; don't worship the harvest. The rain is not God; the real God gives the rain, the harvest, and the land. Worship Him. God knew that in Canaan His people were going to live next to the Canaanites, and the Canaanites worshiped prosperity. They worshiped fertility and called it "Baal." They worshiped the grain harvest and called it "Dagon." Water sustains life, so they worshiped the river and called it "Nahar." The sea is powerful, so they worshiped the sea and called it "Yamm." We who live in the enlightened, modern West think, "What a primitive religion!" However, many people in our culture have the same religion, and some followers of Jesus try to worship Jesus and prosperity at the same time. Our gods have different names—"BMW" and "Beachfront Property," "G.P.A." and "Popularity," "Lucrative Career" and "Comfortable Retirement." Some followers of Jesus try to worship such gods and Jesus at the same time. It does not work. Jesus said, "No one can be a slave of two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves of God and of money." (Matt 6:24-[note](#)) We have to choose which God we are going to worship—Jesus or money. We cannot worship both. The Israelites were surrounded by people who worshiped multiple gods. But the one true God told His people to be different. In Leviticus 25 God told them, "I am Yahweh your God," "Fear your God." God tells His people to worship only Him. Therefore, we do not worship possessions. (See context in [Exalting Jesus in Leviticus](#))

**Eugene Merrill** - Holiness is wider than religious observance—how one relates vertically with one's God: It encompasses all of life, including how one relates horizontally, living justly and in harmony with one's fellow human beings and with the earth itself. This

chapter discusses occasions when these aspects of life were given singular consideration, a special sabbatical year (Lev 25:2b–7) and a Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8–22). Both of these events had a theological motivation, but they also had economic and social ramifications for Israel. (See [Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy](#))

#### **A C Gaebelein's summary of Leviticus 25**

**This is the great restoration chapter in Leviticus.** All is connected pre-eminently with Israel's land. The application, which has been made, that this chapter foreshadows a universal restitution of all things, including the wicked dead and Satan as well, is unscriptural. If such a restitution were true the Bible would contradict itself. The Sabbatic year could only be kept after Israel came into the land. "When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto the Lord." And Jehovah uttered these words from Mount Sinai and not from the tabernacle (Lev. 1:1). Every seventh year, the land which belongs to Jehovah, and which was not to be sold, had to enjoy complete rest. See what gracious promises Jehovah had given in connection with the Sabbatic year (Lev 25:20–22). Jehovah was the Lord of the land, the owner of the land, and Israel received the land as a gift; they were the tenants. Beautifully the Lord said: "Ye are strangers and sojourners with Me." When Israel sinned and broke the laws of Jehovah, when they did not give the land its rest, then the Lord drove the people out of the land. Read here Lev 26:32–35. "And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwelt therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the nations, and will draw out a sword after you, and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." This prediction has been fulfilled. Israel is scattered among the nations of the earth and the land is desolate, a witness for the Word of God. Jehovah in giving the law concerning the Sabbatic year, gave to His people a picture of that coming rest, and the assurance of joy and blessing. But they failed.

**The year of Jubilee shows clearly the restoration which is in store of Israel and Israel's land.** It points once more to the millennial times of blessing and glory. How blessedly is that coming age of restoration and of glory seen in the year of Jubilee! Without entering into details we give a few of the Divine statements. What did the Jubilee year mean to Israel? Liberty was proclaimed; every man returned to his possession; every man to his family; all wrongs were righted and the redemption of the bondmen took place. Seven times the word "Return" is used; and oftener the word "Redeem." It was the time of returning, the blessed time of restoration and redemption.

**And how was this year of Jubilee ushered in?** By the sound of the trumpet of the Jubilee on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement. This great year of returning and redemption began with the day of atonement. Most likely after the high priest had returned from his holy office work and sprinkling of blood; after he had put the sins of the people upon the scapegoat and that sacrificial animal bearing upon its head Israel's sin had vanished in the wilderness, the trumpet sounded. What all this means we have seen in the annotations of the "day of atonement" chapter. The year of Jubilee begins, when our Lord comes back from the Holiest and appears in the midst of His people. And this time of restoration, blessing and glory is not confined to Israel's land. It means more than the promised blessings for that land. We have the year of Jubilee in Romans 8:19–23.

**We must not forget the significance of the time, the fiftieth year.** The day of Pentecost came fifty days after the resurrection of Christ from among the dead. And the fiftieth day brought, as the result of the death and resurrection of Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the formation of the church began. It came on the eighth day, the first day of the week. The year of Jubilee may well be termed another Pentecost. On that day a great outpouring of the Spirit of God will take place (Joel 2:28). The kingdom with all its glories and blessings will be established upon the earth. And how much more might be added to these blessed foreshadowings of the good things to come! (The Annotated Bible)

**Matthew Henry** - All labour was to cease in the seventh year, as much as daily labour on the seventh day. These statutes tell us to beware of covetousness, for a man's life consists not in the abundance of his possessions. We are to exercise willing dependence on God's providence for our support; to consider ourselves the Lord's tenants or stewards, and to use our possessions accordingly. This year of rest typified the spiritual rest which all believers enter into through Christ. Through Him we are eased of the burden of worldly care and labour, both being sanctified and sweetened to us; and we are enabled and encouraged to live by faith.

tabernacle (Lev 25:1; 26:46; 27:34).

Every seventh year was to be observed as a sabbath. The land was to lie fallow (uncultivated). Food for the people would be provided from the crop that grew of itself. The owner was not to harvest it, but leave it for free use by the people.

The fiftieth year was also a sabbath, known as the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8-17). It began on the Day of Atonement following seven sabbatic-year cycles (49 years). Slaves were to be set free, the land was to lie fallow, and the land was to revert to its original owner. The price of a slave or a piece of land decreased as the Year of Jubilee approached (Lev 25:15-17), and all business transactions were supposed to take this fact into account. The words "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Lev 25:10 KJV) are inscribed on the U.S. Liberty Bell. Believers today may liken the Year of Jubilee to the coming of the Lord. As we get closer to His coming, our material wealth decreases in value. The moment He comes, our money, real estate, and investments will be worthless to us. The moral is to put these things to work for Him today.

With regard to the sabbatic year, the people might wonder how they would have enough food to eat that year, and also the following year until their crops were harvested. God promised them that if they were obedient He would give them sufficient crops during the sixth year to last for three years (Lev 25:18-22). This would take care of the one time every 50 years when the Year of Jubilee followed the sabbatic year—in other words, when the people would not sow their fields for two years. They would have enough to last till the harvest of the third year.

Land could be sold, but not forever, because Jehovah is the Owner (Lev 25:23). There were three ways in which land could be "redeemed" (revert to its original Jewish owner): The nearest relative could buy it back for the seller (Lev 25:25); the seller, if he regained financial solvency, could redeem it, paying the purchaser for the years remaining until the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:26, 27); otherwise, the land automatically reverted to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:28).

A house in a walled city was subject to redemption for one year; after that, it became the property of the new owner forever (Lev 25:29, 30). Houses in unwallled villages were considered as part of the land and therefore reverted to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:31). Houses owned by the Levites in the special cities assigned to them were always subject to being bought back by the Levites (Lev 25:32, 33). The fields assigned to the Levites for pasture-ground were not to be sold.

If an Israelite fell into debt and poverty, his Jewish creditors were not to oppress him (Lev 25:35-38). They were not to charge him interest on money or demand additional food for food loaned (Lev 25:37).

If an impoverished Israelite sold himself to a Jewish creditor for nonpayment of debt, he was not to be treated as a slave but as a hired servant, and was to be released in the Year of Jubilee, if this came before the end of his six years of service (Lev 25:39-43). The Jews were permitted to have slaves from the Gentile nations, and these were considered their own property, to be handed down to their descendants. But Jewish people were not to be used as slaves (Lev 25:44-46).

If a Jew sold himself to a Gentile who happened to be living in the land, the Jew could always be bought back and set free. The redemption price was determined by the number of years remaining until the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:47-55). The relative redeeming the Jew could use him as a hired servant until the Jubilee (Lev 25:53). If no relative redeemed him, then he automatically went free in the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:54).

This chapter is a vivid reminder that the Israelites (Lev 25:55) and their land (Lev 25:23) belonged to the Lord and that He should be recognized as rightful Owner. Neither God's people nor God's land could be sold permanently.

**Leviticus 25:2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a Sabbath to the LORD."**

- When ye (KJV): Lev 14:34 De 32:8,49 34:4 Ps 24:1,2 115:16 Isa 8:8 Jer 27:5
- keep (KJV): Heb. rest, Lev 23:32 \*marg:
- a sabbath (KJV): Lev 26:34,35 Ex 23:10 2Ch 36:21

Note the phrase "**a Sabbath to the LORD.**" It is as if when we obey and keep the Sabbath to rest we do it as unto the Lord.

**Guzik** - The laws are given in faith; they are still in the wilderness, and not yet in the Promised Land. And as far as Moses and the people knew, they were only a matter of months from entering in. ([Study Guide for Leviticus 25](#))

**Criswell** - Every seventh year was to be a sabbath for the land, a stipulation designed to guard the Israelites against covetousness, as well as a sound agricultural principle. 2 Chr. 36:21 attests that the Babylonian captivity was a judgment of God against the Israelites for their disobedience in failing to observe the sabbath years (cf. Lev. 26:34, 35).

The Seventh Year was also a time of special instruction in the law of God (cf. Deut. 31:10-13).

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Leviticus 25:1-7 - The land itself must observe a sabbath to the Lord. - Leviticus 25:2

#### TODAY IN THE WORD

"Sleep scientists" are warning that people are not getting enough rest, and our health and safety are suffering as a result. William Dement, founder and director of the Stanford University Sleep Research Center, estimates that people sleep about one-and-a-half hours less per night than the average from a century ago.

The consequences? One report found that driver fatigue was involved in over half of all American vehicle accidents. Larger accidents, such as the Exxon Valdez disaster, have also been linked to sleep deprivation. In laboratory experiments, prolonged stress without rest apparently caused the immune systems of the rats to fail. Also, recent theories propose that the REM stage of sleep is necessary to learning and memory, meaning that less sleep affects our cognitive functions as well as our physical well-being.

The need for rest should come as no surprise to Christians, for we know that our Creator made us that way! That's why in the Law God made every seventh day a Sabbath, and every seventh year a Sabbath year.

During a Sabbath year, fields were not to be worked, though whatever grew there could be taken for food, especially by poor people (Leviticus 25:5, 6, 7; Ex. 23:10, 11, 12). Physically, leaving the fields fallow for a year was, as we now know, sound agricultural practice, as well as a unique custom compared to the surrounding nations. Spiritually, to rest from farming—on which the people depended for their daily food and livelihood—required faith in God's promise that He would provide bumper crops the year before (Leviticus 25:20, 21). Other features of the Sabbath year included the cancellation of debts and a special reading from the Law during the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. 31:10, 11, 12, 13).

#### TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Do you honor the spiritual principle of rest in your life? Though we no longer keep a Saturday Sabbath, God has built rest into the rhythms of life, even setting us an example Himself by resting on the seventh day of His work of creation. Given these facts, it is vital that work not occupy an inordinate amount of our time and energy.

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Leviticus 25:1-28

Blessed is he who has regard for the weak . . . the LORD will protect him and preserve his life; he will bless him in the land. - Psalm 41:1, 2

#### TODAY IN THE WORD

Every major U.S. earthquake results in modifications to building codes for commercial buildings and private homes. Strict regulations dictate how houses must be attached to their foundations and where—even if—brick may be used. New building projects require countless permits and inspections. Even existing buildings must sometimes be retrofitted to become compliant.

At times, the number of codes to be met must seem unbearable to architects and contractors. But in the end, everyone knows why such attention to structural detail is so important—newer building codes have dramatically decreased earthquake-related deaths in the United States.

As you read through today's passage, you may have felt that you too were reading a series of "codes." Why so many laws and regulations about the land even before any of the twelve tribes had stepped foot in it? Since the land was God's divine gift to His people, it had to be possessed and protected accordingly. The gift of the land was not to be abused through over-farming (Lev. 25:1–7). Moreover, by leaving the land fallow every seven years, the poor would receive needed care (Lev 25:5, 6, 7).

Today's passage shows that God had also ensured the protection of each Israelite family's land allotment. The land, which ultimately belonged to God, could not be sold permanently (v. 23). Therefore, poor individuals (or their descendants) who had been forced to sell their land to survive would have the opportunity to make a fresh start in the Jubilee year (v. 10). The Jubilee was a gracious provision to preserve human life and dignity and to protect the gift of God's inheritance.

#### TODAY ALONG THE WAY

Strict earthquake building codes exist because legislators believe human life is precious and worth protecting.

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**Leviticus 25:3 'Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop,**

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**R Laird Harris** - The sabbatical year (šabbāt) is mentioned also in Exodus 23:10–11 and Deuteronomy 15:1–18. In the former passage, however, it is described as a year to leave the land fallow (as here in Lev 25) without the year being specifically named. In the Deuteronomy passage the year is called a šemiṭṭāh and is described as a year of canceling debts and freeing slaves, not as a year of rest from the tillage of the land. (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**Moseley** - God was teaching His people that the land was for their use but not their abuse. They were to respect the land, to be responsible with the land, and to care for the land under God's direction. We live in a time when people are elevating environmentalism to the status of a religion and worshiping Mother Earth. Such thinking is paganism. If we follow what the Bible teaches about our relationship to the environment, we will not deify nature or consider the environment of greater value than humans. However, we will take care of God's creation. We will not allow greed to push us to exploit the land without considering things like replenishment and sustainability. In fact, replenishment and sustainability could be considered modern ways to implement God's ancient command to give the land rest. God tells His people to care for creation, so we protect it. (See [Exalting Jesus in Leviticus](#))

**Illustration of Need for Rest** - In his book Out Of My Mind, Joe Bayly told of a pastor friend who had three sons. When two of them began to stutter, he took them to a speech therapist. After evaluation the counselor spoke to the pastor and bluntly told him that it was his own neglect that was responsible for the speech defect. "When did you last take your family on a vacation?" the counselor demanded. It had been a long time. The minister had been too busy to give any time to his family. The pastor admitted, "I'm ashamed of it now, but I can remember saying quite proudly to my congregation, 'The devil never takes a vacation, so why should I?' I never stopped to think that the devil wasn't to be my example." He began spending time with his family. After the sixth day of creation, God rested (Gen. 2:2). He declared the sabbath to be a day of rest for Israel (Ex. 20:8-11), and He decreed that even the land should rest every seventh year (Lev. 25:3-4). In the New Testament, Jesus took His disciples to the mountains to rest (Mk. 6:30-31).

**Leviticus 25:4 but during the seventh year the land shall have a Sabbath rest, a Sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard.**

- Lev 25:20-23 26:34,35,43 Ex 23:10,11 2Ch 36:21

Leviticus 16:31 "It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute.

From this passage in chapter 16 God states that one of the purposes of the Sabbath is rest, but even more importantly that the people would experience humility for their souls. To not keep the Sabbath is to avoid God's rest and refuse to be humbled before Him!

"During the sabbatical year there must be no systematic harvesting of self-seeding crops, or such fruits as figs and grapes. Anything of this nature that the land produces without human aid is the property of all, and people are to obtain food wherever they can find it, just as the Israelites did in their wilderness wanderings." (Harrison)

**Warren Wiersbe** - Deuteronomy 15:1–11 informs us that personal debts were also remitted during the Sabbath Year and that indentured servants were set free. The word "release" in Deuteronomy 15:1 means "to let loose, to drop." It involves the canceling of debts and the freeing of slaves. As the people shared with the poor and with their liberated servants, they were to be generous and openhanded. Three motives were to govern what the people did: appreciation for God's blessings (Lev. 25:4, 6, 10, 14), appreciation for God's deliverance of the nation from Egypt (v. 15), and simple obedience to the command of God (v. 5). What God commanded was for the good of all the people, and nobody had the right to disobey Him. During the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, King Zedekiah proclaimed a release for the slaves, but he later rescinded it (Jer. 34:8ff). The Sabbath Year was also the occasion for a "Bible conference" when the priests read and explained the Book of Deuteronomy to all the people (Deut. 31:9–13). This was done during the Annual Feast of Tabernacles, which would usher in the new year. It would take a great deal of faith for the people to trust God for their daily food, and "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17, NKJV). During that special year, the nation learned the meaning of "give us this day our daily bread." God promised to protect them and provide for them throughout the year, if only they would trust and obey (Lev. 25:18–22). **We have no biblical evidence that the Jews ever celebrated the Sabbath Year, in fact, the Bible indicates that they didn't:** "To fulfil 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 fulfil threescore and ten years" (2 Chron. 36:21). God sent Israel into Babylonian exile for seventy years in order to give the land the rest it needed (Jer. 25:8–11; 29:10). This suggests that for nearly 500 years, the Jews had disobeyed God's law concerning the Sabbath Year. (See context in [The Wiersbe Bible Commentary](#).)



**BUT DURING THE 7TH YEAR THE LAND SHALL HAVE A SABBATH REST A SABBATH TO THE LORD** - This pattern is taught throughout Scripture and ultimately foreshadows a Rest that is found only in Jesus, our eternal "Sabbath Rest." (cp Mt 11:28-30).

Deuteronomy 15:1 ("At the end of [every] seven years you shall grant a remission [of debts].")

Exodus 21:2 "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment."

Exodus 23:10 "You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield, 11 but [on] the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard [and] your olive grove."

Jeremiah 34:14 "At the end of seven years each of you shall set free his Hebrew brother who has been sold to you and has served you six years, you shall send him out free from you; but your forefathers did not obey Me or incline their ear to Me."

Nehemiah 10:31 As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego [the crops] the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

Hebrews 4:9 So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

**NET NOTE** - Heb "and in the seventh year a Sabbath of complete rest shall be to the land." The expression "a Sabbath of complete rest" is superlative, emphasizing the full and all inclusive rest of the seventh year of the sabbatical cycle. Cf. ASV "a sabbath of solemn rest"; NAB "a complete rest."

**YOU SHALL NOT SOW YOUR FIELD NOR PRUNE YOUR VINEYARD** No planting new crops and no maintenance of existing crops was allowed. No sowing or pruning means they needed to trust the Lord for His provision.

Property is a trust from God. Its ownership and use is to be handled responsibly considering that God is the primary Owner. The 7th year of rest for land protected its productivity. The 50th or Jubilee Year protected personal liberty and equality and gave lasting strength to family ties in a social structure linked to land ownership. Biblical faith values the use of property in sustaining a family.

**Guzik** - It was also just plain good ecology! Giving the land a rest every seven years would help restore vital nutrients to the soil that normally would be depleted. Israel's failure to keep this command determined the length of their captivity; Leviticus 26:34 says that if Israel is not obedient, God will make sure the land gets its Sabbaths by exiling the nation to an enemy land; this was fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity of Israel (2 Chronicles 36:20-21). Today, many observant Jews find a way around the Sabbath year law; on the seventh year, they "sell" their land to a Gentile, work it, and then "buy" it back from the Gentile when the Sabbath year is over. The Gentile makes a little money, and the Jew can say, "It wasn't my land on the Sabbath year, so it was all right if I worked it." ([Study Guide for Leviticus 25](#))

**Leviticus 25:5 'Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year.'**

- growth (KJV): 2Ki 19:29 Isa 37:30

## **A SABBATH REST FOR THE LAND**

While the weekly Sabbath was for resting man, but Sabbath year was primarily for the resting of the land.

**Harvest's aftergrowth** - In Hebrew this phrase is "growth from spilled kernels" or "volunteer grain" is denoted by sâphîach. This refers to any plants that grow up on their own or which sprang up by themselves in the second year and which was fair to be used as food for the Israelites, since no planting could be done in the Sabbath year (Lev 25:5, 11; 2 Ki 19:29; Isa. 37:30).

**Allen Ross** - To be sure, this law provided care for the land so that it could be more productive and last longer. But by giving the land a Sabbath the people were also acknowledging that this provision of the land came from the Creator, their covenant God. For a whole year they and their land were in a Sabbath. (Holiness to the Lord)

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Rest.** "It is a year of rest" (Lev 25:5). It was kept as a Sabbath unto the Lord. The Gospel of Christ proclaims rest to the weary and heavy laden (Matt. 11:28). Not rest in their works, but rest from them. It was the Sabbath of

the Lord, therefore God's rest. It was, and is, an entering into His rest. Rest in the Lord (Ps. 116:7). We which have believed do enter into rest (Heb. 4:1-3).

**Leviticus 25:6 'All of you shall have the Sabbath products of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you.'**

- Ex 23:11 Ac 2:44 4:32,34,35

Exodus 23:11 but [on] the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard [and] your olive grove.

**NET NOTE** - A "resident who stays" would be a foreign person who was probably residing as another kind of laborer in the household of a landowner (B. A. Levine, Leviticus [JPSTC], 170–71). See v. 35 below.

**Leviticus 25:7 'Even your cattle and the animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat.'**

NLT - And your livestock and the wild animals will also be allowed to eat of the land's bounty.

## **BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS FEED BEASTS**

God's provision of food in the year in which they are "resting" the land would also be sufficient for their animals. This promise would have blunted any arguments that we need to plant a few crops to make sure we can feed our cattle and animals. God had already "dotted that I" and "crossed that I" so to speak. God is the God of details and order and His instructions if received and believed are always the perfect antidote for anxiety over His provision for our needs. Ultimately these OT principles foreshadow the abundant provision He promises those who place their faith in Christ for as Paul wrote "my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Php 4:19-[note](#))

This passage ends the section giving instructions on the Sabbatical Year.

**Warren Wiersbe** applies these truths writing "It's a basic principle of life that whatever we rob from God, we can never keep and enjoy ourselves. In my pastoral ministry, I've met people who robbed God of tithes and offerings, only to end up paying extra money for medical bills or car repairs. I recall one church member bringing his family budget book to my office, just to show me how God had begun to bless him when he stopped robbing the Lord. His figures showed that every dollar he took from God had to be spent on some emergency need, and he never got to use that money himself. 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. 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. They also lost the blessings that come from sharing with the needy, and they robbed God of the glory He would have received as the other nations saw how much He blessed His people. It was a costly mistake on their part, and they paid for it dearly." (See context in [The Wiersbe Bible Commentary](#).)

### **Jewish scholar Alfred Edersheim on**

**The Sabbatical Year** - Though not strictly connected with the Temple services, it may be desirable briefly to refer to the observance of the Sabbatical year, as it was strictly enforced at the time of Christ. It was otherwise with the year of Jubilee. Strangely, there are traces of the latter during the period before the return from Babylon (1 Kings 21:3; Isa. 5:8; 37:30; 61:1–3; Ezek. 1:1; 7:12; Micah 2:2), while the Sabbatical year seems to have been systematically neglected. Hence Jewish tradition explains, in accordance with 2 Chron. 36:21, that the seventy years' captivity were intended to make up the neglected Sabbatical years—commencing the calculation, if it be taken literally, from about the accession of King Solomon. But while, after the return from Babylon, the year of Jubilee was no longer kept, at least, as a religious ordinance, the Sabbatical year was most strictly observed, not only by the Jews (Neh. 10:31; 1 Macc. 6:49, 53; Jos. Antiq. 13. 8, 1; 14. 10, 6; xv. 1, 2; Jew. Wars, 1. 2–4.), but also by the Samaritans. (Antiq. 11. 8, 6.) Jewish tradition has it, that as it took seven years for the first conquest, and other seven for the proper division of the Holy Land, 'tithes' were for the

first time paid fourteen years after the entrance of Israel into Canaan; and the first Sabbatical year fell seven years later, or in the twenty-first year of their possession of Palestine. The Sabbatical law extended only to the soil of Palestine itself, which, however, included certain surrounding districts. The Rabbis add this curious proviso, that it was lawful to use (though not to store or sell) the spontaneous produce of the land throughout the extent originally possessed by Israel, but that even the use of these products was prohibited in such districts as having originally belonged to, were again occupied by Israel after their return from Babylon. But this, as other rules laid down by the Rabbis, had many exceptions. (The Temple)

**Leviticus 25:8 'You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, namely, forty-nine years.**

NLT "In addition, you must count off seven Sabbath years, seven years times seven, adding up to forty-nine years in all.

### **RELEASE AND RESTORATION: THE YEAR OF JUBILEE Leviticus 25:8-12**

**Seven Sabbaths of years...seven times seven years** - As mentioned in these notes there is not clear evidence that Israel ever kept the Sabbatical Year. In fact one of the primary reasons they were sent into exile in Babylon was for their failure to obey the instructions in Leviticus 25. And so in Second Chronicles we read...

And those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete. (2 Chr 36:20, 21, cp Jer 25:11, 29:10 and Daniel 9:2)

Why 70 years? Because they had failed to observe and keep 70 Sabbaths! Using simple math, this means that for 490 years prior to the Babylonians exile in 586 the nation had not obeyed God and given the land a year of rest. It is therefore highly likely that during this period they also failed to obey God's instructions regarding the Year of Jubilee! Indeed, we have no record, Scriptural or extra-Biblical, that they ever celebrated the Year of Jubilee!

There is one Scripture which might be interpreted that Judah "temporarily" kept the Year of Jubilee. During the reign of King Zedekiah Jerusalem was under siege by Babylon and the king **made a covenant with all the people who were in Jerusalem to proclaim release (deror)** of the slaves (Jer 34:8) to which they capitulated (Jer 34:9, 10). Unfortunately the people had a change of heart, when the Babylonian siege was temporarily lifted, and took back their slaves (Jer 34:11). God's response to their breaking of the covenant was swift and striking

Although recently you [had] turned and done what is right in My sight, each man proclaiming release to his neighbor, and you had made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name. Therefore thus says the LORD, **'You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming release** each man to his brother and each man to his neighbor. Behold, **I am proclaiming a release** to you,' declares the LORD, **'to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine;** and I will make you a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. (Jer 34:15, 17)

Jeremiah then announced that the people would have "freedom" to fall by the plague, sword, and famine (Jer 34:15, 17).

**Jubilee** means "the sound of the trumpet" from the Hebrew word yobel meaning a ram's horn.

**Criswell** - Every fiftieth year was designated a Year of Jubilee, and the jubilee trumpet (shophar) was blown on the Day of Atonement. During the year of jubilee there was to be no sowing or reaping, all land being returned to its original owner and slaves to their families. According to Lu 4:17-21, the Year of Jubilee served as a type of deliverance by Christ from the bondage and slavery of sin (Jn 8:36; Ga 5:1).

**Lindsey** makes a very interesting observation regarding the year of Jubilee - The Year of Jubilee is not mentioned in the Old Testament outside the Pentateuch. There is no direct biblical evidence regarding its observance in Israel's history, but if its practice was normal, there might have been no occasion to mention it. On the other hand, the apparent failure of Israelites to keep the sabbatical years during the monarchical period (cf. 26:34-35, 43; 2 Chron. 36:20-21) suggests that the Jubilee might also have been violated. (See [The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament](#))

**Spurgeon** - The preaching of the Gospel is a proclamation of a spiritual jubilee, Jesus our great High-priest has preached deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Now, even now, each believer keeps his jubilee. Note that the jubilee began on the evening of the day of atonement; our Lord's atoning work is the fountain-head of our holy joy.... (ANOTHER COMMENT ON LEV 25 HE WRITES) Thus by the gospel jubilee we are set free, with the true liberty. Now know we the meaning of the Lord's words, "the year of my redeemed is come." Have all in this house kept the jubilee? If not, the Lord grant that we may

Jesus our great High Priest,  
Hath full atonement made;  
Ye weary spirits, rest;  
Ye mournful souls, be glad!  
The year of jubilee is come:  
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.

Ye who have sold for nought  
The heritage above,  
Receive it back unbought,  
The gift of Jesus' love;  
The year, &c.

Ye slaves of sin and hell,  
Your liberty receive;  
And safe in Jesus dwell,  
And blest in Jesus live;  
The year, &c.

**Wiersbe** - For the people of Israel, each new year opened with the blowing of the trumpets on the first day of the seventh month (Keep in mind that the Jewish **religious** year began in April with Passover - Ex. 12:2; their **civil** year began with the Feast of Trumpets seven months later), and ten days later, the people celebrated the Day of Atonement by fasting, repenting, and offering the required sacrifices. But every fiftieth year, at the close of the celebration of the Day of Atonement, the horns were blown again to announce that the Year of Jubilee had begun. It would require a great deal of faith for the people to celebrate this special year, because the previous year—the forty-ninth—would have been a Sabbath year when the fields, vineyards, and orchards would not have been cultivated. The Jews had to trust God to provide for them for the forty-ninth and fiftieth years, and also during the fifty-first year while they waited for the harvest. God certainly wouldn't fail them, but their faith might fail. In fact, there's no evidence in Scripture that the nation of Israel ever celebrated the Year of Jubilee. (See context in [The Wiersbe Bible Commentary](#).)

The Year of Jubilee is a beautiful picture of our **Kinsman-Redeemer and Savior, Jesus Christ**, the One in Whom this great truth is fully and forever fulfilled. Play the great song by Michael Card and worship the One Who has set us free indeed!

### Jubilee

Michael Card

The Lord provided for a time for the slaves to be set free  
For the debts to all be canceled so His chosen ones could see  
His deep desire was for forgiveness, He longed to see their liberty  
And His yearning was embodied in the Year of Jubilee

Chorus:

Jubilee, Jubilee  
Jesus is our Jubilee  
Debts forgiven  
Slaves set free  
Jesus is our Jubilee

At the Lord's appointed time His deep desire became a man  
The heart of all true jubilation and with joy we understand  
In his voice we hear a trumpet sound that tells us we are free  
He is the incarnation Of the year of Jubilee  
(Chorus)

To be so completely guilty, given over to despair  
To look into your judges face, and see a Savior there  
(Chorus)

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Universal reign of Christ.

1 HARK! the song of Jubilee,  
Loud as mighty thunders roar,  
Or the fulness of the sea,  
When it breaks upon the shore;  
Hallelujah! for the Lord  
God omnipotent shall reign;  
Hallelujah! let the word  
Echo round the earth and main.

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### **Alfred Edersheim - The Number Seven**

THE symbolical character which is to be traced in all the institutions of the Old Testament, appears also in the arrangement of its festive calendar. Whatever classification of the festivals may be proposed, one general characteristic pervades the whole. Unquestionably, the number seven marks in Scripture the sacred measurement of time. The Sabbath is the seventh of days; seven weeks after the commencement of the ecclesiastical year is the Feast of Pentecost; the seventh month is more sacred than the rest, its 'firstborn' or 'New Moon' being not only devoted to the Lord like those of the other months, but specially celebrated as the 'Feast of Trumpets,' while three other festivals occur within its course—the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, and its Octave. Similarly, each seventh year is Sabbatical, and after seven times seven years comes that of Jubilee. Nor is this all. Seven days in the year may be designated as the most festive, since in them alone 'no servile work' was to be done, while on the so-called minor festivals (Moed Katon), that is, on the days following the first of the Passover week and of that of Tabernacles, the diminution of festive observances and of restrictions on labour marks their less sacred character. (The Temple)

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### **The Year of Jubilee - R C Sproul**

At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. [Deut. 15:1]

In Deuteronomy 15 Moses told the people to keep the sabbath years God had established. Leviticus 25 develops the sabbath year laws and their meaning. Every seventh year the land was to lie fallow. Everybody's land was to rest at the same time. This required a great deal of faith: "What shall we eat?" "What if the following year we suffer crop failure? We shall have no reserve." Yet God promised that in the sixth year he would send a triple harvest to carry the nation through (Lev. 25:20–22). This promise of abundance was significant. The land itself would join in an act of obedience and worship; people and nature would share a first step toward the reversal of the effects of the curse.

In the sabbath year certain debts were canceled, specifically charity loans. God warned the people not to harden their hearts against the poor as they saw the year of release drawing near. Those who lent to the poor without interest, and whose loan wound up being canceled in the sabbath year, could count on God to make up the difference. The sabbath year was for Old Testament Israel only, but the obligation to be openhearted toward the poor is for us as well.

After 49 years (seven sabbath year cycles) there was an extra sabbath called the jubilee. This fiftieth year was a super-sabbath for the land. In the jubilee, all of the land of Israel temporarily reverted to its true owner, the Lord. To understand the jubilee, remember that God, as owner, had taken the land of Canaan from the Canaanites. They had forfeited the right to dwell there through their sinfulness. As Israel conquered Canaan, God parceled out his land to the tribes. Each family received a permanent plot of good land. If it became necessary to sell the plot to raise money, the land only temporarily changed hands. In effect what was sold was not the land itself but the crops the land would produce until the jubilee. At the jubilee, God took his land back and returned it to the original steward families.

Immigrants might lease land, but they would lose it in the jubilee; thus, they settled in cities, for land in the cities was not covered under the jubilee law.

In the new covenant, the spiritual and moral teaching of the jubilee continues to be relevant. In Luke 4:19 Jesus proclaimed that the great jubilee had come. God was taking the earth back from Satan and would give it, little by little, generation by generation, to his faithful stewards.

Coram Deo - The jubilee year meant release from debt and bondage. It was a type of the jubilee that Jesus inaugurated. Salvation in Christ is God's jubilee to his people. From what has God released you? How can you act as a faithful steward by showing love to someone who seems oppressed in spiritual and emotional captivity?

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## **JUBILEE YEAR [ISBE]**

JUBILEE YEAR - (shenath ha-yobhel; etos tes apheseos; annus jubilaeus, "year of jubilee" (Lev 25:13), or simply ha-yobhel, "the jubilee" (Lev 25:28; compare Nu 36:4), the King James Version and the English Revised Version Jubile): The Hebrew word yobhel stands for qeren ha-yobhel, meaning the horn of a ram. Now, such a horn can be made into a trumpet, and thus the word yobhel came to be used as a synonym of trumpet. According to Lev 25:9 a loud trumpet should proclaim liberty throughout the country on the 10th day of the 7th month (the Day of Atonement), after the lapse of 7 sabbaths of years = 49 years. In this manner, every 50th year was to be announced as a jubilee year. All real property should automatically revert to its original owner (Lev 25:10; compare 25:13), and those who, compelled by poverty, had sold themselves as slaves to their brothers, should regain their liberty (Lev 25:10; compare 25:39).

In addition to this, the Jubilee Year was to be observed after the manner of the sabbatic year, i.e. there should be neither sowing nor reaping nor pruning of vines, and everybody was expected to live on what the fields and the vineyards produced "of themselves," and no attempt should be made at storing up the products of the land (Lev 25:11 f). Thus there are three distinct factors constituting the essential features of the Jubilee Year: personal liberty, restitution of property, and what we might call the simple life.

### **1. Personal Liberty:**

The 50th year was to be a time in which liberty should be proclaimed to all the inhabitants of the country. We should, indeed, diminish the import of this institution if we should apply it only to those who were to be freed from the bonds of physical servitude. Undoubtedly, they must have been the foremost in realizing its beneficial effects. But the law was intended to benefit all, the masters as well as the servants. They should never lose sight of their being brothers and citizens of theocratic kingdom. They owed their life to God and were subject to His sovereign will. Only through loyalty to Him were they free and could ever hope to be free and independent of all other masters.

### **2. Restitution of Property:**

The institution of the Jubilee Year should become the means of fixing the price of real property (Lev 25:15 f; compare 25:25-28); moreover, it should exclude the possibility of selling any piece of land permanently (Lev 25:23), the next verse furnishing the motive: "The land is mine: for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." The same rule was to be applied to dwelling-houses outside of the walled cities (Lev 25:31), and also to the houses owned by Levites, although they were built within walled cities (Lev 25:32).

In the same manner the price of Hebrew slaves was to vary according to the proximity of the Jubilee Year (Lev 25:47-54). This passage deals with the enslaving of a Hebrew by a foreigner living among the Jews; it goes without saying that the same rule would hold good in the case of a Hebrew selling himself to one of his own people.

In Lev 27:17-25 we find a similar arrangement respecting such lands that were "sanctified unto Yahweh." In all these cases the original owner was at liberty to redeem his property at any time, or have it redeemed by some of his nearest relatives (25:25-27, 29, 48 ff; 27:19).

The crowning feature, though, was the full restitution of all real property in the Jubilee Year. The primary object of this regulation was, of course, the reversion of all hereditary property to the family which originally possessed it, and the reestablishment of the original arrangement regarding the division of the land. But that was not all; for this legal disposition and regulation of external matters was closely connected with the high calling of the Jewish people. It was a part of the Divine plan looking forward to the salvation of mankind. "The deepest meaning of it (the Jubilee Year) is to be found in the apokatastasis tes basileias tou theou, i.e. in the restoring of all that which in the course of time was perverted by man's sin, in the removing of all slavery of sin, in the establishing of the true liberty of the children of God, and in the delivering of the creation from the bondage of corruption to which it was subjected on account of man's depravity" (Rom 8:19 ff) (compare Keil, Manual of Biblical Archaeology). In the Year of Jubilee a great future era of Yahweh's favor is foreshadowed, that period which, according to Isa 61:1-3, shall be ushered in to all those that labor and are heavy laden, by Him who was anointed by the spirit of the Lord Yahweh.

### **3. The Simple Life:**

The Jubilee Year, being the crowning point of all sabbatical institutions, gave the finishing touch as it were to the whole cycle of sabbatic days, months and years. It is, therefore, quite appropriate that it should be a year of rest for the land like the preceding sabbatic year (Lev 25:11 f). It follows, of course, that in this instance there were two years, one after the other, in which there should

be no sowing or systematic ingathering. This seems to be clear from Lev 25:18-22: "And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat of the fruits, the old store; until the ninth year, until its fruits come in, ye shall eat the old store." Thus in the 7th and 8th years the people were to live on what the fields had produced in the 6th year and whatever grew spontaneously. This shows the reason why we may say that one of the factors constituting the Jubilee Year was the "simple life." They could not help but live simply for two consecutive years. Nobody can deny that this afforded ample opportunity to develop the habit of living within very limited means. And again we see that this external part of the matter did not fully come up to the intention of the Lawgiver. It was not the simple life as such that He had in view, but rather the laying down of its moral and religious foundations. In this connection we must again refer to Lev 25:18-22, "What shall we eat the seventh year?" The answer is very simple and yet of surpassing grandeur: "Then I will command my blessing upon you," etc. Nothing was expected of the people but faith in Yahweh and confidence in His power, which was not to be shaken by any doubtful reflection. And right here we have found the root of the simple life: no life without the true God, and no simplicity of life without true faith in Him. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4; compare Dt 8:3).

We may well ask: Did the Jewish people ever observe the Jubilee Year? There is no reason why they should not have observed it in pre-exilic times (compare Lotz in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, X, under the word "Sabbatical Year" and "Year of Jubilee"). Perhaps they signally failed in it, and if so, we should not be surprised at all. Not that the institution in itself was cumbered with any obstacles that could not have been overcome; but what is more common than unbelief and unwillingness to trust absolutely in Yahweh? Or, was it observed in post-exilic times? Here, too, we are in the dark. There is, indeed, a tradition according to which the Jubilee Year has never been observed--neither in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah nor at any later period. The truth of this seems to be corroborated by the silence of Josephus, who, while referring quite frequently to the sabbatic year, never once mentions the Year of Jubilee. William Baur

#### Related Resources:

- [Easton's Dictionary - Jubilee](#)
- [Smith's Dictionar - Jubilee](#)
- [What is the Year of Jubilee? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Wikipedia - Jubilee](#)

**Leviticus 25:9 'You shall then sound a ram's horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land.'**

- Jubilee (KJV): Lev 25:10-12 27:17,24 Nu 36:4
- of the jubilee to sound (KJV): Heb. loud of sound, Nu 10:10 Ps 89:15 Ac 13:38,39 Ro 10:18 15:19 2Co 5:19-21 1Th 1:8
- the day (KJV): Lev 16:20,30 23:24,27

**Greek** (Septuagint) kai diaggeleite salpiggos phone en pase te ge humon te meni to hebdomo te dekate tou menos te hemera tou hilasmou (1Jn2:2,4:10) diaggeleite salpiggi en pase te ge humon

**LXE** In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall make a proclamation with the sound of a trumpet in all your land; on the day of atonement ye shall make a proclamation with a trumpet in all your land.

**CSB** Then you are to sound a trumpet loudly in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month; you will sound it throughout your land on the Day of Atonement.

**ESV** Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land.

**KJV** Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

**NET** You must sound loud horn blasts-- in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, on the Day of Atonement-- you must sound the horn in your entire land.

**NIV** Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land.

**NLT** Then on the Day of Atonement in the fiftieth year, blow the ram's horn loud and long throughout the land.

**YLT** and thou hast caused a trumpet of shouting to pass over in the seventh month, in the tenth of the month; in the day of the atonements ye do cause a trumpet to pass over through all your land;



## THE DAY OF ATONEMENT OPENS THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

**TENTH DAY OF THE 7th MONTH:** This day corresponds to the DAY OF ATONEMENT (Lev 16:29 23:27 25:9, Heb 9:7): Apparently on years that were not JUBILEE, there was no sounding of a SHOPHAR as on this glorious day

The day of Atonement is described in Leviticus 16:29-34

[This] shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; 30 for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31 "It is to be a sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute. 32 "So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments, 33 and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34 "Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year." And just as the LORD had commanded Moses, [so] he did.

**In short the nation would begin the Year of Jubilee with a time of repentance and cleansing.** They had to be right with God or they would never obey some of the serious instructions associated with Jubilee such as freeing their slaves and restoring their land to their former owners.

**Guzik** - Our founding fathers were aware of the principle of the year of Jubilee and the freedom associated with it; proclaim liberty throughout all the land is inscribed on the Liberty Bell that hangs in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. ([Study Guide for Leviticus 25](#))

**Leon Hyatt** - The beginning of this celebration was to be signaled by passing along the loud noise of a shofar. A "shophar" was a musical instrument that is not in use today except in a portrayal of ancient practices. Some translate the word as "trumpet." Others called it a "cornet." However, it did not correspond to either of those modern instruments. It was built in a long coil, evidently to resemble a ram's horn and to imitate the sounds of a ram's horn. It produced a loud, piercing sound and produced only one note. This verse describes the instrument as "a noise-making shofar," which is an apt description of it. The word translated "noise-making" is the word that is used in Leviticus 23:24 to describe the joyous shouts and noises of the Jewish New Year's Day. The previous passage did not state what was to be used to make the noise, but this verse specifically says it was to be made by a shofar. to pass along (See YLT or Young's Literal Translation above). They were to cause the loud noises of the shofar "to pass along," which means the sounds were to pass from place to place until they had been heard in the whole land. Perhaps the sound was to be passed along from one shofar to another, spaced close enough together for each shofar to hear the sound of another and to pass it on to the next. That arrangement would have been a quick way to send the signal across the whole Land. Another possibility is that a person blowing a shofar was to pass along throughout the whole Land. Such an arrangement is less likely because it could not have been carried out in one day.

**Spurgeon's Sermon** - [Jubilee Joy](#)

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### Alfred Edersheim - The Blowing of Trumpets

In the law of God only these two things are enjoined in the observance of the 'New Moon'—the 'blowing of trumpets' (Nu 10:10) and special festive sacrifices. (Nu 28:11–15.) Of old the 'blowing of trumpets' had been the signal for Israel's host on their march through the wilderness, as it afterwards summoned them to warfare, and proclaimed or marked days of public rejoicing, and feasts, as well as the 'beginnings of their months.' (Nu 10:1-10) The object of it is expressly stated to have been 'for a memorial,' that they might 'be remembered before Jehovah,' it being specially added: 'I am Jehovah your God.' It was, so to speak, the host of God assembled, waiting for their Leader; the people of God united to proclaim their King. At the blast of the priests' trumpets they ranged themselves, as it were, under His banner and before His throne, and this symbolical confession and proclamation of Him as 'Jehovah their God,' brought them before Him to be 'remembered' and 'saved.' And so every season of 'blowing the trumpets,' whether at New Moons, at the Feast of Trumpets or New Year's Day, at other festivals, in the Sabbatical and Year of Jubilee, or in the time of war, was a public acknowledgment of Jehovah as King. Accordingly we find the same symbols adopted in the figurative language of the New Testament. As of old the sound of the trumpet summoned the congregation before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle, so 'His elect' shall be summoned by the sound of the trumpet in the day of Christ's coming (Mt 24:31), and not only the living, but those also who had 'slept' (1 Cor 15:52)—'the dead in Christ.' (1 Thess. 4:16.) Similarly, the heavenly hosts are marshalled to the war of successive judgments, (Rev. 8:2; 10:7.) till, as 'the seventh angel sounded,' Christ is proclaimed King Universal: 'The kingdoms of

## THE YEAR OF JUBILEE. Leviticus 25 - James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose

Every fiftieth year was to Israel a holy memorial festival. It was a periodical season appointed by God for the readjustment of the social affairs of His people, and is a trumpet-toned type of the Gospel of Christ and its power to put men right with God and with one another. The year of jubilee was the "accepted time" and the "day of salvation" to many in Israel. The market value of things was regulated by it (Lev 25:15, 16). Man's dealings with man were to be ordered according to the appointments of God. Business and the Gospel seem in our days to be entirely divorced. But for all that this law abides, that the real value of the things of this life depend on their relationship to Christ and His Gospel. The sound of the jubilee trumpet was the sound of—

**1. Atonement.** "In the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound" (Lev 25:9). There can be no joyful sound to sinful man apart from atoning blood. The trumpet needs a living man to blow it, and he must have God's authority before it can be a Divine message to those who hear it. Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, therefore the great trumpet of atonement is being blown, and its sound reacheth unto the ends of the earth.

**2. Liberty.** "Ye shall proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants" (Lev 25:10). On the ground of Christ's atonement God proclaims liberty to every captive. The sounding of the trumpet at the lips of God's holy ones was the publishing of this glad news. This deliverance for the bond slave was immediate and complete on the hearing and believing of the tidings. The sound was for the ear, the message was for the heart (Luke 4:18).

**3. Forgiveness.** "If thy brother be poor, thou shalt relieve him" (Lev 25:35). Even the debt and poverty of a man did not hinder him from enjoying the grace of the jubilee, but made him just the more a fit subject for it. To the poor the Gospel is preached. While we were yet sinners Christ died for us, He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,

**4. Rest.** "It is a year of rest" (Lev 25:5). It was kept as a Sabbath unto the Lord. The Gospel of Christ proclaims rest to the weary and heavy laden (Matt. 11:28). Not rest in their works, but rest from them. It was the Sabbath of the Lord, therefore God's rest. It was, and is, an entering into His rest. Rest in the Lord (Psa. 116:7). We which have believed do enter into rest (Heb. 4:1-3).

**5. Plenty.** "Ye shall eat your fill, and dwell in safety" (Lev 25:19). What a Gospel! Made safe in the place of plenty. Lying down in green pastures. The unsearchable riches of Christ is our holy land of promise. Into this fulness By His grace, we who believe have been brought. All are-yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Be careful for nothing. Take the water of life freely.

**6. Restoration.** "Ye shall return every man into his possession" (Lev 25:13). All that was lost through failure and sin was restored through the jubilee Gospel. All that was lost in Adam is restored in Christ, and the glorious Gospel of the blessed God declares it. Made nigh by the Blood of Christ. Poor Mephibosheth heard such a Gospel and enjoyed such a restoration (2 Sam. 9). He restoreth my soul. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

**7. Brotherly love.** "Ye shall not oppress one another, but fear the Lord thy God" (Lev 25:17). By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another. We must love unworthy ones as we unworthy ones have been loved, and forgive as we have been forgiven. The forgiven servant who took his fellow-worker by the throat was evidently courageous enough to deal with him face to face, but he was utterly destitute of the grace and compassion of his master (Matt. 18:28). Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Freely ye have received, freely give. Be ye imitators of God as dear children (Eph. 5:1).

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### The Jubilee

Robert Kerr

The silver trumpets call,  
The gladsome jubilee!  
The fetters now must fall;  
The bondsmen may go free!  
For Jesus has the ransom paid,  
And the new way to glory made.

The silver trumpets call,  
The gladsome jubilee!

Let Heav'n and earth agree  
To sound His fame abroad,  
Thro' whom the jubilee  
Calls back the world to God.  
How fervently His heart doth burn,  
To see His banished ones return!  
Let Heav'n and earth agree  
To sound His fame abroad.

Lost Eden is restored;  
All hail the jubilee!  
Let Jesus be adored  
For grace so full and free.  
Ye ruined souls, no longer roam;  
No more despise your blood-bought home.  
Lost Eden is restored;  
All hail the jubilee!

The Gospel bugle blow  
O'er every land and sea,  
Till Satan's captives know  
That Jesus makes them free!  
Soon may He see them, born again,  
The happy subjects of His reign.  
The Gospel bugle blow  
O'er every land and sea.

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Leviticus 25 - Devotional from Today in the Word

Jubilee: Provisions for the Poor/Stewardship of the Land

Katharine Hayhoe might be considered a paradox. She is a Christian climate scientist. The daughter of missionaries, the wife of a pastor, Hayhoe explains, "My faith is the Christian faith . . . and we are told to love our neighbors as ourselves. And our neighbors, especially the poorer ones, are already harmed by climate change."

It's clear that Scripture insists on a proper care and stewardship of the earth. Today's reading explains that not only did God insist upon a weekly Sabbath observance for His people, or a day consecrated to rest, He also commanded a Sabbath rest for the land. Every seven years, the Israelites were to refrain from planting and sowing, reaping and harvesting. The land was to lay fallow, resting and replenishing.

The question Moses anticipates is this: "What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not plant or harvest our crops?" That strikes at the heart of what Sabbath is really meant to do. Sabbath, whether it's a day we set aside for rest and worship, or a year we set aside for the earth to replenish, is an expression of courageous trust. It reminds us that it is not our work that secures for us our livelihood. It is God who provides us with all that we need.

Beyond a Sabbath for the land every seventh year, God ordained the practice of Jubilee to be observed every fifty years. This required more dramatic dependence on the part of the Israelites. Jubilee was a provision of protection for the poor: it called for debt cancellation. Land and homes were returned to the rightful owner as prescribed by family heritage.

Jubilee is not veiled socialism, or simple redistribution according to principles of fairness. It was a way to acknowledge that no one but God owned the land.

Apply the Word - What would the practice of Jubilee look like today? What kinds of debts can you cancel for others? Maybe you can forgive some financial obligations. Or maybe you can forgive someone's offense against you and work to restore the relationship. On a larger scale, how can our churches practice the kind of reconciliation in the principle of Jubilee?

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The trumpet of the jubilee.—Lev 25:9. - Richard Hawker

MY soul! pause over the subject of the jubilee trumpet; for surely much of gospel was proclaimed by it. It should seem that there were four distinct and special sounds of the trumpet in the camp of Israel. The trumpet of memorials so called, (Levit. 23:24,) was blown on the occasion of the new moon, calling the people to the joyful assembly, Psalm. 81:3. There was also the fast trumpet, of which the prophet speaks, Joel 2:1. Besides these, the war trumpet gave a certain sound to prepare to battle, 1 Cor. 14:8. And this of the jubilee, which differed from all. And although the jubilee trumpet was never heard but once in fifty years, yet so sweet and so distinguishing was the sound, that no poor captive, among the servants in the camp of Israel, was at a moment's loss to understand its gracious meaning. Say, my soul, is not the gospel sound, when first heard by the ear of faith, precisely the same? When pardon was first proclaimed to thee by the blood of Christ, and the day of his atonement so manifested to thy spiritual senses, that the captivity of sin and Satan lost their powers upon thee, was not this indeed the jubilee trumpet, and the acceptable year of the Lord? Hast thou heard this joyful sound? Hath the Son of God made thee free? Hath Jesus caused thee to return to thy long-lost, long-forfeited, inheritance? And wilt thou ever forget the unspeakable mercy? Hail! thou Almighty Deliverer, thou Redeemer of thy captives! I had sold my possession, sold myself, for nought; and thou hast redeemed it for me again without money. I had sold it indeed, but could not alienate it for ever, because the right of redemption was with thee. Yes, blessed Jesus! thou art He whom thy brethren shall praise. Thou art the next of kin, the nearest of all relations, and the dearest of all brothers! And thou hast redeemed both soul and body, both lands and inheritance, by thy blood; and so redeemed the whole, as never more to be lost again or forfeited for ever. And now Lord, thy jubilee trumpet sounds; and the proclamation of the everlasting gospel is heard in our land, to give liberty to the captive, sight to the blind, to bring the prisoners out of the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house! Oh! cause me to know the joyful sound, and daily to walk in the light of thy countenance. Cause me, by the sweet influences of thy spirit, to live in the constant expectation of the year of the everlasting jubilee, when the trumpet of the archangel shall finally sound, and all thy redeemed shall then return to Zion, with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads; when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Hallelujah!

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#### **DEUTERONOMY 5:12–15; LEVITICUS 25:1–12**

God intends for us to be free. Freedom from slavery is part of the Sabbath and the Jubilee. All of Israel, including servants, and even animals, are to observe this rest. "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15).

The focus and purpose of all of our labor, ultimately, is to serve him. No other person or institution may own our allegiance; any other allegiance is ultimately slavery. God has freed us and will continue to free us. These Sabbaths don't just point backward to the God of creation; they point to God as a deliverer as well. The year of Jubilee tells us that we can never lose our identity as God's freed children. He is the One who delivers the enslaved and those he sets free are freed forever. In addition, the Sabbath and Jubilee tell us that God has a home for us and will lead us there. God takes the enslaved and restores the created order of things by settling his people in his land. Who or what controls your world? Whom or what do you serve? WINSTON T. SMITH

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#### **G Campbell Morgan - It shall be a jubilee unto you.—Lev. 25.10.**

The provision for the year of jubilee was a method by which the people were perpetually reminded that all human inter-relations were dependent upon the deeper things of Divine authority and possession. The first part of this chapter gives the law of the land-sabbath. Every seventh year the land was to have rest from cultivation. Thus the Divine ownership was recognized, as men were forbidden to treat the land as their absolute property. There is no doubt that this requirement, in common with all others, was based upon the true method of dealing with the land. Every fiftieth year was one in which all sorts of human arrangements were interfered with. In that year, men dispossessed through adversity were restored to possession. In that year the slave was to be set free, and all men released from toil. The laws for this year were clearly set out, as they affected the land, dwelling-houses, and persons. They should be carefully pondered, for in them the foundations of the social order were firmly laid. By them we see how all human inter-relationships, both as to property and person, are conditioned by the fact that the fundamental ownership, both of property and persons, is that of God. The only right a man has in land is that of his own labour therein. The liberation of the slave proved that no one human being can have the right to possess, absolutely and finally, any other human being. The master has only a right in the work of his slave. The readjustment of the year of jubilee re-called men to the realization of the sovereignty of Jehovah, and of the limitations within which they lived. ([Life applications from every chapter of the Bible](#) by Morgan, G. Campbell )

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#### **Lawrence Richards - This Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8–55)**

It was to be a year for rejoicing, the Year of Jubilee. It was to be a year when every poor family won the lottery, and every rich man rejoiced for him.

When Israel entered Palestine, each family was to be given its own land to cultivate. That land, and the crops it produced, was to support the family and be the source of its wealth. God said that such land must not "be sold permanently." No family was to be

thrust into poverty; each was to have and keep its own capital.

But what would happen if a family did have reverses and became poor? First, others who could were to help out, by lending money without interest or selling food at no profit (vv. 35–37). Second, if desperate, a man might sell the right to harvest crops the family land would produce, but not sell the land itself (vv. 13–29). Third, if destitute, a person might even sell himself, but such a person could not be treated as a slave (vv. 39–53).

But, when the 50th year came, the Year of Jubilee, everything was to be set right. Any debt the poor owed was canceled. Any land the family had sold was reclaimed. And anyone who lived in servitude was freed. No wonder “jubilee” has come to mean “jubilation,” and “rejoicing.”

God truly does care about the poor. Through these unusual provisions of Old Testament Law, God showed His people how they could express concern for the poor too.

Yet the Year of Jubilee that we read of here was never celebrated in Israel. Not once. When each 50th year came, the rich tightened their grip on their wealth. And the poor continued in their poverty. God’s people had the opportunity to fulfill a dream. But again and again they turned away.

Today, when we read the ageless code that so beautifully displays God’s concern for the poor and the oppressed, we too are called to dream of a just and moral society. A community of faith in which people have priority, and concern for those less fortunate is a mark of the godly.

Personal Application - What elements in this chapter’s plan for dealing with poverty can Christians adopt today?

Quotable

“It is not the Christian man’s part to think in this wise: what have I to do with this fellow? . . . Remember only those things which Christ hath done for thee, which should be recompensed, not in Himself, but in thy neighbour. Only see of what things he hath need, and what thou art able to do for him. Think this thing only, he is my brother in our Lord, co-heir in Christ, a member of the same body, redeemed with one blood, a fellow in the common faith, called unto the very same grace and felicity of the life to come.”—Erasmus of Rotterdam

(Borrow the [The 365 day devotional commentary](#))

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### **Ivan Steeds - Leviticus 25:8–24 CHRIST IN THE JUBILEE**

The main purpose of the jubilee was to give rest to the land. God rested from His work after the days of creation and gave commandment to man—six days he must work but the seventh day would be a Sabbath of rest. The God who first created and who sustains His creation through the spoken word of His own Son now teaches men how to respect the land to preserve its fruitfulness and secure its increase. Consider this in these days of industry and commerce, where increase and growth are the key objectives and little time is devoted to rest. Some of the sweetest enjoyment of Christ will be gained by the soul who ‘sits down’ under His shadow and enjoys the riches of divine provision, Song 2:3.

In the year of jubilee every man was commanded to return to his possessions and his family. The God of heaven places great emphasis on our attitude towards, and responsibility for, our domestic circumstances. The Scriptures contain clear teaching on matters such as husband/wife, children/parents, work ethic and family values; the year of jubilee caused people to reflect on these things and take stock, to put matters right and enjoy a period of calm. Oppression was to cease, loss was to be taken when necessary and the commandment was backed by highest authority—‘I am the Lord your God’, v. 17.

We would see Christ in this chapter and there is much to consider in this context. How righteous He was, rendering to Caesar things that were Caesar’s and unto God things that were God’s. His righteous anger was kindled when men failed to distinguish between the place set aside for holy activities and that of industry and commerce; instead they endeavoured to make gain in an unholy way, Mark 11. The care He had for His widowed mother was demonstrated on the cross; He was a Son who fulfilled all His obligations to His earthly parents.

In Leviticus 25 we find an interesting compensation for those who honour God. When concern is raised over what they would eat in the seventh year, God gives a promise, ‘I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year and it shall bring forth fruit for three years’, v. 21. To the burdened soul the Saviour says, ‘Come unto me ... and I will give you rest’.

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### **Cyril Hocking - Leviticus 25:1–24 REST AND LIBERTY**

GOD is no hard taskmaster. Our chapter shows that He has more consideration for His people than we have one for another.

Verses 2–7 tell of the sabbatic year, every seventh year being set aside for rest, v. 4. The land was to be left fallow, and no

agricultural operations were to be carried out. In Exodus 20:10 a weekly sabbath was appointed for men and animals; now during this seventh year the land is included. The very natural question "What shall we eat the seventh year?", v. 20, is answered by God's bountiful provision in the sixth year, when the ground brought forth sufficient to cover three years, v. 21. This reminds us of a similar provision in relation to the supply of manna, Exod. 16:22. Law writes "Faith has the richest board. It works when God says work. It rests when God says rest, and in obedience thrives". In practice, the sabbatic year was largely ignored by the people, and this was one reason for the 70 years of captivity, 2 Chron. 36:21. The year of rest was to be used in gaining a greater knowledge of God's law, Deut. 31:10-13—did this fall into disuse too?

The year of jubilee, vv. 8-24, followed seven successive sabbatic years. It was introduced by the day of atonement, v. 9, which involved mourning for sin, and the putting away of the sins by atonement. A proclamation of "liberty" was made, v. 10, and the process of buying and selling property was related to the nearness to the trumpet sound on the day of atonement, v. 16. Does the expectation of the trumpet affect us in our home and business ventures?, 1 Thess. 4:16. As, too, the presence of the Lord Jesus inaugurated a veritable year of liberty, Luke 4:18, 19, so, at His second coming in glory, the earth will celebrate its jubilee.

Consideration of our chapter impresses upon us the following thoughts: (i) "The earth is the Lord's", Psa. 24:1. He has not given it wholly into the hands of men. (ii) God is able to provide. For the year of jubilee followed a sabbatic year, and for two years in succession no agricultural pursuits would be followed. His bounty is proved by the obedient, (iii) The jubilee relaxed the ties of bondage, and "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed", John 8:36.

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WHAT GREATER JOY IS THERE than to see old scars transformed into catalysts of life? Mourning into dancing, ashes into beauty, water into wine. Shout the jubilee! Shout the jubilee! ISAIAH 61:3

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**Leviticus 25:10 'You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.'**

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- proclaim (KJV): Ex 20:2 Ezr 1:3 Ps 146:7 Isa 49:9,24,25 61:1-3 63:4 Jer 34:8,13-17 Zec 9:11,12 Lu 1:74 4:16-21 Joh 8:32-36 Ro 6:17,18 2Co 3:17 Ga 4:25-31 5:1,13 1Pe 2:16 2Pe 2:19,20
- every man (KJV): Lev 25:13,26-28,33,34 Lev 27:17-24
- ye shall return (KJV): Nu 36:2-9

LXE And ye shall sanctify the year, the fiftieth year, and ye shall proclaim a release upon the land to all that inhabit it; it shall be given a year of release, a jubilee for you; and each one shall depart to his possession, and ye shall go each to his family.

CSB You are to consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim freedom in the land for all its inhabitants. It will be your Jubilee, when each of you are to return to his property and each of you to his clan.

ESV And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.

KJV And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

NET So you must consecrate the fiftieth year, and you must proclaim a release in the land for all its inhabitants. That year will be your jubilee; each one of you must return to his property and each one of you must return to his clan.

NIV Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan.

NLT Set this year apart as holy, a time to proclaim freedom throughout the land for all who live there. It will be a jubilee year for you, when each of you may return to the land that belonged to your ancestors and return to your own clan.

YLT and ye have hallowed the year, the fiftieth year; and ye have proclaimed liberty in the land to all its inhabitants; a jubilee it is to you; and ye have turned back each unto his possession; yea, each unto his family ye do turn back.

**Leviticus 27:17-24** 'If he consecrates his field as of the year of jubilee, according to your valuation it shall

stand. 18 'If he consecrates his field after the jubilee, however, then the priest shall calculate the price for him proportionate to the years that are left until the year of jubilee; and it shall be deducted from your valuation. 19 'If the one who consecrates it should ever wish to redeem the field, then he shall add one-fifth of your valuation price to it, so that it may pass to him. 20 'Yet if he will not redeem the field, but has sold the field to another man, it may no longer be redeemed; 21 and when it reverts in the jubilee, the field shall be holy to the LORD, like a field set apart; it shall be for the priest as his property. 22 'Or if he consecrates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not a part of the field of his own property, 23 then the priest shall calculate for him the amount of your valuation up to the year of jubilee; and he shall on that day give your valuation as holy to the LORD. 24 'In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it, to whom the possession of the land belongs.

## **PROCLAIM LIBERTY IN THE YEAR OF JUBILEE**

**Consecrate the fiftieth year** - They were to set it aside as holy as removed from common use. Why? Because it was special and should be treated as such. In fact it was a shadow of a better Jubilee to come. It could have and should have been a reminder to Israel of the magnanimous nature of their (our) forgiving God and should have caused those in the Old Testament to consider the coming of the Messiah Who would quote Isaiah 61:1-2a+ in His first "sermon" given in His hometown Jewish synagogue...

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME **TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES**, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, **TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED**, **TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD**. And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:18-21+, cf Titus 2:14+)

**Comment:** It is significant that Jesus ceased His quotation from Isaiah 61:2 before the phrase "**And the day of vengeance of our God**" which describes His Second Coming to defeat the Antichrist (Rev 19:11-21+) and all of His enemies. Isaiah 61:2 is therefore an excellent example of a time gap, which is not infrequent in Old Testament prophecies (cp Daniel 9:26+ and the time gap until Daniel 9:27+).

**Consecrate** (Sanctify, make holy, consider holy - a command not a suggestion!) (06942) (**qadash**) means to set apart for a specific use. Removed from common use. To be holy. To show one's self to be holy. To consecrate or dedicate. To set apart a person or thing from all common or secular purposes to some religious use. Everything consecrated to God was separated from all profane use. The Septuagint translates qadash here with the verb **hagiazō** meaning to make holy, sanctify (e.g., every believer is one who has been sanctified - Acts 20:32).

**Qadash** is used with various objects in addition to the fiftieth year:

- people of Israel - Ex 19:10, 14; Joshua 7:13
- altar in the Temple - Ex 29:36; 1 Ki 8:64
- priests - Ex 28:41; 29:1; 1 Sa 7:1
- mountain - Ex 19:23
- Sabbath - Ge 2:3; Ex 20:8
- new building - Neh 3:1
- fast - Joel 1:14; 2:15

**Webster's Dictionary** definition #2 for **consecrate** is convicting - "make or declare sacred; esp **devote irrevocably to worship of God** by a solemn ceremony."

**Spurgeon comments on Lev 25:10** - The preaching of the Gospel is a proclamation of a spiritual jubilee, Jesus our great High-priest has preached deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. Now, even now, each believer keeps his jubilee. Note that the jubilee began on the evening of the day of atonement; our Lord's atoning work is the fountain-head of our holy joy

**PROCLAIM A RELEASE THROUGH THE LAND TO ALL ITS INHABITANTS:** "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (KJV) is inscribed upon the original [Liberty Bell of the United States](#) and was cited in connection with the ringing of the Liberty Bell when America's Declaration of Independence was signed.



**Release** (01865)(**deror**) means a flowing or free running (this literal use found in Ex 30:23+). Figuratively **deror** described a release, liberty or emancipation. **Deror** refers to the freedom proclaimed during the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10; cp Jer. 34:8, 15, 17). In the Year of Jubilee, slaves were released and allowed to return to their families and land was restored to its original owners. Isaiah used **deror** in his messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61:1 to announce good news to the afflicted, including a proclamation of freedom to captives. Jesus quoted this text in the synagogue at Nazareth at the inception of His own ministry (Luke 4:18+).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **deror** (in Lev 25:10, et al) with the Greek noun **aphesis** which speaks of release of captives (Lk 4:18+) resulting in liberation and deliverance. **Aphesis** in other contexts referred to cancellation or pardon of a debt. The predominant significance of **aphesis** in the NT relates to the forgiveness of sins (Mt 26:28) which is one of the primary blessings for those who enter the New Covenant by grace through faith in Jesus the Sin Bearer. Note that the word **aphesis** does not refer to a "passing over" of sins as we see in the Old Testament sacrificial system (cp Ro 3:25+ which alludes to the merciful truth that God "passed over [paresis] the sins previously committed.") In dramatic contrast to the handling of sins in the OT (they were just "passed over"), aphasis speaks of the complete removal of the sins from the mind of God (compare the blessing of the New Covenant's handling of our sins in Heb 10:3+ and Heb 10:18+).

**Brown-Driver-Briggs Expanded Definition - deror** - I. דָּרוֹר noun [masculine] a flowing; free run, liberty; —

מֵרְדְּרוֹר Exodus 30:23 (P) i.e. *myrrh of flowing*, fine-flowing myrrh compare מֵרֵךְ & דִּי.

2 with קָרָא *proclaim liberty*, לְכָל־עַבְדֵּי־יְהוָה, וְקָרָאתֶם דָּרוֹר בְּאַרְבָּעָה לְיָמֵי הַיְּבוֹלָה, Leviticus 25:10 (H) in Jubilee year, compare Isaiah 61:1 ("" (תְּחַלְקֶנָּה); Jeremiah 34:8,15,17 all reference to liberty of Sabbatical year; Jeremiah 34:17 (iron.) *lo ! I proclaim to you liberty unto the sword, unto pestilence & unto famine*, i.e. liberty to be destroyed by sword, pestilence and famine, (a judgment of Yahweh); שְׁנַת־דָּרוֹר Ezekiel 46:17i.e. year of Jubilee (cf Leviticus 25:10).

**Gesenius Definition - deror** - מ. דָּרוֹר - [but f. Psalms 84:4. Root דָּבַר]

(1) **swift flight, gyration**; hence concr. used of a bird wheeling in its flight; according to the Jewish interpreters the swallow (in the other member there is צִפּוֹר sparrow), according to the ancient versions the turtle dove, יֶהֱ, which appears less suitable, Psalms 84:4; Proverbs 26:2. Compare the root דָּבַר No. 1.

(2) **a free or abundant flow** (see the root No. 2). Exodus 30:23, מֵרְדְּרוֹר myrrh which flows spontaneously. Hence

(3) **liberty, freedom** (comp. לְקַבֵּל דָּרוֹר, לְקַבֵּל, to proclaim liberty to any one. Isaiah 61:1 Jerem. 34:8, 15 Jeremiah 34:15, 17 Jeremiah 34:17 followed by בְּ Leviticus 25:10. שְׁנַת־דָּרוֹר the year of liberation (of slaves), i.q. the year of jubilee, Ezekiel 46:17.

**Deror** - 8x in 7v in the OT - Usage: flowing(1), liberty(2), release(5).

Exodus 30:23 "Take also for yourself the finest of spices: **offlowing** myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty,

Leviticus 25:10 'You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a **release** through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim **liberty** to captives And freedom to prisoners;

Jeremiah 34:8 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were in Jerusalem to proclaim **release** to them:

Jeremiah 34:15 "Although recently you had turned and done what is right in My sight, each man proclaiming **release** to his neighbor, and you had made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name.

Jeremiah 34:17 "Therefore thus says the LORD, 'You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming **release** each man to his brother and each man to his neighbor. Behold, I am proclaiming a **release** to you,' declares the LORD, 'to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine; and I will make you a terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

Ezekiel 46:17 "But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his until the year of **liberty** (another name for the Year of Jubilee); then it shall return to the prince. His inheritance shall be only his sons'; it shall belong to them.

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Liberty**. "Ye shall proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants" (Lev 25:10).

On the ground of Christ's atonement God proclaims liberty to every captive. The sounding of the trumpet at the lips of God's holy ones was the publishing of this glad news. This deliverance for the bond slave was immediate and complete on the hearing and believing of the tidings. The sound was for the ear, the message was for the heart (Luke 4:18).

**IT SHALL BE A JUBILEE FOR YOU:** The institutions of the sabbatical year, giving the lands a rest, and the jubilee year, after seven sabbatical years, were a marvelous provision by God to insure perpetual freedom and productivity for all the people of Israel if they would have only observed these commands. The land would have remained perpetually fruitful; permanent slavery could not exist, and vast accumulations of wealth by a few individuals would have been precluded. Sadly, the people repeatedly disobeyed, and God's warning had to be carried out (Lv 26:33-35). Since they rejected God's provision for "liberty throughout the land," their land became desolate and all its people were taken into captivity (2 Ch 36:20,21)

**NET NOTE** - Heb "A jubilee that shall be to you." Although there has been some significant debate about the original meaning of the Hebrew word translated "jubilee" (יובֵל, yovel; see the summary in J. E. Hartley, Leviticus [WBC], 434), the term most likely means "ram" and can refer also to a "ram's horn." The fiftieth year would, therefore, be called the "jubilee" because of the associated sounding of the "ram's horn" (see B. A. Levine, Leviticus [JPSTC], 172, and the literature cited there).

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**Jubilee** (03104)(yobel from yabal = to conduct, bear along) has two distinct meanings (1) that of "ram's horn," appearing in construct with the noun shôphâr, "horn," and qeren , "horn"; and (2) reference to "Year of Jubilee." The horn was used as a musical instrument in Hebrew and is usually labeled by the technical term "shophar." The association of the meanings stems from the blowing of the horn to announce the advent of the Year of Jubilee.

**Baker on yobel** - It is used in the phrase *qeren yôbêl*, "horn of a ram" (Josh. 6:5) or in the phrase *šôperôt hayyôbêlîm* "**shophars** (rams' horns) of rams" which is rendered as "trumpets of rams' horns" (e.g., NASB, Josh. 6:4). Its most famous use is in the phrase "year of the ram's horn," which means the Year of Jubilee that was announced by blowing a ram's horn (Lev. 25:13). The word is used alone with the definite article or without it to mean simply the Jubilee (Lev. 25:10–12; 25:15). Its most spectacular use was at Sinai to inaugurate God's appearance and the giving of the Law (Ex. 19:13)." (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: OT)

**Yobel** - 27x in 25v - Usage: jubilee(21), ram's(1), ram's horn(1), rams' horns(4).

Exodus 19:13 'No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the **ram's horn** sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain."

Leviticus 25:10 'You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a **jubilee** for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.

Leviticus 25:11 'You shall have the fiftieth year as a **jubilee**; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in from its untrimmed vines.

Leviticus 25:12 'For it is a **jubilee**; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field.

Leviticus 25:13 'On this year of **jubilee** each of you shall return to his own property.

Leviticus 25:15 'Corresponding to the number of years after the **jubilee**, you shall buy from your friend; he is to sell to you according to the number of years of crops.

Leviticus 25:28 'But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of **jubilee**; but at the **jubilee** it shall revert, that he may return to his property.

Leviticus 25:30 'But if it is not bought back for him within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city passes permanently to its purchaser throughout his generations; it does not revert in the **jubilee**.

Leviticus 25:31 'The houses of the villages, however, which have no surrounding wall shall be considered as open fields; they have redemption rights and revert in the **jubilee**.

Leviticus 25:33 'What, therefore, belongs to the Levites may be redeemed and a house sale in the city of this possession reverts in the **jubilee**, for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the sons of Israel.

Leviticus 25:40 'He shall be with you as a hired man, as if he were a sojourner; he shall serve with you until the year of **jubilee**.

Leviticus 25:50 'He then with his purchaser shall calculate from the year when he sold himself to him up to the year of **jubilee**; and the price of his sale shall correspond to the number of years. It is like the days of a hired man that he shall be with him.

Leviticus 25:52 and if few years remain until the year of **jubilee**, he shall so calculate with him. In proportion to his years he is to refund the amount for his redemption.

Leviticus 25:54 'Even if he is not redeemed by these means, he shall still go out in the year of **jubilee**, he and

his sons with him.

Leviticus 27:17 'If he consecrates his field as of the year of jubilee, according to your valuation it shall stand.

Leviticus 27:18 'If he consecrates his field after the **jubilee**, however, then the priest shall calculate the price for him proportionate to the years that are left until the year of **jubilee**; and it shall be deducted from your valuation.

Leviticus 27:21 and when it reverts in the **jubilee**, the field shall be holy to the LORD, like a field set apart; it shall be for the priest as his property.

Leviticus 27:23 then the priest shall calculate for him the amount of your valuation up to the year of **jubilee**; and he shall on that day give your valuation as holy to the LORD.

Leviticus 27:24 'In the year of **jubilee** the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it, to whom the possession of the land belongs.

Numbers 36:4 "When the **jubilee** of the sons of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe to which they belong; so their inheritance will be withdrawn from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers."

Joshua 6:4 "Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of **rams' horns** before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets.

Joshua 6:5 "It shall be that when they make a long blast with the **ram's horn**, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead."

Joshua 6:6 So Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of **rams' horns** before the ark of the LORD."

Joshua 6:8 And it was so, that when Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of **rams' horns** before the LORD went forward and blew the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

Joshua 6:13 The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of **rams' horns** before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew the trumpets; and the armed men went before them and the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while they continued to blow the trumpets.

**Holman Bible Dictionary** on the **Year of Jubilee** - The fiftieth year after seven cycles of seven years (Leviticus 25:10 ) in which Israel's land and people gained freedom. It was begun with a blast from a ram's horn on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 25:9 ). During this year of joy and liberation, the law stipulated three respects in which the land and people were to be sanctified: (1) It was to be a time of rest for the soil as well as people (Leviticus 25:11 ). The unattended growth of the field was for the poor to glean and for the beasts of the field (Exodus 23:11 ). (2) All land was to revert back to the original owner (Leviticus 25:10-34 ; Leviticus 27:16-24 ). The original distribution of land was to remain intact. All property which the original owner had been obligated to sell (and had not yet been redeemed) was to revert (without payment) to the original owner or his lawful heirs. Some exceptions to this pattern are noted in Leviticus 25:29-30 ; Leviticus 27:17-21 . (3) Every Israelite who had sold himself—either to his fellow countryman or to a foreigner settled in the land—because of poverty and remained unredeemed was to be freed along with his children (Leviticus 25:39-46 ).

The Year of Jubilee prevented the Israelites from oppression of one another (Leviticus 25:17 ). It had a leveling effect of Israel's culture by giving everyone a chance for a new start. It discouraged excessive, permanent accumulations of wealth and the deprivation of an Israelite of his inheritance in the land. Families and tribes were preserved by the return of freed bondservants to their own families. Permanent slavery in Israel was rendered impossible. This year was a constant reminder of God's interest in economic freedom (Ezekiel 46:17 ). Purchase of property was actually tantamount to assuming a lease for a maximum of forty-nine years, and the seller always retained the right to cancel the purchase by settling with the buyer on the amount of money that was still payable, taking into account the number of years that the buyer had made use of the property. If the seller was either incapable or not desirous of making use of this right of redemption, the property nevertheless returned to his possession automatically in the next Year of Jubilee. So the sale of a house, for example, was equivalent to renting it for a specified period of time (Leviticus 25:29-34 ). This made it difficult to accumulate vast permanent holdings of wealth (compare Isaiah 5:8 ; Micah 2:2 ). God's designed arrangement was against both large estates and pauperism. The Israelites were repeatedly given the opportunity to begin anew, and the impoverished were enabled to maintain themselves in society.

This year also reflected God's provision for the soil's conservation (Leviticus 25:11-12 , Leviticus 25:11-12, 25:18-21 ). During the Year of Jubilee, the Israelites were once again taught that they were to live in faith that the Lord would satisfy their needs (compare Exodus 16:17-18 ).([Source](#))'

**Other Resources on the Year of Jubilee:**

- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Jubilee Year](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Jubilee Year](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Sabbatical Year and Jubilee](#)
- American Tract Society • [Jubilee](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- Chabad Knowledge Base • [Jubilee](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible • [Jubilee](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)
- People's Dictionary of the Bible • [Jubilee](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary • [Year of Jubilee](#)
- Webster Dictionary • [Jubilee](#) • [Jubilee](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary • [Jubilee](#)

### **Devotional - Today in the Word - Leviticus 25:8-55**

Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you. - Leviticus 25:10

#### **TODAY IN THE WORD**

An old Wesleyan hymn celebrates the Year of Jubilee from a New Testament perspective:

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow, The gladly solemn sound,  
 Let all the nations know, To earth's remotest bound;  
 The Year of Jubilee is come! Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.  
 Jesus, our great High Priest, Hath full atonement made:  
 Ye weary spirits, rest, Ye mournful souls, be glad;  
 The Year of Jubilee is come!  
 Return, ye ransomed sinners, home . . .  
 Ye slaves of sin and hell, Your liberty receive,  
 And safe in Jesus dwell, And blest in Jesus live;  
 The Year of Jubilee is come! Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

The Year of Jubilee is the close and climax of this section of Leviticus. Jubilee literally means "trumpet" or "ram's horn," which was blown to proclaim the start of this special season, observed every fiftieth year (that is, after seven sevens of years).

This time had several economic implications. Land could not be worked and was returned to its original owner. Valuations of real estate and labor were actually based on how many years remained until the Jubilee. This reminded the people that they were merely tenants—God was the true owner (Leviticus 25:23). It also kept land and wealth from becoming over-concentrated in the hands of a few people, and it provided debt relief for the poor.

Spiritually, the Year of Jubilee involved the same faith and obedience that we've seen mandated elsewhere in Leviticus. To obey in this area and give up material gains required faith and humility, but God promised to bless those who followed His command (Leviticus 25:18, 19). In addition, consecration and freedom are interestingly linked in our verse for today, which is also quoted on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

#### **TODAY ALONG THE WAY**

For a musical complement to this month's study, consider listening to the first album of Michael Card's trilogy on the Old Testament, *The Ancient Faith*, and especially the song, "Jubilee." On that album, Card explores the Pentateuch, and in the song, "Jubilee," he draws parallels between the Year of Jubilee and our freedom in Christ.

### **Warren Wiersbe - Isaiah 61:1-3**

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted;  
 He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;  
 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,  
 3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness

instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Luke 4:16+ And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, 18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

Wiersbe comments on Isaiah 61:1–3 that "Jesus took these verses as His text when He preached in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-19+) and **announced that He was ushering in the Year of Jubilee** (Lev. 25). It is a time of **releasing the slaves, canceling all debts**, and **making a new beginning**. **Today, those who trust Christ begin to enjoy their Jubilee**; those who reject Him face judgment.

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#### Warren Wiersbe - The Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8–17, 23–24)

The OT Jewish calendar functioned on a series of "sevens." The seventh day of the week was the Sabbath. Seven weeks after Passover came Pentecost, and the seventh month of the year introduces the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Every seventh year was a "Sabbatic Year," and after seven Sabbatic years came the Year of Jubilee.....

The word "**jubilee**" comes from the Hebrew word yobel which means "ram's horn." This special year was announced by the blowing of trumpets on the Day of Atonement. Thus, the year began with fasting and repentance as the nation confessed its sins to the Lord (Lev. 16).

During that year, the people reclaimed the land that had been sold so that it would not go out of the control of the family or clan. Any Jew purchasing property would calculate the price until the next Year of Jubilee when the land would revert back to the original owner. How much food it could produce in that time was a major consideration. As in the Sabbatic year, the land was to lie fallow during the Year of Jubilee. The people would have to trust God to provide what they needed for the Sabbatic year (the forty-ninth), the Year of Jubilee (the fiftieth), and the fifty-first year when they would again plant seed. There would not be a new harvest until the next year.

The people did not own the land, therefore they couldn't sell it permanently. God gave them the land (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:7; 17:8; Deut. 5:16) and permitted them to use it, and He would always control it. The people were to walk in the fear of the Lord and not use their wealth to oppress one another.

The slaves were released during this special year, so that families would be reunited. The statement "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land" (v. 10) is engraved on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

**The Year of Jubilee looks forward to the kingdom age when Jesus Christ will reign in glory and fulfill the promises made to the Jewish people.** Read Isa. 61 and see what God has planned for the nation of Israel. In a spiritual sense, the Year of Jubilee also pictures our Christian life (Luke 4:16–21, which is quoted from Isa. 61:1–2). In His reading of the OT in the synagogue that Sabbath in Nazareth, Jesus stopped with "the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19), which refers to the Year of Jubilee. He did not read "the day of vengeance of our God" (Isa. 61:2), for that day of judgment will not come until after God has finished His present program of "calling out a people for His name" (Acts 15:14).'

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#### Wiersbe in [Pause for Power](#) - Jubilee!

I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In my faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them. Isaiah 61:8

Every seven years, the Jews were to observe a "sabbatical year" and allow the land to rest. After seven sabbaticals, they were to celebrate the fiftieth year as the "Year of Jubilee." During that year, all debts were to be canceled, all land returned to the original owners, the slaves were to be freed, and everybody was to be given a fresh new beginning.

If you have trusted Christ as your Savior, you are living today in a spiritual "Year of Jubilee." You have been set free from bondage; your spiritual debt to the Lord has been paid; you are living in "the acceptable year of the LORD" (Isa. 61:2 KJV; also quoted in Luke 4:19 KJV). Instead of the ashes of mourning, you have a crown on your head (Isa. 61:3); for He has made you a king (Rev. 1:6 KJV). You have been anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit, and you wear a garment of righteousness (Isa. 61:3).

Something to Ponder - In what ways do you demonstrate your freedom from bondage or release from spiritual debt? (See context in [Pause for Power](#))



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Wiersbe notes on Isaiah 61 has the following related to Jubilee...

### The beginning of a new life (Isa. 61:1–11)

The Lord speaks (Isa. 61:1–9). Jesus quoted from this passage when He spoke in the synagogue in Nazareth, and He applied this Scripture to Himself (Luke 4:16–21). (Note that Isa. 61:1 names the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.) However, He did not quote, “And the day of vengeance of our God” from verse 2 because that day is yet to come (Isa 34:8; 35:4; 63:4).

**The background of this passage is the “Year of Jubilee” described in Leviticus 25:7ff.** Every seven years, the Jews were to observe a “sabbatical year” and allow the land to rest. After seven sabbaticals, or forty-nine years, they were to celebrate the fiftieth year as the “Year of Jubilee.” During that year, all debts were canceled, all land was returned to the original owners, the slaves were freed, and everybody was given a fresh new beginning. This was the Lord’s way of balancing the economy and keeping the rich from exploiting the poor.

**If you have trusted Christ as your Savior, you are living today in a spiritual “Year of Jubilee.” You have been set free from bondage; your spiritual debt to the Lord has been paid; you are living in “the acceptable year of the Lord.” Instead of the ashes of mourning, you have a crown on your head; for He has made you a king (Rev. 1:6). You have been anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit, and you wear a garment of righteousness (Isa. 61:3, 10).**

In her days of rebellion, Israel was like a fading oak and a waterless garden (1:30); but in the kingdom, she will be like a watered garden (58:11) and a tree (oak) of righteousness (61:3). But all of God’s people should be His trees (Ps. 1:1–3), “the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified” (Isa. 61:3).

**In their kingdom “Year of Jubilee,” the Jewish people will rebuild, repair, and restore their land; and the Gentiles will shepherd Israel’s flocks and herds and tend to their crops. Instead of being farmers and shepherds, the Jews will be priests and ministers!** God will acknowledge them as His firstborn (Ex. 4:22) and give them a double portion of His blessing (Isa. 61:7; Deut. 21:17).

The “everlasting covenant” of Isaiah 61:8 is described in Jeremiah 31:31–37 and includes the blessings of the New Covenant that Jesus Christ instituted by His death (Heb. 10:1–18; Matt. 26:28). Note that Isaiah 61:9 speaks of the Jews’ “descendants.” Those who enter into the millennial kingdom will marry, have families, and enjoy God’s blessings on the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1–5). They will study God’s Word from generation to generation (Isa. 59:21).

The prophet speaks (Isa. 61:10–11). Isaiah is speaking on behalf of the remnant who are praising God for all He has done. They rejoice that He has cleansed them and clothed them and turned their desert into a fruitful garden (55:10). They have gone from a funeral to a wedding! (See context in [Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

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### Warren Wiersbe on Leviticus 25

**Resources.** The **Sabbatical Year** (vv. 1–7) and the **Year of Jubilee** (vv. 8–55; jubal means “to blow a trumpet”) were based on two propositions: “The land is Mine” (v. 23), and “The children of Israel are My servants” (vv. 42; 55). God owns the land; we are stewards of what He has shared with us. We must use His resources wisely for His glory, for one day we must give an account of our stewardship (Luke 16:1ff.).

**Rest.** There was also an ecological purpose behind these laws, for obedience to them would grant rest to the land, to the beasts who helped work the land, and to the people. Along with the weekly Sabbath, the two events reminded Israel that rest and work go together and that people and God-given resources must not be exploited.

**Riches.** There was an economic purpose, for God had a concern for the poor and afflicted (vv. 25, 35, 39, 47). Had Israel obeyed the law of the Year of Jubilee, it would have helped to balance the economy, and the rich would have had difficulty exploiting the poor.

**Responsibility.** But the overriding purpose was spiritual, a reminder that Jehovah was Lord of both the land and the people, and that Israel had the responsibility to trust Him for everything. They could not sow during either the forty-ninth or fiftieth year but had to wait for the harvest of the fifty-first year. That would take faith (vv. 18–22)!

**Redemption.** Jesus used the Year of Jubilee to picture salvation (Luke 4:16–21). Today He offers rest and freedom to all who will trust Him. We are living now in the Year of Jubilee. (See context in [With the Word: The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook](#))

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Isaiah 61:2 - While the name Jubilee is not found, the concept is found and this was applied by Jesus in his first public sermon in His home town...

Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes...

The fourth passage (THAT DEALS WITH JUBILEE IN THE OT) gives the **messianic implication of the Law of the Year of Jubilee**: to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.

In the Mosaic Law, the Year of Jubilee was a year of favor, a year of special grace. Part of the Messiah's mission was to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor. This was part of the message of the First Coming. This is stated to be such in Luke 4:17-19, which quotes this passage. What Yeshua declared was the year of Jehovah's favor, that the blessings of the **Year of Jubilee were being fulfilled in His messianic mission**.

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### Leviticus 25:8-24 TODAY IN THE WORD

According to The Wall Street Journal, tax amnesty programs in New Jersey and Rhode Island earlier this year allowed thousands of delinquent taxpayers to settle their accounts with Uncle Sam. New Jersey's program was especially successful. The state not only allowed businesses and individuals to pay late taxes without prosecution, but also waived all penalties and interest on the delinquent taxes.

It's evident that many people couldn't pass up the chance to set things straight with "the powers that be." Amnesty programs are successful because it makes us feel good to get things back to their rightful owners, whether it's overdue taxes or that tool we borrowed from our neighbor and never returned.

God established an amnesty program of His own for ancient Israel. It was called the "Year of Jubilee," and it went into effect every fifty years. The purpose of Jubilee is spelled out very clearly in our text. Its purpose was to "proclaim liberty" (Leviticus 25:10) throughout Israel by the return of all land and slaves to the family from which they had been purchased.

By voiding all such transactions after a reasonable period, the Lord was making several powerful points to His people. First, He was teaching them that no Hebrew should be in permanent servitude to another, and no family in Israel should be left destitute by being forced to sell land to pay debts.

But the primary lesson of Jubilee is theological. This festival was a pointed reminder that God retained first rights of ownership on His people and the land (Leviticus 25:23). Each family's plot of ground in Canaan was "on loan" from the Lord, and they were not free to do absolutely anything they wanted with it.

### TODAY ALONG THE WAY

To the world's way of thinking, a provision such as Jubilee seems radical and unreal. But it's the world that needs a reality check, not God.

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### The Times of Restitution - Robert Neighbour

"Whom the Heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of His holy Prophets" (Acts 3:21)

What a wealth of research is suggested in these words for us. A matter which is spoken of not once, nor twice, but something which is frequently set forth by all the holy Prophets. The testimony of these Prophets is before us. Are we too lazy or too indifferent to seek out their revelation of the times of restitution?

1. What a blessed name for the days which shall follow Christ's return. The times of restitution of all things — that is, everything lost will be restored.

Let us begin in the Garden of Eden. Let us study, for awhile, the glory of those days. As we consider Adam environed in a nature gone wild with joy, and nature untouched by sin; as we study marriage as God gave it, as Adam and Eve knew it, we ask, "Will Edenic conditions be restored?"

Let us go to the testimony of the Prophets. What do they say? Enough to make you shout and sing for joy! They tell us that this travailing earth, brought under bondage by the sin of man, shall laugh and sing under the liberty of the children of God.

2. Is it right to linger long upon the accounts of our losses to emphasize the blight of sin?

The Word of God and the pages of history both alike tell the story of the wreckage that is all about us.

The Word tells us something else, it tells how man has tried to regain the paradise he lost, to re-estate himself in his former glory. Side by side with man's sin and loss, the Word records man's effort to restore his loss. Early accounts of this titanic task are written in Genesis 4:16-24. How was the fall with the loss of Eden offset? By the building of a city; by the making of harps and organs, by artificers in brass and iron.



Yet, man has failed. He has sought out many inventions and tried in every way to bring Eden back again, but all is of no avail. Man's pathway is strewn with wreckage. The weird wail of broken hearts, the maddened cry of spoiled hopes fill the air. Haste Thou then the times of Thy return, O Lord; for then will be the times of the restitution of all things.

3. What restitution will mean. When Christ returns the poor and the needy will come into their own; the blind eyes will be opened; the ears of the deaf will be unstopped; the lame will leap as an hart.

### **The year of jubilee is the type of that day of restitution.**

The fiftieth year, jubilee, was marked by restitution. What did God say: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

"A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of the vine undressed.

"For it is the jubilee, it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field" (Lev. 25:10-12).

Thus we may anticipate another day — the day of the Lord's reign when God will restore all things.

1. He will restore the preserved of Israel (see Isa. 49:6).

2. He will restore health to Israel (see Jer. 30:17).

3. He will restore all things (see Matt. 17:11).

May God hasten the day of this blessed Times of Restitution

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### **A VACATION WITH GOD**

Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan.

LEVITICUS 25:10

A common complaint today is that people are too busy. Too busy to sleep, too busy to relate to others, too busy to enjoy life. And all this "too busyness" produces tired, stressed-out people who are hobbled in their ability to enjoy the presence of God.

The year of jubilee was a time to get off the hamster wheel of moneymaking and trust in God's provision. It was a time to relax and let life flow back into the mold God had made for it. Longer than a Sabbath, longer even than a religious festival, jubilee was an extended period in which God's people were given the opportunity to gaze on the face of God until that face became clear, in all its loveliness, through the haze of everyday concerns.

Oh, what freedom! Who among us could not benefit from an extended period in which to put down our tools and spend our time gazing on God?

Our own jubilee experiences can be times when worship goes from being an interlude to being the permanent cast of our nature. It is in these times that we can learn what it means to keep in step with the Spirit and pray without ceasing.

You don't need to wait for an extended period of time to experience jubilee. Make a point to schedule a time of "mini-jubilee" today.

### **PRAYER**

Lord, please meet me ...

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### **Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow!**

1 Blow ye the trumpet, blow!

The gladly solemn sound;

Let all the nations know,

To earth's remotest bound,

**The year of jubilee is come;**

Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

2 Exalt the Lamb of God

The sin atoning Lamb!

Redemption by his blood,

Through every land, proclaim;

**The year of jubilee is come;**

Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

3 Ye slaves of sin and hell!  
Your liberty receive,  
And safe in Jesus dwell,  
And blest in Jesus live:  
**The year of jubilee is come;**  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

4 The gospel trumpet hear,  
The news of pardoning grace:  
Ye happy souls, draw near;  
Behold your Saviour's face:  
**The year of jubilee is come;**  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

5 Jesus, our great High Priest,  
Has full atonement made;  
Ye weary spirits rest;  
Ye mourning souls, be glad:  
**The year of jubilee is come;**  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home

Charles Wesley, 1750

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### C H Spurgeon on Jubilee

I have now an interesting feat to tell you, and I am sure you will think it worth mentioning. Turn to Leviticus 25:9, and you will read: "Then shall you cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall you make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." So that one of the effects of the atonement was set forth to us in the fact that when the year of jubilee came, it was not on the first day of the year that it was proclaimed, but "on the tenth day of the seventh month." Ay, methinks, that was the best part of it. The scapegoat is gone, and the sins are gone; and no sooner are they gone than the silver trumpet sounds,

"The year of jubilee is come,  
Return, you ransomed sinners, home."

On that day sinners go free; on that day our poor mortgaged lands are liberated, and our poor estates which have been forfeited by our spiritual bankruptcy are all returned to us. So when Jesus dies, slaves win their liberty, and lost ones receive spiritual life again; when he dies, heaven, the long lost inheritance is ours. Blessed day! Atonement and jubilee ought to go together. Have you ever had a jubilee, my friends, in your hearts? If you have not, I can tell you it is because you have not had a day of atonement.

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### Liberty Throughout the Land

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family" (Lev. 25:10).

This verse is especially significant in American history as the verse from which the great exhortation was taken on the first Independence Day: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof!" It has ever since been associated with the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, as Americans each year thank God for "the land of the free."

The verse is also significant as containing the first mention of "liberty" in the Bible. In its biblical context, it established the "jubilee year," when all those Israelites who had sold themselves into bondage were set at liberty. The founding fathers of our nation evidently believed there was a parallel between freedom from bondage to the king of England and freedom from bondage in ancient Israel.

There is even a greater freedom than this. Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:34-36). "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?...But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:16-22).

There is always a danger that a free country will someday allow itself to be brought again into bondage, and also a danger that a

believer will fall back into sin. To both, God would say, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). (Henry Morris)

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**Illustration of Jubilee - Robert Morgan** - Recently I spent the afternoon over at Fisk University studying the history of the Negro Spiritual. Fisk University opened its doors in 1866, at the close of the Civil War. It was one of the schools established for liberated slaves by the American Missionary Association. As students and professors arrived on campus, they found themselves living in abandoned Union army hospital barracks built on the site of old slave pens. Among the arriving professors was a New York Yankee, a white man named White. As music instructor, George White became intrigued by the old plantation melodies and slave songs he overheard in the dorms and among the students between classes. White had trouble coaxing his students to sing him those songs; it seemed a particularly private type of hand-me-down music. There were no written scores or words—just plaintive strains passed voice to voice between the generations.

Within a few years, the old buildings at Fisk started rotting. The university found itself in crisis, without even money to buy food for its 400 students. The Missionary Association decided to close the school. When White approached the trustees suggesting a series of fund-raising concerts, the board refused. White gave it a try anyway. "I'm depending on God, not you," he told the board. Selecting nine students (most of them former slaves), White and his wife sold their jewelry and personal belongings to finance the first tour.

On October 6, 1871, the singers boarded a train in Nashville for the Midwest. It was a hard trip, and at times the young people had to relinquish their seats to white folks. Other times they were evicted from trains or hotels. Sometimes the little group, braving threats, insults, obscenities, and indignities, sang in nearly empty halls and churches.

George White agonized about naming his group; but one day, after spending much of the night in prayer, he found the answer. They would be the Jubilee Singers, the biblical year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25 being a day of liberation for slaves.

The tide turned during the Christmas season that year when the Jubilee Singers gave a performance at the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, New York. The pastor was Henry Ward Beecher. When it was finished, Rev. Beecher, deeply moved, stood and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to do what I want every person in this house to do." He turned his pockets inside out, giving all the money he had on his person that night to the Jubilee Singers. Others followed suit, and that night the offering was \$1300! Newspapers picked up the story, and soon the Jubilee Singers had engagements around the world. That was the birth of the Negro Spiritual as a popular form of music. They were songs of slaves yearning to be free.

As I studied all this, I realized how greatly needful it is for us to be free, and how tragic and horrible to be enslaved. Yet when we look at the Lord Jesus, we see someone who operated in reverse of those desires. He was willing to become a servant, to be a slave. He took the form of a bondservant.

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### **C H Spurgeon on the Year of Jubilee and its Relation to Isaiah 61:1-2**

I. Jesus, in the first place, proclaims THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD. Take the expression to pieces and it comes to this—the year of the Lord, and the year of acceptance.

Now, what was the year of the Lord? There can be, I think, very little question that this relates to the jubilee year. Every seventh year was the Lord's year, and it was to be a sabbath of rest to the land; but the seventh seventh year, the fiftieth year, which the Lord reserved unto Himself, was in a very marked and especial sense the year of the Lord. Now, our Lord Jesus has come to proclaim a period of jubilee to the true seed of Israel. The seed of Abraham now are not the seed according to the law, but those who are born after the promise. There are privileges reserved for Israel after the flesh, which they will yet receive in the day when they shall acknowledge Christ to be the Messiah; but every great blessing which was promised to Abraham's seed after the flesh is now virtually promised to Israel after the Spirit, to those who by faith are the children of believing Abraham.

Now, beloved, to all who believe, our Lord Jesus proclaims a year of jubilee. Let us dwell upon the four privileges of the jubilee, and accept with delight the proclamation which our Lord has made.

In the year of jubilee, as we read in the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus, there was a release of all persons who had sold themselves for servants. Pinched by great poverty, and unable to meet their debts, it sometimes happened that men were compelled to say to their creditor, "Take us and our wives and children, and accept our services instead of money. We have no goods or chattels, and our land has been mortgaged long ago, but here we are; we cannot pay in any other way—give us food and raiment and lodging, and we will put ourselves under apprenticeship to you." The law of Moses ordained that such persons were not to be treated harshly, nor regarded as slaves, but as hired servants, but still it must have been an unpleasant condition of servitude for a freeborn

Israelite. How happy then was the morning when the jubilee trumpet sounded, and the generous law came into operation which said, "He shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee, but then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him." From that moment he owed no more service, however great his debt might have been; he looked upon his wife and children and rejoiced that they were all his own and all free from the yoke, so that they could at once return to the possession of their fathers, all live in the cottage in which they formerly dwelt, and enjoy the piece of land which they formerly called their own. Liberty, that gladsome sound, liberty had come to them; no matter that they had long been under obligations to the creditor, those obligations ceased on the sound of the sacred trumpet. Beloved souls now present, proclamation is made to you in the Lord's name that if you are under bondage to sin and to sinful habits, there is liberty for you; faith in Jesus will set you free. If you are in bondage under justice and the broken law there is deliverance. If you are under bondage through fear of death, or from the rage of Satan, our divine Lord and Master has come into the world on purpose to break these bonds in sunder, and to proclaim liberty to the captives. Ye need be bound no longer; if ye believe in Jesus ye are bound no longer, but ye are set free from all the bondage of the law, from the slavery of Satan and from the dread of death. Take the liberty which the great Lord freely presents to you, and be no longer slaves. Jesus has brought in redemption and finished atonement, and believers are free; come and rejoice therein.

The next jubilee blessing was the redemption of alienated possessions. Every man had his own plot of ground in the Holy Land, but through the pressure of the times it sometimes happened that a man alienated his property: he was in need of ready money, his children wanted bread to eat, and he, therefore, parted with his land. It was gone: the vines and the figtrees, the corn and the oil, passed over to another; but it was not gone forever, he had no power to sell beyond the year of jubilee. When this joyful morning dawned he went back to his family estate; it was all his own again, clear of all encumbrances; the little homestead, and the farmyard, and the fields, and the garden, all had come back to him, and none could dispute his right. Just so my Lord and Master declares to all who believe in Him that the estate which Adam forfeited is restored to all for whom the Second Adam died. The alienated heritage is our own again. The great Father's love, and favor, and care, yea, all things, whether things present or things to come, or life or death, all are ours, and we are Christ's and Christ is God's. If we are believers, and we are of the true seed of Israel, this day the Lord Jesus proclaims to us a restoration of all the lost privileges and blessings which originally belonged to manhood. Behold, believers, all covenant blessings are yours, rejoice in them! Partake of heavenly blessings freely. Let your soul rejoice in its portion, and delight itself in fatness.

It followed, also, as a third blessing of the year of the Lord that all debts were discharged. The man who had sold himself had, as it were, made a composition of his debts by the sale of himself, and this implied a full and final discharge at the jubilee. The person also who had mortgaged his land up to the jubilee year had discharged his debts thereby, and when the man received back himself and his property, no further liability rested upon him, he was cleared of all charges. The jubilee did not give the man back himself and his land under a reserve, but unreservedly. If debt had still been due the release would have been a mere farce, since he would have had to mortgage his land and sell himself again directly to meet the demand. No, there was a full discharge, a canceling of all debts, a removal of all encumbrances upon the man and upon his estate, and he was free. What a joy this must have been! He who is in debt is in danger; a honest man sleeps on a hard bed till he has paid what he owes. He who is immersed in debt is plunged in misery, driven to his wits' end, not knowing what to do. Happy is he that is delivered from debt once for all. Now behold, O believers in Jesus, your debts before the Lord are all discharged, the handwriting that was against you is nailed to the cross, receipted in the crimson lines of Jesus' precious blood. Being justified by faith ye are clear before the sight of the Eternal; none can lay anything to your charge. What joyful notes are these! Jesus makes the proclamation, who will not believe it and be glad?

A fourth blessing of the jubilee trumpet was rest. They had their lands, but they were not to till them for a year. No more the spade and the plow, the sickle and the flail—they were to put away instruments of labor, and rest for twelve months. Think of a whole year of perfect repose, wherein they might worship and adore God all the week round, make every day a holy festival, and the whole year a Sabbath of Sabbaths unto the Most High. Brethren, the Israelites had no small privileges under the ceremonial covenant, if they had lived up to it, but they failed to do so, for it has sometimes been questioned whether they ever kept a jubilee at all, and whether the Sabbatic year was ever once observed. If they had obeyed the Lord they would have been favored indeed: for in the matter of holidays and quiet resting times they were favored above all people. Think of one year in seven of absolute cessation from toil. What repose for them! And then they had also the year after the seventh seven, so that every man who reached the fiftieth year enjoyed two consecutive years of absolute rest from all labor, and yet knew no want, for the ground brought forth plentifully, and every man helped himself. Those who had land had a good store to last them through three years, and those who had none were fed by the spontaneous produce of the soil. We live not under such laws, and if we did I am afraid we should not have the faith to trust in the Lord and avail ourselves of the divinely appointed holiday. But, beloved, we rest spiritually. He that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has entered into rest. Now no more does he strive to work out a righteousness of his own, for he has already a divine one, and needs no other. It is his pleasure to worship God, but he no longer trembles beneath His wrath; it is his delight to do His commandments, but he toils and frets no longer as a slave under the law; he has become a free man, and a beloved child, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps his heart and mind. Being justified by faith he has peace with God, and enjoys his influences of the divine Comforter whose indwelling gives rest to the soul.

The jubilee year, according to our text, was called “the year of the Lord”; and the reason for all the four jubilee blessings was found in the Lord. First, the servants were set free because God said, “they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt” (Lev. 25:42). Ah, poor burdened soul, if thou believest in Christ thou shalt go free, for thou art the Lord’s own—His chosen, His redeemed, and therefore He claims thee, and will suffer no other lord to have dominion over thee. The devil seeks to lay an embargo upon thee, and hold thee a slave, but Jesus saith, “Let go my captives, for I have redeemed them with my blood.” Jesus claims you, O penitent souls; He cries to sin as once the Lord said to Pharaoh, “Thus saith the Lord, let my people go.” Jesus says of each repenting soul, “Loose him and let him go, for he is mine. My Father gave him to me—he is my chosen, my beloved. Neither sin nor Satan, nor death nor hell, shall hold him, for he is mine.”

The land also was set free for this same reason, for concerning it the Lord said, “The land is Mine” (Lev. 25:23). The freehold of the land was vested in Jehovah Himself, consequently He ordained that no man should hold any portion of it by right of purchase beyond the fiftieth year, for the land was entailed and must go back to those for whom He had appointed it at the jubilee year. So the blessings of the everlasting covenant are God’s and therefore He appoints them unto you poor believing sinners, and you shall have them, for the divine decree shall not be frustrated. As surely as He appointed Christ to reign, and placed Him on the throne, so does He appoint you to reign with Him, and you shall sit upon His throne though all the devils in hell should say you nay.

So, too, the debts were all discharged, because on the day before the jubilee the great atonement had swept away all transgression and indebtedness towards God, and He would have His people forgive all the debts of their fellow men. All things are the Lord’s and He exercised His crown rights on the day of jubilee so far as to declare all debts discharged. “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” was the motto of the jubilee, and sufficient reason for the canceling of obligations between man and man.

As for rest, that came also, because it was God’s year, and was hallowed unto the Lord. “A jubilee shall the fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.” During man’s years the earth brings forth thorns and thistles, and man must earn his bread, with the sweat of his face; but when God’s year comes then the wilderness and the solitary place are glad, and the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. When the Lord’s own kingdom cometh then shall the earth yield her increase as she has never done before. My beloved, I trust you know the blessedness of living in God’s year, for you live by faith upon His providence, casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. This is the Sabbath of the soul, the counterpart of heaven. You behold the work of atonement fully accomplished on your behalf, and know yourselves to be delivered from all your liabilities to the law, and therefore your heart leaps within you. You are clean, delivered, set free, washed in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore do you come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon your heads.

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**F. Whitfield** They shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel Zech. 4:10

It is joy to the Christian to know that the plummet is now in the hands of our great Zerubbabel, and that when He comes forth, the world’s misrule shall be over. The false standards and false estimates of men shall be swept away. The standards of “expediency,” of “conscience,” of “every man thinking as he likes, if he is only sincere”—these, and all similar refuges of lies shall be like a spider’s web. The measure of all things will be Christ, and Christ the Measurer of all things. How everything will be reversed! What a turning upside down of all that now exists! Blessed day, and longed for—the world’s great jubilee, the earth’s long-looked-for Sabbath, groaning creation’s joy, and nature’s calm repose! Who would not cry, “Come, Lord Jesus, and end this troubled dream! Shatter the shadows of the long, dark night of sin and sorrow, sighing and tears, despair and death!”

**Leviticus 25:11 'You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in from its untrimmed vines.**

- Lev 27:17
- shall : Lev 25:5-7

NLT - Yes, the fiftieth year will be a jubilee for you. During that year, do not plant any seeds or store away any of the crops that grow naturally, and do not process the grapes that grow on your unpruned vines.

**You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in from its untrimmed vines** - Let the land rest.

**Harrison** has an interesting note - We don't know for a fact that the Year of Jubilee was ever actually observed. "Just how widely the concept of the jubilee year was observed through the history of the Israelites is difficult to state for lack of direct evidence." (Harrison)

**Leviticus 25:12 'For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field.'**

- Lev 25:6,7

NLT - It will be a jubilee year for you, and you must observe it as a special and holy time. You may, however, eat the produce that grows naturally in the fields that year.

**'For it is a jubilee It shall be holy to you** - In other words you are to treat it as set apart to the Lord.

**You shall eat** - Do not fret. The Lord will provide for your needs. Every generation needs to hear and heed these words "You shall eat!"

**Leviticus 25:13 'On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property.'**

- Lev 25:10 27:17-24 Nu 36:4

## RELEASE OF THE PROPERTY

**On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property** - NLT "In the Year of Jubilee each of you must return to the lands that belonged to your ancestors."

**Ryrie** on Lev 25:13-17 Buying and selling land was to be carried on equitably, with due regard to how near the year of jubilee was, when the land would have to be returned to its original owner.

**Guzik** - When Israel came into the Promised Land, the land was allotted according to tribes and families. These initial tracts of land would be the permanent possession of those families, and therefore land in Israel could never really be "sold" - it could only be leased, and the amount of the lease would be based on how many years there were left until the Jubilee. This assured that no family would be permanently prevented from having land. Every fifty years, every family would have the opportunity to start again. ([Study Guide for Leviticus 25](#))

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Restoration.** "Ye shall return every man into his possession" (Lev 25:13). All that was lost through failure and sin was restored through the jubilee Gospel. All that was lost in Adam is restored in Christ, and the glorious Gospel of the blessed God declares it. Made nigh by the Blood of Christ. Poor Mephibosheth heard such a Gospel and enjoyed such a restoration (2 Sam. 9). He restoreth my soul. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

**Spurgeon** - YOU remember, when Christ died, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. There was not a little slit for little sinners to creep through, but it was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, so that big sinners might come, just in the same way as when Samson pulled up gates, posts, bar, and all, there was a clear way out into the country for all who were locked up in the town. Prisoner, the prison doors are open. Captive, loose the bonds on thy neck; be free! I sound the trump of jubilee. Bond-slaves, Christ hath redeemed you.

O'ER the gloomy hills of darkness,  
Look, my soul, be still and gaze;  
All the promises do travail  
With a glorious day of grace:  
Blessèd jubilee,  
Let thy glorious morning dawn!

**Leviticus 25:14 'If you make a sale, moreover, to your friend or buy from your friend's hand, you shall not wrong one another.'**

- Lev 25:17 19:13 De 16:19,20 Jud 4:3 1Sa 12:3,4 2Ch 16:10 Ne 9:36,37 Job 20:19,20 Ps 10:18 Pr 14:31 21:13 22:16 28:3,8,16 Ec 5:8 Isa 1:17 3:12-15 5:7 33:15 58:6 Jer 22:17 Eze 22:7,12,13 Am 5:11,12 8:4-7 Mic 2:2,3 6:10-12 7:3 Lu 3:14 1Co 6:8 Jas 5:1-5

NLT - "When you make an agreement with a neighbor to buy or sell property, you must never take advantage of each other.

This principle is echoed throughout the Pentateuch...

Deuteronomy 16:19; 20 "You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. Justice, [and only] justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

**Leviticus 25:15 'Corresponding to the number of years after the jubilee, you shall buy from your friend; he is to sell to you according to the number of years of crops.**

- Lev 27:18-23 Php 4:5

NLT When you buy land from your neighbor, the price of the land should be based on the number of years since the last jubilee.

### **The Jubilee and the Land** **Leviticus 25:15–28.**

**NET NOTE** - The purchaser is actually buying only the crops that the land will produce until the next jubilee, since the land will revert to the original owner at that time. The purchaser, therefore, is not actually buying the land itself.

**Leviticus 25:16 'In proportion to the extent of the years you shall increase its price, and in proportion to the fewness of the years you shall diminish its price, for it is a number of crops he is selling to you.**

NLT The more the years, the higher the price; the fewer the years, the lower the price. After all, the person selling the land is actually selling you a certain number of harvests.

**Leviticus 25:17 'So you shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God.**

- **shall not:** Lev 25:14
- **fear:** Lev 25:43 19:14,32 Ge 20:11 22:12 39:9 42:18 Ex 20:20 De 25:18 1Sa 12:24 2Ch 19:7 Ne 5:9,15 Ps 19:9 Pr 1:7 Jer 22:16 Mal 3:5 Lu 12:5 Ac 9:31 10:2,35 Ro 3:18 11:20

NLT Show your fear of God by not taking advantage of each other. I, the LORD, am your God.

**So you shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God-** Fear of God motivates right treatment of His creation and our fellow creatures!

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Brotherly love.** "Ye shall not oppress one another, but fear the Lord thy God " (Lev 25:17). By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another. We must love unworthy ones as we unworthy ones have been loved, and forgive as we have been forgiven. The forgiven servant who took his fellow-worker by the throat was evidently courageous enough to deal with him face to face, but he was utterly destitute of the grace and compassion of his master (Matt. 18:28). Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Freely ye have received, freely give. Be ye imitators of God as dear children (Eph. 5:1).

**C H Spurgeon** - The Jews could overreach each other by selling the lease of their lands for forty-nine years, whereas the seven seventh years were not "years of the fruits" but Sabbatic years, and therefore the Lord enacts that the sabbatic years shall not count in the estimate. In our buying and selling let us be scrupulously just, lest we provoke the Lord.

**Leviticus 25:18 'You shall thus observe My statutes and keep My judgments, so as to carry them out, that you may live securely on the land.**



- Wherefore (KJV): Lev 19:37 Ps 103:18
- and ye (KJV): Lev 26:3-12 Dt 12:10 28:1-14 33:12,28 Ps 4:8 Pr 1:33 Jer 7:3-7 Jer 23:6 25:5 33:16 Eze 33:24-26,29 34:25-28 36:24-28

#### Related Passages:

Lev 18:4-5 — You shall **do** My ordinances and **keep** My statutes and **walk** in them. I am the Lord your God. 5 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My ordinances which, if a man does, he shall live by them. I am the Lord.

Lev 18:26 — So you shall **keep** My statutes and My ordinances and shall not commit any of these abominations, neither the native-born nor any stranger who sojourns among you,

Lev 19:37 — You shall **observe** all My statutes and ordinances and do them. I am the Lord.

Lev 20:8 — And you shall keep My statutes and do them. I am the Lord Who sanctifies you.

Lev 20:22 — You shall therefore **keep** all My statutes and all My ordinances and **do** them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out [as it did those before you].

Lev 26:3-5 — If you **walk** in My statutes and **keep** My commandments and do them, 4 I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase and the trees of the field yield their fruit. 5 And your threshing [time] shall reach to the vintage and the vintage [time] shall reach to the sowing time, and you shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land securely.

NLT "If you want to live securely in the land, keep my laws and obey my regulations.

### HEED THE WORD AND BE BLESSED

**Observe My statutes and keep My judgments** - The idea of **observe** is to do them or carry them out. In other words don't just be hearers of His Word but doers (a timeless principle - James 1:22-[note](#)). Observe with care or pay close attention to. Conform your actions or practice to God's statutes. The more we "observe" the Word, the better we will understand the Word (cp John 7:17). The idea of **keep** ([shamar](#) - guard, keep watch over) is more along the line of to watch over the judgments, to preserve them, to guard them and the [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) translates [shamar](#) with the Greek "military verb" [phulasso](#) meaning to guard, protect, watch over, and in essence carry out the duties of a military sentinel (so to speak). This implies not so much that God's Words can be stolen as that they be can be watered down, perverted, misinterpreted, etc (cp liberal theologians, so-called "higher criticism," emphasis on symbolic interpretation over literal interpretation, etc). They needed to protect the integrity of the **judgments** of the Lord which are true and are righteous altogether (Ps 19:9). Believers have the same need today to be doers of and watchers over the Word.

**To carry them out** - This is the same Hebrew verb (*asah*) as used for observe. Again the emphasis is not on hearing but on heeding. To obey is always better than sacrifice. It is easy to read, but more difficult to heed! In short, doing the Word is tantamount to obedience which is always God's gateway to His blessing, in this case the blessing of **security on the land**. This same principle applies to us today. If we think we can disobey willfully and expect to be blessed with the security and protection of God, we are naive, deceived and greatly mistaken!

**Securely (security)** ([0983](#))([betach](#) from **batach** = to trust) means security, confidence (belief that one is safe and secure - Isa 32:17, Job 24:23, Mic 2:8). In its first occurrence betach emphasizes the status of a city which was certain of not being attacked (Ge 34:25). All three uses in Psalms speak of God enabling us to dwell securely (Ps. 4:8; 16:9; 78:53)

**Betach** is frequently coupled with **yashab** (to dwell) conveying the idea to **dwell in safety**. See Lev 25:18, 19, 26:5, Dt 12:10, Jdg 18:7, 1Sa 12:11, 1Ki 4:25, Ps 4:8, Pr 3:29, Isa 47:8, Jer 32:37, Jer 49:31, Ezek 28:26, Ezek 34:25, Ezek 34:28, Ezek 38:8, Ezek 38:11, Ezek 38:14, Ezek 39:6, 39:26 Zep 2:15 Zec 14:11

**Stephen Bramer** - The idea of living securely or safely in the land involves the use of this noun in an adverbial construction. It is commonly used with the verb *ysb* ("dwell") as it is here. Security was promised to those who were rightly related and in fellowship with the LORD (here; Ps. 16:9). This security was part of the national promise that Jeremiah reiterated for the future (Jer. 23:6). It is also used in other places to contrast the futility of trusting in anyone or anything besides the LORD (e.g., Judg. 18:7; Isa. 47:8; Ezek. 30:9). (Bible Knowledge Key Word Study)

**Leviticus 25:19 'Then the land will yield its produce, so that you can eat your fill and live securely on it.**

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NLT Then the land will yield bumper crops, and you will eat your fill and live securely in it.

- Lev 26:5 Ps 67:6 85:12 Isa 30:23 65:21,22 Eze 34:25-28 36:30 Joe 2:24,26

Related Passages:

Deut 30:19-30+ "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the **blessing** and the **curse**. So **choose life in order that you may live**, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by **obeying** His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, **that you may live in the land** which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

## MORE BLESSINGS OF OBEDIENCE

**Then the land will yield its produce, so that you can eat your fill and live securely on it** As discussed in Lev 25:18, obedience brings blessing. In the previous passage God promised protection on the land and here He promises produce from the land. Notice also that again He uses the Hebrew word [betach](#) which places emphasis on obedience and security. Israel failed to grasp and/or truly believe this principle and repeatedly failed to keep the Sabbaths for the land. And guess what happened. They sowed seeds of disobedience and reaped the bitter fruit of being torn from the land by the Assyrians in 722BC and the Babylonians in 586BC. Even in these two passages (Lev 25:18, 19) God had set before them life and blessing but they rebelled and reaped death and cursing. Our flesh is foul and flies from God and to the lusts of the world. Israel's disobedience was a picture of my flesh and your flesh dear reader. Enabled by the Spirit of God we need to observe and keep God's Word if we desire to "live securely in the land" (so to speak)! Are you experiencing the disciplining hand of the Lord? Are you surprised? Or do you see that your sowing to the flesh reaped only corruption and not true life as God meant for you to experience?

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Plenty.** "Ye shall eat your fill, and dwell in safety" (Lev 25:19). What a Gospel! Made safe in the place of plenty. Lying down in green pastures. The unsearchable riches of Christ is our holy land of promise. Into this fulness By His grace, we who believe have been brought. All are-yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Be careful for nothing. Take the water of life freely.

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**Leviticus 25:20 'But if you say, "What are we going to eat on the seventh year if we do not sow or gather in our crops?"**

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NLT But you might ask, 'What will we eat during the seventh year, since we are not allowed to plant or harvest crops that year?'

- Nu 11:4,13 2Ki 6:15-17 7:2 2Ch 25:9 Ps 78:19,20 Isa 1:2 Mt 6:25-34 8:26 Lu 12:29 Php 4:6 Heb 13:5,6

**But if you say, "What are we going to eat on the seventh year if we do not sow or gather in our crops?"**- This is a natural question which leads to a supernatural answer.

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**Leviticus 25:21 then I will so order My blessing for you in the sixth year that it will bring forth the crop for three years.**

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- I will (KJV): As it is here graciously promised, that the sixth year was to bring forth fruits for three years, not merely for two, it is evident that both the sabbatical year and the year of jubilee were distinctly provided for. They were not to sow from the sixth to the eighth year, omitting two seed times; nor reap from the sixth to the ninth, omitting two harvests. No legislator, unless conscious of being divinely commissioned, would have committed himself by enacting such a law as this; nor would any people have submitted to receive it, except in consequence of the fullest conviction that a divine authority had dictated it. It therefore stands as a proof that Moses acted by the express direction of the Almighty, and that the people were fully persuaded of the reality of his divine mission by the miracles he wrought. Ge 26:12 41:47 Ex 16:29 De 28:3,8 Ps 133:3 Pr 10:22 2Co 9:10
- three years (KJV): Lev 25:4,8-11

NLT The answer is, 'I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so the land will produce a bumper crop, enough to support you for three years.

## GOD'S BOUNTIFUL BLESSING

**then I will so order My blessing for you in the sixth year that it will bring forth the crop for three years.** While this verse answers the specific question Lev 25:20, God's blessing is still contingent upon Israel's obedience described in Lev 25:18,19.

**Guzik** - God promised that if Israel obeyed Him, He would provide so much on the sixth year, that they will not only be supplied for the seventh year when they give the land rest, but they will also be eating the produce of the sixth year some three years later. If we obey God - even when it doesn't make sense - we can trust He will provide our every need. If we seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, all those practical things will be added unto us! (Matthew 6:33) ([Study Guide for Leviticus 25](#))

**Blessing** (01293) (**berakah** from **barak**) is a feminine noun referring to something that brings prosperity and life. It designates the good favor bestowed on someone as by giving a gift (Ge 33:11, 1 Sa 25:27) or by giving words of blessing (Ge 27:36, 49:28), which were a verbal picture of tangible blessing. Berakah most often describes divine favor bestowed on the righteous (Ge 12:2, Mal 3:10).

**Berakah** - This is the only use in Leviticus of the noun berakah (01293) ("blessing"). It comes from the verb brk, which means to "kneel, bless" [BDB, 138]. The verb is used twice in Leviticus 9:22, 23. The noun can mean either "the verbal endowment with good things or a collective expression for the good things themselves (Ezek. 34:26; Mal. 3:10)" [J. Oswalt, TWOT, 1:132]. In the context of Lev. 25:21 the blessing was an abundant harvest that would suffice for the time the land was allowed its Sabbatical. While blessing could be in the form of spiritual values, for the Israelite the land and blessing of it was all an essential and indispensable part of God's promise to them as a nation. See Lev. 9:22 for the use of the verb **barak**. (Bramer)

**Gilbrant on berakah** - It denotes words of blessing from a parent (Gen. 27:12, 41), from Moses (Deut. 33:1), from God (Deut. 11:26, 27, 29; Josh. 8:34; 2 Sam. 7:29), from the people (Prov. 11:26; 24:25), and from a poor person (Job 29:13). The word was also used in a formula of blessing (Gen. 49:28). It also refers to a source of blessing other than God: Abraham (Gen. 12:2), Israel (Isa. 19:24; Ezek. 34:26; Zech. 8:13), descendants of the righteous (Ps. 37:26), the king (Ps. 21:6), memory of the righteous (Prov. 10:7), and new wine (Isa. 65:8). The good things that are an expression of blessing are also referred to (Ps. 21:3). It denotes the prosperity of the upright, which exalts a city (Prov. 11:11), and it refers to the early rain (Ps. 84:6). It also refers to a gift (Gen. 33:1; Josh. 15:19; 1 Sam. 25:27), and a generous person (Prov. 11:25). Furthermore, it refers to blessing and praise of God (Neh. 9:5). Finally, this word denotes a peace treaty, or capitulation (2 Ki. 18:31; Isa. 36:16). (Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary)

**Gesenius** Definition of berakah - בְּרָכָה once בְּרָכָה Genesis 27:38, constr. בְּרָכָה; plur. בְּרָכוֹת, constr. בְּרָכוֹת f.

(1) **a blessing, benediction, invocation of good, as of a father about to die**, Genesis 27:12, seq.; 33:11. בְּרָכָה וְשָׁרִים "the benediction of righteous men," Proverbs 11:11 בְּרָכָה וְיְהוָה "benediction (i.e. favour) of God," the result of which is prosperity and good of every kind, Genesis 39:5 Ps. 3:9 Isaiah 44:3. Also בְּרָכָה simply, Isaiah 19:24; Joel 2:14, sometimes followed by a gen. of him whom God had blessed. Genesis 28:4, אֲבִרְכֶם בְּרָכָה "the benediction (with which he blessed) Abraham;" Genesis 49:26, בְּרָכוֹת הוֹרֵי עַד "the benedictions (of God with which he blessed) the eternal mountains." Differently, Proverbs 24:25, בְּרָכָה טוֹב "blessing of good." Plur. בְּרָכוֹת benedictions, blessings, sc. of God, Proverbs 10:6, 28:20 but more often, benefits, gifts divinely bestowed; Psal. 84:7 Genesis 49:25. Compare Isaiah 65:8, "destroy it (the cluster) not, כִּי בְרָכָה בּוֹ for there is a divine gift in it."

(2) **concr. used of a man by the favour of God, extremely fortunate and happy**. Genesis 12:2, וְיְהוָה בְּרָכָה; Psal. 21:7, תְּשִׁייתֵהוּ בְּרָכוֹת לְעַד "thou hast made him most blessed for ever." Collect. Zechariah 8:13.

(3) **a gift, present, by which one signifies favour and good will, such as one offers with good wishes**. Genesis 33:11; 1 Samuel 25:27, 30:26 2 Kings 5:15. בְּרָכָה נָפֶשׁ "a bountiful soul," i.e. a bountiful person; Proverbs 11:25. (Syr. ܒܪܟܬܐ, Eth. ጸሎት id.).

(4) i.q. שְׁלוֹמִים peace, 2 Kings 18:31, עָשׂוּ אִתִּי בְרָכָה "make peace with me;" Isaiah 36:16.

(5) [Berachah], pr.n.

(a) of a valley in the desert near Tekoa, 2 Chronicles 20:26.

(b) m. 1 Chronicles 12:3.

Aramaic בְּרַכָּא חַמְצָא; Late Hebrew as Hebrew) — בְּ Genesis 12:2 39t.; construct בְּרַכַּת Genesis 28:4 9t.; suffix בְּרַכְתּוֹ Genesis 49:28 7t.; plural בְּרַכּוֹת Psalm 21:7 4t.; construct בְּרַכּוֹת, בְּרַכּוֹת Genesis 49:25 5t.; suffix בְּרַכּוֹתֵיכֶם Malachi 2:2; —

1 blessing:

a. of parent Genesis 27:12,41; Genesis 49:28 (JE), of Moses Deuteronomy 33:1.

b. of God Exodus 32:29 (E) Leviticus 25:21 (P) Deuteronomy 11:26,27,29; Deuteronomy 23:6 (= Nehemiah 13:2) Deuteronomy 28:2; Deuteronomy 28:8; Deuteronomy 30:1; Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 8:34 (D) 2 Samuel 7:29; Psalm 3:9; Psalm 21:4; Psalm 133:3; Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 34:26; Ezekiel 44:30; Joel 2:14; Malachi 3:10; בְּרַכַּת יְהוָה Genesis 39:5 (J) Deuteronomy 12:15; Deuteronomy 16:17; Deuteronomy 33:23; Psalm 129:8; Proverbs 10:22; יְבָרַכְהָ מֵאֵת יְ Psalm 24:5; בְּרַכַּת אַבְרָהָם Genesis 28:4 (P), the blessing given to Abraham.

c. of the people, in recognition of good men Psalm 109:17; Proverbs 10:6; Proverbs 11:26; Proverbs 24:25; Proverbs 28:20.

d. of a poor man, in recognition of benefits Job 29:13.

2 source of blessing: Abraham Genesis 12:2 (J); Israel Isaiah 19:24; Ezekiel 34:26; Zechariah 8:13; seed of the righteous Psalm 37:26; the king Psalm 21:7; memory of the righteous Proverbs 10:7; new wine Isaiah 65:8.

3 blessing, prosperity: בְּבִרְכַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל by the prosperity of the upright (the city is exalted) Proverbs 11:11; גם, וְאֶרְוִתִּי אֶת ye, the early rain covereth with blessings Psalm 84:7 compare Genesis 49:25,26; בְּרַכּוֹת יֵעֲטֶהמוֹרָה and I will curse your prosperity Malachi 2:2.

4 blessing, praise of God Nehemiah 9:5.

5 a gift, present Genesis 33:11 (E) Joshua 15:19 (J) Judges 1:15; 1 Samuel 25:27; 1 Samuel 30:26; 2 Kings 5:15; נָפֵשׁ בְּרַכָּה a liberal person Proverbs 11:25

6 treaty of peace 2 Kings 18:31 = Isaiah 36:16.

**Berakah** - 69x in 64 verses. Usage: benefit(1), blessed(1), blessing(48), blessings(11), generous(1), gift(3), most blessed(1), peace(2), present(1).

Genesis 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a **blessing**;

Genesis 27:12 "Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing."

Genesis 27:35 And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing."

Genesis 27:36 Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

Genesis 27:38 Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

Genesis 27:41 So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

Genesis 28:4 "May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham."

Genesis 33:11 "Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty." Thus he urged him and he took it.

Genesis 39:5 It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD'S blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field.

Genesis 49:25 From the God of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

Genesis 49:26 "The blessings of your father Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; May they be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.

Genesis 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.

Exodus 32:29 Then Moses said, "Dedicate yourselves today to the LORD-- for every man has been against his son and against his brother-- in order that He may bestow a blessing upon you today."

Leviticus 25:21 then I will so order My blessing for you in the sixth year that it will bring forth the crop for three years.

Deuteronomy 11:26 "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse:

Deuteronomy 11:27 the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today;

Deuteronomy 11:29 "It shall come about, when the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

Deuteronomy 12:15 "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your gates, whatever you desire, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as of the gazelle and the deer.

Deuteronomy 16:17 "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

Deuteronomy 23:5 "Nevertheless, the LORD your God was not willing to listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the LORD your God loves you.

Deuteronomy 28:2 "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:

Deuteronomy 28:8 "The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

Deuteronomy 30:1 "So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you,

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

Deuteronomy 33:1 Now this is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the sons of Israel before his death.

Deuteronomy 33:23 Of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full of the blessing of the LORD, Take possession of the sea and the south."

Joshua 8:34 Then afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

Joshua 15:19 Then she said, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water." So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

Judges 1:15 She said to him, "Give me a blessing, since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me also springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

1 Samuel 25:27 "Now let this gift which your maidservant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who accompany my lord.

1 Samuel 30:26 Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Behold, a gift for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD:

2 Samuel 7:29 "Now therefore, may it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You. For You, O Lord GOD, have spoken; and with Your blessing may the house of Your servant be blessed forever."

2 Kings 5:15 When he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him, he said, "Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; so please take a present from your servant now."

2 Kings 18:31 'Do not listen to Hezekiah, for thus says the king of Assyria, "Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern,

Nehemiah 9:5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah, said, "Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever! O may Your glorious name be blessed And exalted above all blessing and praise!

Nehemiah 13:2 because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.

Job 29:13 "The blessing of the one ready to perish came upon me, And I made the widow's heart sing for joy.

Psalms 3:8 Salvation belongs to the LORD; Your blessing be upon Your people! Selah.

Psalms 21:3 For You meet him with the blessings of good things; You set a crown of fine gold on his head.

Psalm 21:6 For You make him most blessed forever; You make him joyful with gladness in Your presence.

Psalm 24:5 He shall receive a blessing from the LORD And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Psalm 37:26 All day long he is gracious and lends, And his descendants are a blessing.

Psalm 84:6 Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring; The early rain also covers it with blessings.

Psalm 109:17 He also loved cursing, so it came to him; And he did not delight in blessing, so it was far from him.

Psalm 129:8 Nor do those who pass by say, "The blessing of the LORD be upon you; We bless you in the name of the LORD."

Psalm 133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing-- life forever.

Proverbs 10:6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

Proverbs 10:7 The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot.

Proverbs 10:22 It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, And He adds no sorrow to it.

Proverbs 11:11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, But by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down.

Proverbs 11:25 The generous man will be prosperous, And he who waters will himself be watered.

Proverbs 11:26 He who withholds grain, the people will curse him, But blessing will be on the head of him who sells it.

Proverbs 24:25 But to those who rebuke the wicked will be delight, And a good blessing will come upon them.

Proverbs 28:20 A faithful man will abound with blessings, But he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.

Isaiah 19:24 In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth,

Isaiah 36:16 'Do not listen to Hezekiah,' for thus says the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me and come out to me, and eat each of his vine and each of his fig tree and drink each of the waters of his own cistern,

Isaiah 44:3 'For I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants;

Isaiah 65:8 Thus says the LORD, "As the new wine is found in the cluster, And one says, 'Do not destroy it, for there is benefit in it,' So I will act on behalf of My servants In order not to destroy all of them.

Ezekiel 34:26 "I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

Ezekiel 44:30 "The first of all the first fruits of every kind and every contribution of every kind, from all your contributions, shall be for the priests; you shall also give to the priest the first of your dough to cause a blessing to rest on your house.

Joel 2:14 Who knows whether He will not turn and relent And leave a blessing behind Him, Even a grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God?

Zechariah 8:13 'It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.'

Malachi 2:2 "If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart.

Malachi 3:10 "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

**Leviticus 25:22 'When you are sowing the eighth year, you can still eat old things from the crop, eating the old until the ninth year when its crop comes in.'**

- eighth (KJV): 2Ki 19:29 Isa 37:30
- old fruit (KJV): Jos 5:11,12

NLT As you plant the seed in the eighth year, you will still be eating the produce of the previous year. In fact, you will eat from the old crop until the new harvest comes in the ninth year.'

## GOD IS ABLE TO BLESS ABUNDANTLY

**When you are sowing the eighth year, you can still eat old things from the crop, eating the old until the ninth year when its crop comes in.** This passage shows just how bountiful is the blessing that the Lord would bestow if they would choose obedience. It is reminiscent of Ephesians 3:20-[note](#) where Paul writes "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

**Leviticus 25:23 'The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.**

Greek (Septuagint) kai e ge ou prathesetai eis bebaiosin eme gar estin e ge dioti proselutoi kai paroikoi humeis este enantion mou

LXE Leviticus 25:23 And the land shall not be sold for a permanence; for the land is mine, because ye are strangers and sojourners before me.

CSB Leviticus 25:23 "The land is not to be permanently sold because it is Mine, and you are only foreigners and temporary residents on My land.

ESV Leviticus 25:23 "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me.

KJV Leviticus 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

NET Leviticus 25:23 The land must not be sold without reclaim because the land belongs to me, for you are foreigners and residents with me.

NIV Leviticus 25:23 " 'The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants.

NLT Leviticus 25:23 "The land must never be sold on a permanent basis, for the land belongs to me. You are only foreigners and tenant farmers working for me.

YLT Leviticus 25:23 'And the land is not sold -- to extinction, for the land is Mine, for sojourners and settlers are ye with Me;

- The land (KJV): Lev 25:10 1Ki 21:3 Eze 48:14
- for ever (KJV): or, to be quite cut off, Heb. for cutting off, for the land. De 32:43 2Ch 7:20 Ps 24:1 85:1 Isa 8:8 Ho 9:3 Joe 2:18 3:2
- for ye are (KJV): Ge 47:9 1Ch 29:15 Ps 39:12 119:19 Heb 11:9-13 1Pe 2:11

Related Passages:

Psalms 24:1 A Psalm of David. The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it.

## THE LAND BELONGS TO THE LORD

**David** writes "The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it." (Ps 24:1)

**'The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently,**(Only Lv 25:23, 30): One of the central teachings of the OT is that God, his people, and, the real estate which he gave to them belonged together. Since God remained the sole owner of the land, He attached certain conditions to the Israelites' occupation of it. One condition was that the land was not to be sold permanently (Lv 25:23). if someone became so poor that he had to sell his property, his nearest kinsman was to redeem it (Lev 25:25). If he had no kinsman, and never recovered sufficient means to buy it back himself, it remained in the hands of the purchaser until the year of Jubilee. In that year, the seventh seven, every family was to return to its ancestral possession. The law of Jubilee was the first land reform in history.



**NET NOTE** - The term rendered "without reclaim" means that the land has been bought for the full price and is, therefore, not subject to reclaim under any circumstances. This was not to be done with land in ancient Israel (contrast the final full sale of houses in v. 30; see the evidence cited in B. A. Levine, Leviticus [JPSTC], 174).

**for the land is Mine:** This explains why the land was not to be sold permanently.

**Rooker** - As owner he alone has title to the property; the Israelites are but aliens and tenants with a stewardship (1 Chr 29:15; Heb 11:13). Since the land was God's, it was to be used in accordance with his plan and policy. The Israelites do not possess the land because of their military prowess, neither may they dispose of the land at their own discretion. Land sales in Israel were thus not final but were more like leases. (See context in [Leviticus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**MacArthur** - "God owns the earth and all that is in it (cf. Ps 24:1). The people of Israel were, in fact, only tenants on the land by the Lord's grace. Therefore ownership of property was temporary, not permanent." (See context in [The NASB, MacArthur Study Bible](#).)

**for you are but aliens:** Alien, sojourner, stranger, referring to someone who did not enjoy the rights usually possessed by the resident. The clearest sense of the noun ger is seen when used of Israel in their sojourn in Egypt (Ex 23:9 Ge 15:13). Moses named his son Gershom in memory of his stay in Midian (Ex 18:3), for he had been exiled from both Egypt and Canaan. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived as strangers in Canaan (Ex 6:4) meaning that they had no property rights there.

**and sojourners with Me:** refers to the temporary, landless wage earner who could not eat the Passover, and whose children were not exempt from being sold as slaves (Lev 25:45). However sojourners could seek the protection of the cities of refuge (Nu 35:15) but in general his freedom was not as great as that of the **alien** even though he shared some of his privileges.

**Leviticus 25:24 'Thus for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land.'**

- redemption: Lev 25:27,31,51-53 Ro 8:23 1Co 1:30 Eph 1:7,14 Eph 4:30

#### **Related Passages:**

Romans 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

Ephesians 1:7; In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

Ephesians 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

### **PROVISION FOR REDEMPTION OF LAND**

**'Thus for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land-** BBE = "Wherever there is property in land, the owner is to have the right of getting it back."

**Rooker** notes that "Since the land was God's, it was to be used in accordance with his plan and policy. The Israelites do not possess the land because of their military prowess, neither may they dispose of the land at their own discretion. Land sales in Israel were thus not final but were more like leases. The various scenarios are introduced by the phrase "If one of your countrymen becomes poor" (Lev 25:25; see also Lev 25:35, 39, 47). (See context in [Leviticus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

**REDEMPTION** in this verse is the Hebrew word = [geullah](#) is often translated the right of redemption and is used in regard to deliverance of persons or property that had been sold for debt. The law required that the "right of redemption" of land and of persons be protected (Lev 25:24, 48). The redemption price was determined by the number of years remaining until the release of debts in the year of jubilee (Lev 25:27-28). The word [geullah](#) also occurs in Jeremiah 32 where God gives an unusual instruction to Jeremiah to buy land even though the Babylonian invasion was imminent!

'Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you, saying, "Buy for yourself my field which is at Anathoth, for you have the **right of redemption** to buy [it.]" "Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of the LORD and said to me, 'Buy my field, please, that is at Anathoth,

which is in the land of Benjamin; for you have the right of possession and the **redemption** is yours; buy [it] for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. ” (Jeremiah 32:7, 8-note)

**W E Vine** writes that **geullah** ([01353](#)) is used in regard to deliverance of persons or property that had been sold for debt. The law required that the “right of redemption” of land and of persons be protected (Lev. 25:24, 48). The redemption price was determined by the number of years remaining until the release of debts in the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:27-28). The word ge'ullah also occurs in Jer. 32:7: “Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.”

**Geullah** is used 9 times in Leviticus 25 - Lev 25:24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 48, 49, 51, 52. There are 2 uses of geullah in Ruth (Ru 4:6,7-[note](#)) and 2 in Jeremiah (Jer 32:7, 8).

**Leviticus 25:25 'If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold.**

- Ru 2:20 3:2,9,12 4:4-6 Jer 32:7,8 2 Co 8:9 Heb 2:13,14 Rev 5:9
- Related Study - Kinsman-Redeemer - The Goel

NLT If any of your Israelite relatives go bankrupt and are forced to sell some inherited land, then a close relative, a kinsman redeemer, may buy it back for them.

## THE CONCEPT OF THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER

**ESV Study** Note summarizes Lev 25:25-28 - If an Israelite is forced to sell his land temporarily, he and his family retain the right of redemption. The land may be redeemed in one of three ways: (1) a kinsman-redeemer buys back the land; (2) the seller himself is able to buy it back; or (3) it is restored to the rightful owner at the jubilee. (See context in [ESV Study Bible](#))

**If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest [qarob](#) kinsman ([goel/ga'al](#)) is to come and buy back ([goel/ga'al](#); [lutroo](#)) what his relative has sold:** The **nearest kinsman** is the [goel](#) who had the obligation to buy or redeem the property of his poor relative. The book of Ruth illustrates the role of the Kinsman-Redeemer (Nearest Kinsman) where Boaz served as Ruth and Naomi's "nearest kinsman."

Ruth 2:20+ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law (Ruth), “May he be blessed of the LORD who has not withdrawn his kindness to the living and to the dead.” Again Naomi said to her, “The man (Boaz) is our relative ([qarob](#)), he is one of our **closest relatives** ([goel](#) NAS marginal note = “redeemers”).”

**Kinsman...Buy back** are both the same Hebrew word [goel](#) and the Septuagint translations help bring out the slight difference in sense of the two uses of this word...

**Kinsman** is translated in the [Septuagint](#) with the Greek verb **agchisteuo** (not found in NT) which means to be next of kin, to exercise the rights and responsibilities of a kinsman, to redeem.

**Buy it back** is translated in the [Septuagint](#) with the verb = [lutroo](#) which refers to the releasing of someone held captive (e.g., a prisoner or a slave) on receipt of the ransom payment.

The **go'el** is a kinsman who did for his relative what that relative could not do for himself. The OT Go'el is a beautiful foreshadowing of our Lord Jesus Who redeemed us from our sins, accomplishing that which we could never accomplish for ourselves. Believers have been redeemed (past tense - the moment we believed in our Kinsman-Redeemer, Christ Jesus), but our redemption awaits a yet future fulfillment, one that will occur that moment we are glorified. Paul alludes to this glorious day of "future redemption" in Eph 4:30 commanding us "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for **the day of redemption** ( = 1 Jn 3:2, 1 Cor 15:51-54)."

**Redeem ([gaal](#))**—The nearest relative is specified in Lev 25:49 as an uncle, a cousin, or any [male] blood relative in his clan. The noun *gaal* is derived from the verb *gaal*, which has the primary meaning of redeeming one's relative from difficulty or danger. This verb, together with its derivatives, is used 117x. In Leviticus it occurs throughout Lev 25:25, 26, 30, 33, 48, 49, 54 and Lev 27:13, 15, 19, 20, 27, 28, 31, 33. The duty of the nearest relative in Lev. 25:25-28 concerns the redemption of land sold in a time of financial need while in Lev. 25:47-53 it concerns the redemption of the Israelite himself who sold himself as a hired hand. The Hebrew verb **padah**, also translated "redeem," is different in that there is no concept of family relationship when it is used (see Lev. 27:27). In Lev.

27:31 gaal is again the word used, this time to describe a redemption by a relative (see Lev. 25:25). Here, however, the redemption is by the owner himself since the redemption was not due to an inability to pay but a choice on the part of the Israelite worshiper. To prevent a redemption that could favor the Israelite, an added-value "tax" was required. A redemption, in this context, of the fruit of the land, might be necessary for the purposes of transportation, but since everyone lived within a small land mass, once the Promised Land was occupied, redemption was obviously discouraged.

**C H Spurgeon** - Blessed be God, we have a near "kinsman" who has redeemed our lost inheritance for us. (Lev 25:28) Our lost possession is now restored to us, and we have obtained even more than Adam forfeited.

**Criswell** summarizes the four responsibilities of the Kinsman-Redeemer

- (1) if a kinsman was forced to sell his property, he was to redeem it (Lev 25:25);
- (2) if a kinsman became a slave, he was to redeem him or her (Lev 25:47-49);
- (3) if a kinsman died without an heir, he was to redeem his name by marrying the widow and rearing a son (Dt. 25:5-10; cf. Matt. 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28);
- (4) if a kinsman was slain, it was his sacred duty to act as the **avenger of blood** (Nu 35:9-28).

The common denominator of all four circumstances is simply that the kinsman-redeemer did for his relative what that relative could not do for himself. It is also significant that, in the Scriptures, the kinsman-redeemer serves as a type of Christ (cf. Job 19:25; Isa. 41:14; 59:20; 1 John 2:1). (Believer's Study Bible)

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**Nearest** (07138) ([qarob](#) from [qarab](#) = to come near, to approach) is an adjective meaning near, close by, closely related. Qarob refers to nearness in time or space: something is about to happen, is near at hand, e.g., judgment, calamity (Dt. 32:35) or something that is not near at hand, referring to its prophetic fulfillment as in Balaam's prophecy "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob." (Nu 24:17) Solomon writes that "with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand." (Pr 10:14) The first use of qarob is in Ge 19:20 which describes the "town is near enough to flee to" from the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Joseph told his brothers "you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me." (Ge 45:10) Solomon uses qarob figuratively to exhort his readers to "draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools." (Eccl 5:1) Qarob as here in Ruth 4 refers to a relationship, a relative (Ex 32:27; Nu 27:11; 2Sa 19:42) and a relationship to God (Lev. 10:3; 1Ki 8:46, 59; Ps 119:151).

Qarob refers to one who is near (literally near, not in comparison with other relatives, but with men in general) whereas closest relatives is one of the key words of this book, the Hebrew word ga'al which is used 20 times in the 85 verses in Ruth. The total number of Old Testament uses of ga'al is 98 and Ruth has about 20% of the all the uses in Scripture.

Qarob - 76x in 71x - about(1), close(2), close relative(1), closer(1), draws near(1), hand(1), kinsmen(1), lately(1), near(47), nearby(1), nearest(6), neighbors(2), ones near(1), related(1), relative(1), relatives(1), short(1), shortly(1), soon(2), who are near(2), who is near(1). Gen. 19:20; Gen. 45:10; Exod. 12:4; Exod. 13:17; Lev. 10:3; Lev. 21:2; Lev. 21:3; Lev. 25:25; Num. 24:17; Num. 27:11; Deut. 4:7; Deut. 13:7; Deut. 21:3; Deut. 21:6; Deut. 22:2; Deut. 30:14; Deut. 32:17; Deut. 32:35; Jos. 9:16; Ruth 2:20; Ruth 3:12; 2 Sam. 19:42; 1 Ki. 8:46; 1 Ki. 8:59; 1 Ki. 21:2; 1 Chr. 12:40; 2 Chr. 6:36; Neh. 13:4; Est. 1:14; Est. 9:20; Job 17:12; Job 19:14; Job 20:5; Ps. 22:11; Ps. 34:18; Ps. 38:11; Ps. 75:1; Ps. 85:9; Ps. 119:151; Ps. 145:18; Ps. 148:14; Prov. 10:14; Prov. 27:10; Eccl. 5:1; Isa. 13:6; Isa. 13:22; Isa. 33:13; Isa. 50:8; Isa. 51:5; Isa. 55:6; Isa. 56:1; Isa. 57:19; Jer. 12:2; Jer. 23:23; Jer. 25:26; Jer. 48:16; Jer. 48:24; Ezek. 6:12; Ezek. 7:7; Ezek. 7:8; Ezek. 11:3; Ezek. 22:5; Ezek. 23:5; Ezek. 23:12; Ezek. 30:3; Ezek. 42:13; Ezek. 43:19; Dan. 9:7; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1; Joel 3:14; Obad. 1:15; Zeph. 1:7; Zeph. 1:14

**Kinsman** (Redeemer) ([01350](#)) [goel/ga'al](#) - **Goel** ([01350](#)) is the active participle of the verb **gaal** and conveys a primary sense of "restored to an original state". A Goel therefore was one who not only delivered but who effected restoration to an original state. The **Goel** is to do the part of a kinsman and thus to redeem their kin from difficulty or danger by the payment of a price. **Goel**, the active participial form of **gaal** has practically become a noun in its own right. Thus **goel** is translated as noun with the words as redeemer, kinsman or avenger. **Don't be confused** if you are looking up the Strong's numbers because Strong did not assign a separate number to the root verb **gaal** ([01350](#)) and the active participle **goel** ([01350](#)), although for reasons unclear to me, he did assign a separate number ([01353](#)) for **geullah** which is the passive participle of gaal. **Ga'al**: ([01350](#)) is the root verb form. The active participle = **Go'el** and is usually translated kinsman, redeemer or avenger. The passive participle = **Geullah**, (see below)

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**F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily - Leviticus 25:25 His kinsman that is next unto him. (R.V.)**

In the case of Naomi this was Boaz; in our case it is Jesus Christ. Redemption, as described in this chapter, had to do with persons

and lands; and each illustrates Christ's work on behalf of believers throughout all ages.

He has redeemed our Persons. — It often happened that a Hebrew waxed poor, and was compelled to sell himself to some wealthy Gentile who sojourned in the land. He who had owned his own patrimony now wrought as a bondservant for another. But after he had sold himself he might be redeemed by his next kinsman. So we had sold ourselves for nought; we wrought the will of the flesh; we were enslaved to the fashions of the world; we obeyed the promptings of the prince of the power of the air. Alas for us! But we have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ. We have been made free by right, and have only to claim and act upon the freedom with which the risen Christ has made us free.

He has redeemed our Inheritance. — What we lost in the first Adam we have more than regained in the second. For innocence, we have purity; for external fellowship with God, his indwelling; for the delights of an earthly paradise, the fulness of God's blessedness and joy.

He is our nearest Kinsman. — "My brother, my sister," He says of each who will do the will of his Father. He has made Himself one with us by taking on Himself our nature, and identifying Himself with our race. We know that Jesus, our Göel and Redeemer, liveth; and that He will come to redeem us from the power of the grave, and receive us to Himself.

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#### QUESTION - [What is a kinsman redeemer?](#)

**ANSWER** - The kinsman-redeemer is a **male relative** who, according to various laws of the Pentateuch, had the **privilege or responsibility** to act on behalf of a relative who was in **trouble, danger, or need**. The Hebrew term (*goel*) for kinsman-redeemer designates one who delivers or rescues (Genesis 48:16; Exodus 6:6) or redeems property or person (Leviticus 27:9–25, Lev 25:47–55). The kinsman who redeems or vindicates a relative is illustrated most clearly in the [book of Ruth](#), where the kinsman-redeemer is Boaz.

The story of Ruth and Boaz begins when Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, return to Bethlehem from Moab where they had been living. Naomi's husband and both sons, one the husband of Ruth, had died, leaving the women penniless and without a male protector. Upon arriving in Bethlehem, Naomi sends Ruth to glean in the fields of Boaz, a wealthy relative of Naomi to whom they, through a series of divinely appointed circumstances, appeal as their *go el*. Boaz acquiesces, willingly takes Ruth as his wife, and together they bear a son named Obed who became the grandfather of David, the forefather of Jesus.

Yahweh is Israel's Redeemer, the one who promises to defend and vindicate them. He is both Father and Deliverer (Exodus 20:2). There are numerous Old Testament appeals to God as rescuer of the weak and needy (Psalm 82:4; Daniel 6:27; Jeremiah 20:13) and preserver of the sheep of Israel (Ezekiel 34:10–12, 22).

In the New Testament, Christ is often regarded as an example of a kinsman-redeemer because, as our brother (Hebrews 2:11), He also redeems us because of our great need, one that only He can satisfy. In Ruth 3:9, we see a beautiful and poignant picture of the needy supplicant, unable to rescue herself, requesting of the kinsman-redeemer that he cover her with his protection, redeem her, and make her his wife. In the same way, the Lord Jesus Christ bought us for Himself, out of the curse, out of our destitution; made us His own beloved bride; and blessed us for all generations. He is the true kinsman-redeemer of all who call on Him in faith. [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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**Leviticus 25:26 'Or in case a man has no kinsman, but so recovers his means as to find sufficient for its redemption,**

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### **REDEMPTION ACHIEVED BY ONE'S SELF**

NLT If there is no one to redeem the land but the person who sold it manages to get enough money to buy it back,

This verse describes the situation where an individual is able to accumulate enough funds to pay his own redemption price for his property. This OT truth about the Go'el does not apply to believers today who could never accumulate enough good deeds to merit redemption from bondage to the power of sin and Satan. Why? Because it only takes one sin and only One Person lived a sinless life and He is the only One Who can redeem us and set us free from the enslavement of sin and Satan (cp Jn 8:31-32, 36)

**Or in case a man has no kinsman** - Kinsman is the Hebrew [goel/ga'al](#). In this verse **kinsman** (go'el) is translated in the Septuagint with the Greek verb **agchisteuo** (not found in NT) which means to be next of kin, to exercise the rights and responsibilities of a kinsman, to redeem.

- Related Study - Kinsman-Redeemer - The Goel

**but so recovers his means as to find sufficient for its redemption-** The idea is that this person later prospers enough and gets enough funds to pay the redemption price himself.

The Hebrew word for **redemption** here is **Geullah** is the passive participle of **gaal/goel** but is always translated as a noun, either **redemption** or **redemption right**. Note that although **geullah** is related to **gaal/goel** it is assigned a Strong's number (01353) different than (**ga'al**) (01350) but both Strong's definition and the respected Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament state that **geullah** is a feminine passive participle of **gaal** and functions as a feminine noun in the Hebrew text. Don't let this technical explanation sidetrack you from the essence of the meaning of this word **geullah**, which expresses the action of a relative in setting free a member of his family or the buying back his property. Geullah was also used in general of purchasing something for a price. A ransom-price was paid to secure the release of that which would otherwise be forfeited.

**Geullah** is used 9 times in Leviticus 25 - Lev 25:24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 48, 49, 51, 52). There are 2 uses of geullah in Ruth (Ru 4:6,7) and 2 in Jeremiah (Jer 32:7, 8).

The Septuagint translates **Geullah** with the noun **lutron** which refers to the price paid for release (as from captivity or slavery). Figuratively, in the NT lutron is used of the cost Christ paid in order to provide deliverance from the power of (enslavement to) sin. Lutron is used only twice in the NT

Matthew 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many."

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many."

**Leviticus 25:27 then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and so return to his property.**

NLT then that person has the right to redeem it from the one who bought it. The price of the land will be based on the number of years until the next Year of Jubilee. After buying it back, the original owner may then return to the land.

REDEMPTION PRICE  
CALCULATED

**Then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it** Calculate is the Hebrew word (02803) **chasab/hasab** in the Piel Perf and is an "accounting" or "bookkeeping" term. In the Mosaic legislation, the word is used several times in respect to the "accounting" necessary for figuring the fluctuating value of properties and produce, in the light of an approaching year of Jubilee (Lev 25:27, 50, 52; Lev 27:18, 23). The basic idea of the word is the employment of the mind in thinking activity. The most significant use of **chasab/hasab** in the OT is when God imputed righteousness to Abraham when he believed God's promise. See discussion in note on Genesis 15:6.

**and so return to his property:** The Hebrew word for property is 'achuzzah which is from the Hebrew word meaning to take hold of as when Jacob "took hold" of Esau's heel (Ge 25:26).

**Leviticus 25:28 'But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of jubilee; but at the jubilee it shall revert, that he may return to his property.**

- and in the (KJV): Lev 25:13
- he shall (KJV): Isa 35:9,10 Jer 32:15 1Co 15:52-54 1Th 4:13-18 1Pe 1:4,5

NLT But if the original owner cannot afford to redeem it, then it will belong to the new owner until the next Year of Jubilee. In the jubilee year, the land will be returned to the original owner.

**OF ITS PURCHASER:** Qal Participle Active: (the one buying it) "to buy" is expressed by qanah frequently in contexts where one person makes a purchase agreement with another. The word is used to refer to "buying" a slave (Ex21:2) and land (Ge47:20).

**UNTIL THE YEAR OF JUBILEE:** Jubilee is derived from the Hebrew jobel or yobel, the joyful shout or clangor of trumpets (e.g. it is found in the phrase "horn of a ram" in Josh 6:5). Jubilee was celebrated every 50th year and announced by the blowing of trumpets on the Day of Atonement (about the 1st of October), the tenth day of the first month of the Israelites' civil year and was to be accompanied by:

- (a) Rest for the soil. Lev 25:11,12
- (b) Reversion of landed property.
- (c) The freedom of Israelites who were slaves.

**JUBILEE** - some significant effects of the year of Jubilee...

- (a) The jubilee tended to abolish poverty.
- (b) It tended to abolish slavery, and in fact did abolish it; "The effect of this law was at once to lift from the heart the terrible incubus of a life-long bondage --that sense of a hopeless doom which knows no relief till death."
- (c) "As an agricultural people, they would have much leisure; they would observe the sabbatic spirit of the year by using its leisure for the instruction of their families in the law (cf to Dt 31:10)
- (d) "This law of entail, by which the right heir could never be excluded, was a provision of great wisdom for preserving families and tribes perfectly distinct, and their genealogies faithfully recorded, in order that all might have evidence to establish their right to the ancestral property. Hence the tribe and family of Christ were readily discovered at his birth."

**IT SHALL REVERT:** This Hebrew verb (yoset) basically means to go out or to come in. It is used in many settings and contexts and is nuanced by those settings. In the present context "movement away" from some point means to [revert back](#) to a previous owner.

**THAT HE MAY RETURN TO HIS PROPERTY:** In the jubilee year, the land will be returned to the original owner.

Wake the song of jubilee,  
Let it echo o'er the sea!  
Now is come the promised hour,  
Jesus reigns with sov'reign power.  
All ye nations, join and sing,  
Christ of lords and kings is King.  
Let it sound from shore to shore  
Jesus reigns forevermore.

Now the desert lands rejoice,  
And the islands join their voice,  
Yea, the whole creation sings,  
"Jesus is the King of kings."  
See the ransomed millions stand,  
Palms of conquest in their hands,  
This before the throne their strain,  
Hell is vanquished, death is slain.

Blessing, honor, glory, might  
Are the conqueror's native right;  
Thrones and powers before Him fall,  
Lamb of God and Lord of all.  
Time has nearly reached its sum;  
All things with the bride say, "Come."  
Jesus, whom all worlds adore,  
Come, and reign forevermore.

**Leviticus 25:29** 'Likewise, if a man sells a dwelling house in a walled city, then his redemption right remains valid until a full year from its sale; his right of redemption lasts a full year.

**INSTRUCTION REGARDING**



## SELLING HOUSES

### Leviticus 25:29–34.

**NLT** "Anyone who sells a house inside a walled city has the right to redeem it for a full year after its sale. During that time, the seller retains the right to buy it back.

**TSK** - A very proper difference is here made between houses in a city and houses in the country. The former might be redeemed any time in the course of a year; but after that time could not be redeemed, or go out with the Jubilee: the latter might be redeemed at any time; and if not redeemed must go out with the jubilee. The reason in both cases is sufficiently evident; the house in the city might be built merely for the purposes of trade or traffic--the house in the country was builded on, or attached to, the inheritance which God had divided to the respective families. It was therefore necessary that the same law should apply to the house as to the inheritance; which necessity did not exist with regard to the house in the city. And, as the house in the city might be purchased for the purpose of trade, it would be very inconvenient for the purchaser, when his business was established, to be obliged to remove.

Note that a **dwelling house in a walled city** is not regulated by the same **redemption right** as were houses in unwalled cities because houses in cities were not to be returned in the year of Jubilee and as stated in this verse their **redemption only lasts a full year** (and not in perpetuity). The houses of the Levites were an exception

**Longman** comments that Lev 29:29-30 "considers several categories of property not included under the general category of fields, vineyards, and the like discussed thus far. First, houses in walled cities are not returnable at the Year of Jubilee. This is first of all because the patrimonies given to Israelite families and clans are not urban but agrarian; therefore, such dwellings will have been purchased in addition to the family property. Further, their presence in a walled city suggests a locus in the context of limited space as well as the privilege of greater security. Thus they represent luxuries for early Israel. The one-year date for the option of redeeming the property may imply a recognition that at least in some cases this will become the only property of a (displaced?) Israelite. Hence, to ensure against the eventuality that such a person cannot find another place to live, there is a year's allowance to buy it back. The same may be true for those mercantile Israelites who will leave the country for long periods of time." (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**Ross** - The exception to the rule of redemption was the sale of a house in a walled city (Lev. 25:29–31). If the seller did not reclaim it within the first year, then it stayed with the buyer forever. This exception was because no farm land was connected to the sale, as in the case of the sale of a house in a farming village. The exception to the exception was Levitical cities, which had the right of redemption (25:32–34). Priests and Levites had no other possessions, and so they had to have the right to reclaim their houses. Their fields could not be sold. God was preserving the priestly properties because if they were lost then the Levites had nothing.

**Leviticus 25:30** 'But if it is not bought back for him within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city passes permanently to its purchaser throughout his generations; it does not revert in the jubilee.

**NLT** But if it is not redeemed within a year, then the house within the walled city will become the permanent property of the buyer. It will not be returned to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee.

See comment on Lev 25:29

**Leviticus 25:31** 'The houses of the villages, however, which have no surrounding wall shall be considered as open fields; they have redemption rights and revert in the jubilee.

- they may be redeemed (KJV): Heb. redemption belongeth unto it, Ps 49:7,8

**NLT** But a house in a village--a settlement without fortified walls--will be treated like property in the open fields. Such a house may be redeemed at any time and must be returned to the original owner in the Year of Jubilee.

**The houses of the villages** - The property within the unwalled cities were distinct from houses in walled cities for these (latter) houses became permanent property of the buyer and did not have to be returned in the Year of Jubilee.

**Leviticus 25:32** 'As for cities of the Levites, the Levites have a permanent right of redemption for the houses of the cities which are their possession.



- the cities (KJV): As the Levites had no inheritance in Israel, but only cities to dwell in; and consequently the houses in these cities were all they could call their own, therefore they could not be ultimately alienated. Nu 35:2-8 Jos 21:1-45

NLT "The Levites always have the right to redeem any house they have sold within the cities belonging to them.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LEVITES Leviticus 25:32-34

It is surprising that this is the only mention of the Levites in Leviticus.

The NLT paraphrase simplifies this verse - "The Levites always have the right to redeem any house they have sold within the cities belonging to them."

The city property of the Levites could always be redeemed and was also covered by the release in the year of Jubilee.

**The Levites** —The proper name for the tribe of Levi occurs only 3x in the book of Leviticus (twice in this verse and once in the following verse). This may appear somewhat odd since the English title of this book seems to indicate that this would be a book pertaining to the Levites. Nevertheless, much in this book pertains to the Aaronic priests who came from Aaron's family within the tribe of Levi. The Levites were chosen to replace the firstborn of each family in the incident of the golden calf when they showed their fidelity to the LORD (Ex. 32:26-29; Nu 3:11-13). In this action they redeemed themselves from the earlier unspiritual action of their forefathers (Ge 49:5-7). Aaron was descended from Levi through Kohath and Amram (Ex 6:16, 18, 20). As such, the sacrificial system that Aaron's descendants administered is generally regarded as "Levitical." Here in Lev. 25:32-33, the reference is not to just Aaron's descendants who were priests but to all descendants of Levi, which would include the "nonpriestly" Levites (Nu 3-4). Aaron and his sons as priests were to bear the major responsibilities for the tabernacle and its services but the entire tribe of Levi was to assist the priests in carrying out this duty though they could never act as officiating priests (Nu 18:1-2; Deut. 18:1-8). The duties of assistance by the Levites included bearing the ark (1 Sa 6:15; 2 Sa 15:24), performing various services in the tabernacle (Ex. 38:21; Nu 1:50-53), and ministering to Aaron and his sons (Nu 3:9; 8:19). Later David placed Levites in charge of music (1 Chr. 15:16, 17, 22), and the guarding of the temple (1 Chr 9:26; 26:17). In the postexilic period they also taught the people the law (Neh. 8:7-8). (The Bible Knowledge Key Word Study)

**Leviticus 25:33 'What, therefore, belongs to the Levites may be redeemed and a house sale in the city of this possession reverts in the jubilee, for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the sons of Israel.**

- a man purchase of the Levites (KJV): or, one of the Levites redeem them
- shall go (KJV): Lev 25:28
- for the houses (KJV): Nu 18:20-24 De 18:1,2

NLT And any property that can be redeemed by the Levites--all houses within the Levitical cities--must be returned in the Year of Jubilee. After all, the cities reserved for the Levites are the only property they own in all Israel.

**Cities of the Levites** - see Nu 35:1-8;

The **NET NOTE** gives a long discussion of this difficult verse - "And which he shall redeem from the Levites shall go out, sale of house and city, his property in the jubilee." Although the end of this verse is clear, the first part is notoriously difficult. There are five main views. (1) The first clause of the verse actually attaches to the previous verse, and refers to the fact that their houses retain a perpetual right of redemption (v. 32b), "which any of the Levites may exercise" (v. 33a; J. E. Hartley, Leviticus [WBC], 418, 421). (2) It refers to property that one Levite sells to another Levite, which is then redeemed by still another Levite (v. 33a). In such cases, the property reverts to the original Levite owner in the jubilee year (v. 33b; G. J. Wenham, Leviticus [NICOT], 321). (3) It refers to houses in a city that had come to be declared as a Levitical city but had original non-Levitical owners. Once the city was declared to belong to the Levites, however, an owner could only sell his house to a Levite, and he could only redeem it back from a Levite up until the time of the first jubilee after the city was declared to be a Levitical city. In this case the first part of the verse would be translated, "Such property as may be redeemed from the Levites" (NRSV, NJPS). At the first jubilee, however, all such houses became the property of the Levites (v. 33b; P. J. Budd, Leviticus [NCBC], 353). (4) It refers to property "which is appropriated from the Levites"

(not “redeemed from the Levites,” v. 33a) by those who have bought it or taken it as security for debts owed to them by Levites who had fallen on bad times. Again, such property reverts back to the original Levite owners at the jubilee (B. A. Levine, Leviticus [JPSTC], 177). (5) It simply refers to the fact that a Levite has the option of redeeming his house (i.e., the prefix form of the verb is taken to be subjunctive, “may or might redeem”), which he had to sell because he had fallen into debt or perhaps even become destitute. Even if he never gained the resources to do so, however, it would still revert to him in the jubilee year. The present translation is intended to reflect this latter view.

Nu 35:1-8 — Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan *opposite* Jericho, saying, 2 "Command the sons of Israel that they give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possession cities to live in; and you shall give to the Levites pasture lands around the cities. 3 "The cities shall be theirs to live in; and their pasture lands shall be for their cattle and for their herds and for all their beasts. 4 "The pasture lands of the cities which you shall give to the Levites *shall extend* from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits around. 5 "You shall also measure outside the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits, with the city in the center. This shall become theirs as pasture lands for the cities. 6 "The cities which you shall give to the Levites *shall be* the six cities of refuge, which you shall give for the manslayer to flee to; and in addition to them you shall give forty-two cities. 7 "All the cities which you shall give to the Levites *shall be* forty-eight cities, together with their pasture lands. 8 "As for the cities which you shall give from the possession of the sons of Israel, you shall take more from the larger and you shall take less from the smaller; each shall give some of his cities to the Levites in proportion to his possession which he inherits."

Dt 18:1-2 — "The Levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the LORD'S offerings by fire and His portion. 2 "They shall have no inheritance among their countrymen; the LORD is their inheritance, as He promised them.

Dt 19:2-9 — you shall set aside three cities for yourself in the midst of your land, which the LORD your God gives you to possess. 3 "You shall prepare the roads for yourself, and divide into three parts the territory of your land which the LORD your God will give you as a possession, so that any manslayer may flee there. 4 "Now this is the case of the manslayer who may flee there and live: when he kills his friend unintentionally, not hating him previously— 5 as when a *man* goes into the forest with his friend to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down the tree, and the iron *head* slips off the handle and strikes his friend so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live; 6 otherwise the avenger of blood might pursue the manslayer in the heat of his anger, and overtake him, because the way is long, and take his life, though he was not deserving of death, since he had not hated him previously. 7 "Therefore, I command you, saying, 'You shall set aside three cities for yourself.' 8 "If the LORD your God enlarges your territory, just as He has sworn to your fathers, and gives you all the land which He promised to give your fathers— 9 if you carefully observe all this commandment which I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in His ways always—then you shall add three more cities for yourself, besides these three.

**Leviticus 25:34 'But pasture fields of their cities shall not be sold, for that is their perpetual possession.'**

- Lev 25:23 Ac 4:36,37

NLT The strip of pastureland around each of the Levitical cities may never be sold. It is their permanent ancestral property.

**John MacArthur** comments that **pasture fields** "were fields that the village/city-at-large used to grow crops." (Study Bible)

**Leviticus 25:35 'Now in case a countryman of yours becomes poor and his means with regard to you falter, then you are to sustain him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.'**

- thy brother (KJV): Lev 25:25 De 15:7,8 Pr 14:20,21 17:5 19:17 Mk 14:7 Joh 12:8 2Co 8:9 Jas 2:5,6
- fallen in decay (KJV): Heb. his hand faileth
- then (KJV): Ps 37:26 41:1 112:5,9 Pr 14:31 Lu 6:35 Ac 11:29 Ro 12:13,18,20 2Co 9:1,12-15 Ga 2:10 1Jn 3:17
- relieve (KJV): Heb. strengthen
- a stranger (KJV): Lev 19:34 Ex 23:9 De 10:18,19 Mt 25:35 Heb 13:2

NET If your brother becomes impoverished and is indebted to you (Literally "and his hand slips with you."), you must support him; he must live with you like a foreign resident

NLT "If any of your Israelite relatives fall into poverty and cannot support themselves, support them as you would a resident foreigner and allow them to live with you.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEALING WITH POOR Leviticus 25:35–38

One might subtitle this section "God's welfare program."

The idea of "**poor**" is desperate, life-threatening poverty.

**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - Forgiveness.** "If thy brother be poor, thou shalt relieve him" (Lev 25:35). Even the debt and poverty of a man did not hinder him from enjoying the grace of the jubilee, but made him just the more a fit subject for it. To the poor the Gospel is preached. While we were yet sinners Christ died for us, He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance,

**Matthew Henry** - Lev 25:35-38. Poverty and decay are great grievances, and very common; the poor ye have always with you. Thou shalt relieve him; by sympathy, pitying the poor; by service, doing for them; and by supply, giving to them according to their necessity, and thine ability. Poor debtors must not be oppressed. Observe the arguments here used against extortion: "Fear thy God." Relieve the poor, "that they may live with thee;" for they may be serviceable to thee. The rich can as ill spare the poor, as the poor can the rich. It becomes those that have received mercy to show mercy.

**Ryrie** - Lev 25:35-46 Poor Israelites were to be assisted in every way and without interest (cf. Ex. 22:25). If one sold himself to a fellow Israelite, he was to be treated as a hired person rather than a slave. Slave labor came only from the heathen nations (cf. v. 44).

**MacArthur** - The law required gleanings (leftovers after harvest) for the Israelite as well as the stranger (cf. Lev 19:9, 10; 23:22; Dt 24:19–21).

**You are to sustain him** - Sustain is the Hebrew word **hazaq** which means to strengthen someone. It is the word used in the famous charge to Joshua to "Be strong (hazaq - [02388](#)) and of good courage!" (Joshua 1:9) Jehovah rebuked Israel for not helping the poor (Ezek 16:49 "she did not help the poor and needy.")

**Stranger** ([01616](#)) (**ger** from **gur** = to live among people not one's blood relatives) is a masculine noun meaning sojourner, alien, stranger. It describes someone who did not enjoy rights usually possessed by residents. It describes a person who does not belong to the nation of Israel by ancestry.

**Baker** adds that **ger** "indicates in general anyone who is not native to a given land or among a given people (Ex. 12:19). The word is used most often to describe strangers or sojourners in Israel who were not native-born Israelites and were temporary dwellers or newcomers. A person, family, or group might leave their homeland and people to go elsewhere because of war or immediate danger as Moses had done (Ex. 2:22; cf. 2 Sam. 4:3); Naomi and her family were forced to travel to Moab to sojourn because of a famine in Israel (Ruth 1:1). God's call to Abraham to leave his own land of Ur of the Chaldees and made him a sojourner and an alien in the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1). Israel's divinely orchestrated descent into Egypt resulted in their becoming an alien people in a foreign land for four hundred years (Gen. 15:13). Abraham considered himself an alien, although he was in the land of Canaan, the land of promise, because he was living among the Hittites at Hebron (Gen. 23:4). This evidence indicates that strangers or aliens were those living in a strange land among strange people. Their stay was temporary or they did not identify with the group among whom they were living, no matter how long they stayed. The transitory nature of aliens' status is indicated in passages that describe them as seeking overnight lodging or accommodations (Job 31:32; Jer. 14:8). Sojourners or strangers in Israel were not to be oppressed but were to receive special consideration for several reasons: Israel knew about being aliens, for they had been aliens in Egypt (Ex. 23:9); aliens had a right to rest and cessation from labor just as the native Israelites did (Ex. 20:10); aliens were to be loved, for God loved them (Deut. 10:18) just as He loved widows and orphans; aliens had a right to food to satisfy their needs just as orphans and widows did (Deut. 14:29). In Ezekiel's vision of a new temple and temple area, the children of aliens and sojourners were given an allotment of land (Ezek. 47:22), for they were to be considered as native children of Israel. However, this shows that sojourners had to receive special concessions because they did not have all the rights of native Israelites. Aliens could eat the Lord's Passover only if they and their entire household submitted to circumcision (Ex. 12:48, 49). They were then not allowed to eat anything with yeast in it during the celebration of the Passover, just like native Israelites (Ex. 12:19, 20). However, major distinctions did exist between sojourners or aliens and native Israelites. Unclean food could be given to aliens to eat, but the Israelites were prohibited from eating the same food. To have done so would violate their holiness and consecration to the Lord God. Unfortunately, David himself laid forced labor on the shoulders of aliens in Israel to prepare to build the temple (1 Chr. 22:2; cf. 2 Chr. 8:7–9). ([The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament](#))

The first use is in Genesis 15:13

"[God] said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be **strangers** in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years."

Does this Psalm describe you?

Ps 119:19 I am a **stranger** in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me.

What is the Lord's heart regarding strangers?

Ps 146:9 The LORD protects the **strangers**; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked.

Here are all the uses of **ger** in Leviticus...

Leviticus 16:29 "[This] shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you;

Leviticus 17:8 "Then you shall say to them, 'Any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice,

Leviticus 17:10 'And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people.

Leviticus 17:12 "Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, 'No person among you may eat blood, nor may any alien who sojourns among you eat blood.'

Leviticus 17:13 "So when any man from the sons of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, in hunting catches a beast or a bird which may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth.

Leviticus 17:15 "When any person eats [an animal] which dies or is torn [by beasts,] whether he is a native or an alien, he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and remain unclean until evening; then he will become clean.

Leviticus 18:26 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not do any of these abominations, [neither] the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you

Leviticus 19:10 'Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 19:33 'When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.

Leviticus 19:34 'The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 20:2 "You shall also say to the sons of Israel: 'Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

Leviticus 22:18 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel and say to them, 'Any man of the house of Israel or of the aliens in Israel who presents his offering, whether it is any of their votive or any of their freewill offerings, which they present to the LORD for a burnt offering—

Leviticus 23:22 'When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.'"

Leviticus 24:16 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Leviticus 24:22 'There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the LORD your God.'"

Leviticus 25:23 'The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are [but] aliens and sojourners with Me.

Leviticus 25:35 'Now in case a countryman of yours becomes poor and his means with regard to you falter, then you are to sustain him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.

Leviticus 25:47 'Now if the means of a stranger or of a sojourner with you becomes sufficient, and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you, or to the descendants of a stranger's family,

strangers(6).

Ge 15:13; Gen. 23:4; Ex. 2:22; Ex 12:19; Ex 12:48; Ex 12:49; Ex 18:3; Ex 20:10; Ex 22:21; Ex 23:9; Ex 23:12; Lev. 16:29; Lev. 17:8; Lev. 17:10; Lev. 17:12; Lev. 17:13; Lev. 17:15; Lev. 18:26; Lev. 19:10; Lev. 19:33; Lev. 19:34; Lev. 20:2; Lev. 22:18; Lev. 23:22; Lev. 24:16; Lev. 24:22; Lev. 25:23; Lev. 25:35; Lev. 25:47; Num. 9:14; Num. 15:14; Num. 15:15; Num. 15:16; Num. 15:26; Num. 15:29; Num. 15:30; Num. 19:10; Num. 35:15; Deut. 1:16; Deut. 5:14; Deut. 10:18; Deut. 10:19; Deut. 14:21; Deut. 14:29; Deut. 16:11; Deut. 16:14; Deut. 23:7; Deut. 24:14; Deut. 24:17; Deut. 24:19; Deut. 24:20; Deut. 24:21; Deut. 26:11; Deut. 26:12; Deut. 26:13; Deut. 27:19; Deut. 28:43; Deut. 29:11; Deut. 31:12; Jos. 8:33; Jos. 8:35; Jos. 20:9; 2 Sam. 1:13; 1 Chr. 22:2; 1 Chr. 29:15; 2 Chr. 2:17; 2 Chr. 30:25; Job 31:32; Ps. 39:12; Ps. 94:6; Ps. 119:19; Ps. 146:9; Isa. 14:1; Jer. 7:6; Jer. 14:8; Jer. 22:3; Ezek. 14:7; Ezek. 22:7; Ezek. 22:29; Ezek. 47:22; Ezek. 47:23; Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5

**W E Vine - ger** (1616 גֵּר), “client; stranger.” Ger occurs about 92 times and in every period of biblical Hebrew.

A “client” was not simply a foreigner (nakri) or a stranger (zar). He was a permanent resident, once a citizen of another land, who had moved into his new residence. Frequently he left his homeland under some distress, as when Moses fled to Midian (Exod. 2:22). Whether the reason for his journey was to escape some difficulty or merely to seek a new place to dwell, he was one who sought acceptance and refuge. Consequently he might also call himself a toshab, a settler. Neither the settler nor the “client” could possess land. In the land of Canaan the possession of land was limited to members or descendants of the original tribal members. Only they were full citizens who enjoyed all the rights of citizenry, which meant sharing fully in the inheritance of the gods and forefathers—the feudal privileges and responsibilities (cf. Ezek. 47:22).

In Israel a ger, like a priest, could possess no land and enjoyed the special privileges of the third tithe. Every third year the tithe of the harvest was to be deposited at the city gate with the elders and distributed among “the Levite, (became he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates ...” (Deut. 14:29). In the eschaton such “clients” were to be treated as full citizens: “And it shall come to pass, that ye shall divide it [the land] by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel” (Ezek. 47:22). Under the Mosaic law aliens were not slaves but were usually in the service of some Israelite whose protection they enjoyed (Deut. 24:14). This, however, was not always the case. Sometimes a “client” was rich and an Israelite would be in his service (Lev. 25:47).

The ger was to be treated (except for feudal privileges and responsibilities) as an Israelite, being responsible to and protected by the law: “Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him” (Deut. 1:16); “ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you” (Lev. 18:26); “ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 24:22). The ger also enjoyed the Sabbath rest (Lev. 25:6) and divine protection (Deut. 10:18). God commanded Israel to love the “client” as himself (Lev. 19:34).

The ger could also be circumcised (Exod. 12:48) and enjoy all the privileges of the true religion: the Passover (Exod. 12:48-49), the Atonement feast (Lev. 16:29), presenting offerings (Lev. 17:8), and all the feasts (Deut. 16:11). He was also obligated to keep the purity laws (Lev. 17:15).

Israel is told that God is the true owner of all the land and its people are but “clients” owing Him feudal obedience (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:19). They are admonished to treat the client with justice, righteousness, and love because like Abraham (Gen. 23:4) they were “clients” in Egypt (Exod. 22:21). In legal cases the “client” could appeal directly to God the great feudal Lord (Lev. 24:22).

Two other nouns related to ger are megurim and gerut. Megurim occurs 11 times and refers to the “status or condition of being a client” (Gen. 17:8) and to a “dwelling where one is a client” (Job 18:19). Gerut appears once to refer to a “place where clients dwell” (Jer. 41:17). Some scholars think this word is a proper name, a part of a place name. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary online](#))

**Brown-Driver-Briggs Expanded Definition - ger** גֵּר noun masculine <sup>Exodus 12:48</sup> sojourner (Arabic جَارٌ, Ethiopic ገረ: ገረ: Aramaic ܓܝܪܐ, גִּיר, *prostelyte*, גִּיר *proselytize*, Phoenician גר in proper name, & plural גֵּרִים — Genesis 15:16 74t.; suffix גֵּרָךְ Exodus 20:10 4t., גֵּרֹו Deuteronomy 1:16; plural גֵּרִים Exodus 22:20 9t., 2 גִּירִים Chronicles 2:16; —

1 *sojourner*, temporary dweller, new-comer (no inherited rights), compare Exodus 12:19; Leviticus 24:16; Numbers 15:30; Joshua 8:33 (opposed to *homeborn*); of Abraham at Hebron Genesis 23:4 (P; תושב); Moses in desert Exodus 2:22 (J) Exodus 18:3 (E; here explanation of name Gershom, Moses' son); as claiming hospitality Job 31:32; perhaps in above cases, and certainly in General, with technical sense; figurative of Yahweh Jeremiah 14:8; of Israel in Egypt Genesis 15:13; Exodus 22:20; Exodus 23:9 (all J E) Leviticus 19:34 (H) Deuteronomy 10:19; Deuteronomy 23:8; גרים with Yahweh Leviticus 25:23 (H) 1 Chronicles 29:15; Psalm 39:13 (in all תושב) compare Psalm 119:19.

2 usually of גרים in Israel 2 Samuel 1:13 (Amalekite) compare Joshua 8:33,35 (E) Joshua 20:9 (P) Isaiah 14:1; dwellers in Israel with certain conceded, not inherited right (compare RS OTJC 434; 2nd ed. 342. n.; K 42; Sem 75f. Sta Geschichte.i.400). The גר is to share in Sabbath rest Exodus 20:10; Exodus 23:12 (both J E) Deuteronomy 5:14; otherwise he is have like obligations with Israel Exodus 12:19,48,49; Leviticus 16:29 (all P) Leviticus 17:8,10,12,13,15; Leviticus 18:26; Leviticus 20:2; Leviticus 22:18; Leviticus 24:16,22 (all H) Numbers 9:14 (twice in verse); Numbers 15:14,15 (twice in verse); Numbers 15:16,26,29,30; Numbers 19:10; Numbers 35:15 (all P) Ezekiel 14:7; similar rights Deuteronomy 1:16; Ezekiel 47:22,23; and like privileges Deuteronomy 16:11,14; Deuteronomy 26:11; Deuteronomy 29:10; Deuteronomy 31:12 compare 2 Chronicles 30:25; very rarely any distinction made, in obligation Leviticus 25:47 (3t. in verse) (H), in permissible food Deuteronomy 14:21; in future success Deuteronomy 28:43; kindness to גר frequently enjoined: Leviticus 19:10 (עני), Leviticus 23:22 (id.) Leviticus 19:34 (all H); Deuteronomy 10:18,19; Deuteronomy 14:29; Deuteronomy 24:19,20,21; Deuteronomy 26:12,13 (all ואלמנה); oppression prohibited Leviticus 19:33 (H) Deuteronomy 24:14; Exodus 22:20; Exodus 23:9 (twice in verse) (JE) Deuteronomy 24:17; Deuteronomy 27:19; Jeremiah 7:6; Jeremiah 22:3; Zechariah 7:10 (these eight ואלמנה); object of care to י Psalm 146:9 (id.); charge that גר has been oppressed Ezekiel 22:7; Malachi 3:5 (both id.); also Ezekiel 22:29 (עני ואביון), Psalm 94:6; compare also command that a poor brother be treated like גר i.e. kindly, Leviticus 25:35 (H). Latest conception somewhat different: 1 Chronicles 22:2; 2 Chronicles 2:16 (הגרים) gathered for hard service; yet compare 2 Chronicles 30:25. (Often with verbal cognate Exodus 12:48,49; Leviticus 16:29; Leviticus 17:8,10,12,13; Leviticus 18:26; Leviticus 19:33; Leviticus 20:2; Numbers 9:14; Numbers 15:14,15,16,26,29; Numbers 19:10; Joshua 20:9; Ezekiel 47:22,23; oft תושב Genesis 23:4; Leviticus 25:23,35,47; 1 Chronicles 29:15; Psalm 39:13).

[גֵּר] **noun masculine** 2 Chronicles 2:16 see גר below I. גור.

#### Holman's Bible Dictionary on alien -

A foreigner living in a community without relatives. People fleeing famine became aliens among the people where they settled. Thus Elijah was an alien in the home of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:20 ; “to sojourn” is to be an alien). Isaac was an alien with Abimelech, the Philistine king (Genesis 26:3 ). War leaves refugees who become aliens (Isaiah 16:4 ). Compare 2 Samuel 4:3 . Levites, priests not given inheritance, are aliens (Deuteronomy 18:6 ). Accidents or crime could cause a person to leave home and become an alien. An alien stood between a person born in the community and a foreigner without any ties to the community. The alien could become a soldier, as did the Amalekite who killed Saul (2 Samuel 1:13 ). David gathered aliens to build God's house (1 Chronicles 22:2 ). As an alien in Sodom, Lot owned a house (Genesis 19:9 ). The patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) were aliens in Canaan, but owned large material resources (Genesis 20:1 ; Genesis 26:3 ; Genesis 32:5 ). The alien could worship God and was supposed to keep the Sabbath (Exodus 23:12 ;Deuteronomy 31:12 ). Israel had a special place for aliens, because Israel began history in Egypt as aliens (Exodus 23:9 ). Special laws provided food and clothing for aliens (Deuteronomy 24:19-20 ; Deuteronomy 26:12 ). Aliens had rights in the courtroom (Deuteronomy 24:17 ; Deuteronomy 27:19 ). The ritual expectations of the alien are not always clear (Deuteronomy 14:21 ; Leviticus 17:15 ). God loves aliens (Deuteronomy 10:19 ). They may observe Passover just as any Israelite (Numbers 9:14 ) and offer sacrifices (Leviticus 17:8 ). They should obey sexual laws (Leviticus 18:26 ). Unexpectedly, the prophets have little to say about aliens. See Jeremiah 7:6 ; Jeremiah 22:3 ; Ezekiel 22:7 ,Ezekiel 22:7,22:29 . Jeremiah does lament that God appears to be an alien (Jeremiah 14:8 ). The psalmist saw all people as aliens on earth (Psalm 39:13 ; Psalm 119:19 ). God owns the land (Leviticus 25:23 ). See [Stranger](#) .

#### Resources Related to Alien:

- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Alien](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Alien](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Alien](#)



- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Alien](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Alien](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Alien](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Alien](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Alien](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Aliens](#)

**Sojourner** ([08453](#))(**toshab**) describes a temporary resident, sojourner, stranger, an alien living in an area that is not one's normal country as a class of people with less social rights (Lev 25:6, 23, 35, 40, 45, 47). Toshab is sometimes synonymous with gēr (Gen. 23:4), but at other times designates a less assimilated person (Ex 12:45; KJV "foreigner").

All the uses in Leviticus 25 are translated in the Septuagint with the Greek word - [paroikos](#) - literally a noncitizen or resident alien (Acts 7:29 "MOSES FLED AND BECAME AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF MIDIAN") and used metaphorically of a Christian whose real home is in heaven stranger, one who lives for awhile on earth (1 Peter 2:11-[note](#)) and of a Gentile not yet belonging to God's covenant people (Eph 2:19-[note](#)). Fanny Crosby beautifully pictures our redemption in this old hymn:

[Redeemed, and with the price of blood,](#)

Which Thou hast shed for me,  
I stand, a monument of grace,  
A witness, Lord, for Thee.

Refrain

Redeemed, and made by simple faith  
An heir of Heaven above!  
Oh, love surpassing human thought!  
Oh, vast, unmeasured love!

Redeemed, no longer dead in sin,  
But raised by pow'r divine,  
My tongue, rejoicing, cries aloud,  
All glory, Lord, be Thine.

Refrain

Redeemed, my heart is filled with praise,  
My soul true comfort knows,  
And daily feels the calm of peace  
That like a river flows.

Refrain

Redeemed, I'll tell it o'er and o'er;  
Redeemed my song shall be,  
My watchword through the vale of death,  
My passport home to Thee.

Refrain

**Toshab** - 14x in 13v - Usage: foreign resident(1), settlers(1), sojourner(8), sojourners(2), sojourning(1), tenants(1).

Genesis 23:4 "(Abraham testified) I am a stranger and a **sojourner** among you; give me a burial site among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

Exodus 12:45 "A **sojourner** or a hired servant shall not eat of it.

Leviticus 22:10 'No layman, however, is to eat the holy gift; a **sojourner** with the priest or a hired man shall not eat of the holy gift.

Leviticus 25:6 'All of you shall have the sabbath products of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your **foreign resident**, those who live as aliens with you.

Leviticus 25:23 'The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and **sojourners** with Me.

Leviticus 25:35 'Now in case a countryman of yours becomes poor and his means with regard to you falter,



then you are to sustain him, like a stranger or a **sojourner**, that he may live with you.

Leviticus 25:40 'He shall be with you as a hired man, as if he were **asojourner**; he shall serve with you until the year of jubilee.

Leviticus 25:45 'Then, too, it is out of the sons of the **sojourners** who live as aliens among you that you may gain acquisition, and out of their families who are with you, whom they will have produced in your land; they also may become your possession.

Leviticus 25:47 'Now if the means of a stranger or of **asojourner** with you becomes sufficient, and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you, or to the descendants of a stranger's family,

Numbers 35:15 'These six cities shall be for refuge for the sons of Israel, and for the alien and for the **sojourner** among them; that anyone who kills a person unintentionally may flee there.

1 Kings 17:1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the **settlers** of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

1 Chronicles 29:15 "For we are **sojourners** before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope.

Psalms 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; Do not be silent at my tears; For I am a stranger with You, A **sojourner** like all my fathers.

**See C H Spurgeon's sermon - [Strangers and Sojourners - Psalm 39:12](#) (#3234) -** "A stranger is a person who is away from his home. And a sojourner is one who only stays in a certain place for a short time and then must be up and away. Such is a true Christian.....Further, we are in our hearts, strangers to the world. Wherever a true Englishman wanders, his heart always turns towards his native land and he says—England, with all your faults, I love you still— and when once again he sees the hoary cliffs of old Albion, his heart leaps within him, for he is glad to be back in the dear homeland! I have traveled through many lands and I can appreciate their beauties, but, after all, "there's no place like home!" So is it with the Christian. He has various interests and occupations here and he seeks to be a blessing in the land where he is for a while, a sojourner, but his heart is with Christ in heaven—and he can never be fully satisfied until he is there, too! An Englishman abroad is often hard to please. He thinks sometimes very foolishly, that there is nothing as good as what he has in his fair island home! But a Christian knows that heavenly things are infinitely preferable to the things of earth! He has long since learned that there is nothing here to satisfy his immortal spirit and his heart is always anticipating the time when he shall be at home with his Lord and find in Him all that his capacious soul can wish." ([Read his entire wonderful sermon](#)).

**ISBE article - THE TOSHABH.** Of the toshabh we know very little. It is possible that the word is practically synonymous with ger, but perhaps it is used of less permanent sojourning. Thus in Lev 22:10 it appears to cover anybody residing with a priest. A toshabh could not eat the Passover or the "holy" things of a priest (Ex 12:45; Lev 22:10). His children could be purchased as perpetual slaves, and the law of the Jubilee did not apply to them as to Israelites (Lev 25:45). He is expressly mentioned in the law of homicide (Nu 35:15), but otherwise we have no information as to his legal position. Probably it was similar to that of the ger.

**NEW NAVE'S TOPICAL BIBLE - ALIENS, strangers, heathen.** To be treated with justice, Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:33, 34; Deut. 1:16; 10:19; 24:14, 17; 27:19; Jer. 7:6; 22:3; Ezek. 22:29; Mal. 3:5. Religious privileges of, Ex. 12:48, 49; Num. 9:14; 15:14, 15. Kindness to Edomites, enjoined, Deut. 23:7. Jews authorized to purchase, as slaves, Lev. 25:44, 45; and to take usury from, Deut. 15:3; 23:20; not permitted to make kings of, Deut. 17:15. Forbidden to eat the passover, Ex. 12:45. Partially exempt from Jewish law, Deut. 14:21. Numerous in times of David and Solomon, 2 Sam. 22:45, 46; 2 Chr. 2:17; 15:9. Oppressed, Ezek. 22:29. Rights of, Num. 35:15; Josh. 20:9; Ezek. 47:22, 23. David's kindness to, 2 Sam. 15:19, 20. Hospitality to, required by Jesus, Matt. 25:35, 38, 43

**Brown-Driver-Briggs Expanded Definition - toshabh - תושב noun masculine** <sup>Leviticus 25:45</sup> **sojourner**, only P (H) and late; absolute ת Genesis 23:4 6t; construct תושב Leviticus 22:10; suffix תושבך Leviticus 25:6; plural תושבים Leviticus 25:6 2t.; construct תשבי 1 Kings 17:1, but read תשבה (q. v.) <sup>5</sup> Ew Th Hi; — *sojourner*, apparently of a more temporary and dependent (Leviticus 22:10; 25:6) kind than the גר (with which it is often joined): שָׁכֵר Exodus 12:45 (P), Leviticus 22:10 (כהן's *sojourner*), Leviticus 25:6, 40 (all H); הַגֵּרִים הַתּוֹשְׁבִים Leviticus 25:45 (c. participle גר also Leviticus 25:6); with עם, also Leviticus 25:47 (twice in verse) (H); with בְּתוֹךְ Numbers 35:15 (P). Figurative of one enjoying only a temporary tenure, with עם Genesis 23:4, with יִזְרָאֵל Leviticus 25:23; Psalm 39:13, with לְפָנַי 1 Chronicles 29:15. — 1 Kings 17:1 see above

**Leviticus 25:36 'Do not take usurious interest from him, but revere your God, that your countryman may live with you.'**

- usury (KJV): Ex 22:25 De 23:19,20 Ne 5:7-10 Ps 15:5 Pr 28:8 Eze 18:8,13,17 Eze 22:12
- fear (KJV): Lev 25:17 Ne 5:9,15

NLT Do not demand an advance or charge interest on the money you lend them. Instead, show your fear of God by letting them live with you as your relatives.

## INSTRUCTIONS ON INTEREST

In Deuteronomy there were several prohibitions regarding **interest**

Deuteronomy 23:19 **"You shall not charge interest to your countrymen** interest on money, food, [or] anything that may be loaned at interest. 20 "You may charge interest to a foreigner, but **to your countrymen you shall not charge interest**, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land which you are about to enter to possess.

Deuteronomy 24:10-13) "When you make your neighbor a loan of any sort, you shall not enter his house to take his pledge. 11 "You shall remain outside, and the man to whom you make the loan shall bring the pledge out to you. 12 "If he is a poor man, you shall not sleep with his pledge. 13 "When the sun goes down you shall surely return the pledge to him, that he may sleep in his cloak and bless you; and it will be righteousness for you before the LORD your God.

See also

Ex 22:25 — "If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, you are not to act as a creditor to him; you shall not charge him interest.

Eze 22:12 — "In you they have taken bribes to shed blood; you have taken interest and profits, and you have injured your neighbors for gain by oppression, and you have forgotten Me," declares the Lord GOD.

**Usurious** - This refers to the practice of making unethical or immoral monetary loans. A loan is usurious when one is charged excessive or abusive interest rates.

Notice what serves as an impediment to charging excess interest - the fear of God. Genuine reverential of God will serve to motivate one to turn from evil. For example, Pr 3:7 says "Do not be wise in your own eyes; **Fear** the LORD and **turn away** from evil." Pr 8:13 says "the fear of the LORD is to hate evil." Proverb 16 says "by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil."

**MacArthur** - Usury or excessive interest was prohibited for all (Ps 15:5). Even fair interest was otherwise prohibited in dealing with the poor (see Dt 23:19, 20; 24:10–13). The basics of life were to be given, not loaned, to the poor.

**Leviticus 25:37 'You shall not give him your silver at interest, nor your food for gain.'**

NLT Remember, do not charge your relatives interest on anything you lend them, whether money or food.

The instructions on how to treat the poor continue. This makes me think of those places that give cash to poor folks who have not yet received their wages and charge exorbitant interests! God is definitely not pleased with those businesses for taking advantage of the situation of these poor individuals!

**Leviticus 25:38 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.'**

- which (KJV): Ex 20:2
- and to be (KJV): Lev 11:45 22:32,33 Nu 15:41 Jer 31:1,33 32:38 Heb 11:16

NLT I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your

God.

## OUR GOD IS A GENEROUS GOD

Why does God state this in the context of instructions on how to treat the poor in their midst? Clearly He desires all of Israel to remember that they were poor and in bondage in Egypt from which they never could have escaped had He not been "generous" to them in giving deliverance and land in Canaan. Remembering this truth should (like the fear of God mentioned in Lev 25:36) should serve as motivation for the better off in Israel to be generous to those who are not well off. How wonderful would it be if Americans (most of whom are rich relatively speaking) practiced this principle! Those who have received mercy (financially speaking) should be the first to show mercy (financially speaking)!!!

**Leviticus 25:39 'If a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to you that he sells himself to you, you shall not subject him to a slave's service.**

- be sold (KJV): Ex 21:2 22:3 De 15:12 1Ki 9:22 2Ki 4:1 Ne 5:5 Jer 34:14
- compel him to serve as (KJV): Heb. serve thyself with him with the service of, etc. Lev 25:46 \*marg: Ex 1:14 Jer 25:14 27:7 30:8

NLT "If any of your Israelite relatives go bankrupt and sell themselves to you, do not treat them as slaves.

## PRINCIPLES REGARDING SLAVERY Leviticus 25:35-38

God is saying that even if a fellow Israelite has become a slave to another Israelite, the latter is not to treat him like he would an ordinary slave!

**Leviticus 25:40 'He shall be with you as a hired man, as if he were a sojourner; he shall serve with you until the year of jubilee.**

- Ex 21:2,3

NLT Treat them instead as hired servants or as resident foreigners who live with you, and they will serve you only until the Year of Jubilee.

In Exodus we see God's laws regarding Hebrew slaves:

Exodus 21:2; 3 "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment. 3 "If he comes alone, he shall go out alone; if he is the husband of a wife, then his wife shall go out with him.

So instead of treating them like a common slave they are to be treated like a hired man or a sojourner. Their debt would remit in the year of Jubilee, which means for some serving as a hired man may be for quite a long time if they indentured themselves soon after the previous Jubilee. Then they would have to work for 40 or more years!

**The Year of Jubilee** - [see notes](#) on Lev 25:8-10ve

C H Spurgeon in "The Interpreter Bible: Spurgeon's Devotional Bible" -

Thus by the gospel jubilee we are set free, with the true liberty. Now know we the meaning of the Lord's words, "the year of my redeemed is come." Have all in this house kept the jubilee? If not, the Lord grant that we may.)

Jesus our great High Priest,  
Hath full atonement made;  
Ye weary spirits, rest;

Ye mournful souls, be glad!  
The year of jubilee is come:  
Return, ye ransom'd sinners, home.

Ye who have sold for nought  
The heritage above,  
Receive it back unbought,  
The gift of Jesus' love;  
The year, &c.

Ye slaves of sin and hell,  
Your liberty receive;  
And safe in Jesus dwell,  
And blest in Jesus live;  
The year, &c.

**Leviticus 25:41 'He shall then go out from you, he and his sons with him, and shall go back to his family, that he may return to the property of his forefathers.'**

- then shall (KJV): Ex 21:3 Joh 8:32 Ro 6:14 Tit 2:14
- shall return (KJV): Lev 25:10,28

NLT At that time they and their children will no longer be obligated to you, and they will return to their clan and ancestral property.

The [year of Jubilee](#) results in a clean slate for the hired individual.

**Leviticus 25:42 'For they are My servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt; they are not to be sold in a slave sale.'**

NLT The people of Israel are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt, so they must never be sold as slaves.

## SERVANTS OF THE LIVING GOD

**They are My servants** - Lev 25:55 says "'For the sons of Israel are **My servants**; they are **My servants** whom I brought out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'" And dear reader, if you have been set free from slavery to sin, you are now the bond servant of God, Paul recording "but now having been freed ([eleutheroo \[word study\]](#)) from sin and enslaved ([douloo \[word study\]](#)) from [doulos](#) to God, you derive your benefit (fruit - [karpos](#)), resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." (Ro 6:22-[note](#)) Paul also wrote "Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. 22For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. 23You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men." (1 Cor 7:21-23)

**Leviticus 25:43 'You shall not rule over him with severity, but are to revere your God.'**

- rule (KJV): Lev 25:46,53 Ex 1:13,14 2:23 3:7,9 5:14 Isa 47:6 58:3 Eph 6:9 Col 4:1
- but shalt (KJV): Lev 25:17 Ex 1:17,21 De 25:18 Mal 3:5

NLT Show your fear of God by treating them well; never exercise your power over them in a ruthless way.

**Revere your God** - Again we see the how holy fear of God should motivate a god-like treatment of others. [See note](#) on Lev 25:17) How have you treated others this past week (today)? Have you treated them the way God has treated you?

**Leviticus 25:44 'As for your male and female slaves whom you may have--you may acquire male and female slaves from the pagan nations that are around you.**

- Ex 12:44 Ps 2:8,9 Isa 14:1,2 Rev 2:26,27

NLT "However, you may purchase male or female slaves from among the foreigners who live among you.

## **INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SLAVERY**

**You may acquire male and female slaves** - This is a difficult passage for many to understand today given the evils that the institution of slavery has wrought throughout history and sadly even in America!

The excellent website [Gotquestions](#) addresses this question:

**Question: "Does the Bible condone slavery?"**

**Answer:** There is a tendency to look at slavery as something of the past. But it is estimated that there are today over 27 million people in the world who are subject to slavery: forced labor, sex trade, inheritable property, etc. As those who have been redeemed from the slavery of sin, followers of Jesus Christ should be the foremost champions of ending human slavery in the world today. The question arises, though, why does the Bible not speak out strongly against slavery? Why does the Bible, in fact, seem to support the practice of human slavery?

The Bible does not specifically condemn the practice of slavery. It gives instructions on how slaves should be treated (Deuteronomy 15:12-15; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1), but does not outlaw slavery altogether. Many see this as the Bible condoning all forms of slavery. What many fail to understand is that slavery in biblical times was very different from the slavery that was practiced in the past few centuries in many parts of the world. The slavery in the Bible was not based exclusively on race. People were not enslaved because of their nationality or the color of their skin. In Bible times, slavery was based more on economics; it was a matter of social status. People sold themselves as slaves when they could not pay their debts or provide for their families. In New Testament times, sometimes doctors, lawyers, and even politicians were slaves of someone else. Some people actually chose to be slaves so as to have all their needs provided for by their masters.

The slavery of the past few centuries was often based exclusively on skin color. In the United States, many black people were considered slaves because of their nationality; many slave owners truly believed black people to be inferior human beings. The Bible condemns race-based slavery in that it teaches that all men are created by God and made in His image (Genesis 1:27). At the same time, the Old Testament did allow for economic-based slavery and regulated it. The key issue is that the slavery the Bible allowed for in no way resembled the racial slavery that plagued our world in the past few centuries.

In addition, both the Old and New Testaments condemn the practice of "man-stealing," which is what happened in Africa in the 19th century. Africans were rounded up by slave-hunters, who sold them to slave-traders, who brought them to the New World to work on plantations and farms. This practice is abhorrent to God. In fact, the penalty for such a crime in the Mosaic Law was death: "Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death" (Exodus 21:16). Similarly, in the New Testament, slave-traders are listed among those who are "ungodly and sinful" and are in the same category as those who kill their fathers or mothers, murderers, adulterers and perverts, and liars and perjurers (1 Timothy 1:8-10).

Another crucial point is that the purpose of the Bible is to point the way to salvation, not to reform society. The Bible often approaches issues from the inside out. If a person experiences the love, mercy, and grace of God by receiving His salvation, God will reform his soul, changing the way he thinks and acts. A person who has experienced God's gift of salvation and freedom from the slavery of sin, as God reforms his soul, will realize that enslaving another human being is wrong. He will see, with Paul, that a slave can be "a brother in the Lord"

(Philemon 1:16). A person who has truly experienced God's grace will in turn be gracious towards others. That would be the Bible's prescription for ending slavery.

### **Why Does the Bible Tolerate Slavery? Dan Vander Lugt**

The slavery tolerated by the Scriptures must be understood in its historical context. Old Testament laws regulating slavery are troublesome by modern standards, but in their historical context they provided a degree of social recognition and legal protection to slaves that was advanced for its time (Exodus 21:20-27 ; Leviticus 25:44-46).

In ancient times, slavery existed in every part of the world. Slaves had no legal status or rights, and they were treated as the property of their owners. Even Plato and Aristotle looked upon slaves as inferior beings. As inhumane as such slavery was, we must keep in mind that on occasion it was an alternative to the massacre of enemy populations in wartime and the starvation of the poor during famine. It was to the people of this harsh age that the Bible was first written.

In New Testament times, slave labor was foundational to the economy of the Roman empire. About a third of the population was comprised of slaves. If the writers of the New Testament had attacked the institution of slavery directly, the gospel would have been identified with a radical political cause at a time when the abolition of slavery was unthinkable. To directly appeal for the freeing of slaves would have been inflammatory and a direct threat to the social order. 1 Consequently, the New Testament acknowledged slavery's existence, instructing both Christian masters and slaves in the way they should behave (Ephesians 6:5-9 ; Colossians 3:2 ; Colossians 4:1 ; 1 Timothy 6:2 ; Philemon 1:10-21). At the same time, it openly declared the spiritual equality of all people (Galatians 3:28 ; 1 Corinthians 7:20-24 ; Colossians 3:11). 2

The gospel first had the practical effect of doing away with slavery within the community of the early church.<sup>3</sup> It also carried within it the seeds of the eventual complete abolition of slavery in the Western world.

The fact that the Bible never expressly condemned the institution of slavery has been wrongfully used as a rationale for its continuance. In the American South prior to the Civil War, many nominal Christians wrongly interpreted the Bible's approach to slavery and used their misunderstanding to justify economic interests. The terrible use of African slave labor continued in spite of those who argued from the Scriptures for the spiritual equality of all races.<sup>4</sup> Today the Christian message of the spiritual equality of all people under God has spread throughout the world, and it is rapidly becoming the standard by which the human values of all nations are measured.

By the time of Christ, there had been several large slave rebellions. The rebellion led by Spartacus in 73 BC terrorized all of southern Italy. His army defeated the Romans in two pitched battles before it was defeated and its survivors crucified.

Also in direct contradiction to pagan values, both the Old and New Testaments clearly denied that there is anything demeaning about physical work. Jesus and His disciples were "blue collar" working men, and Paul was a tentmaker by trade (Mark 6:3 ; Acts 18:3 ; Acts 20:33-34 ; 1 Corinthians 4:12 ; 2 Thessalonians 3:8,11).

Already by the second century, a former slave named Pius was the Bishop of Rome.

William Wilberforce is a prime example of the influence of the gospel. An unlikely candidate for conversion, he was a high-living member of the upper classes and a rising star in English politics. His conversion to Christianity led to his lifelong dedication to the abolition of slavery in the British Empire. His dream was fulfilled just before his death in 1833 when the House of Commons passed a law that abolished slavery.

Another example is John Newton, the author of the beloved hymn "Amazing Grace." Newton was a slave trader prior to his conversion. Afterwards, he became a crusader for the abolition of slavery and an important influence in the life of William Wilberforce.

### **Allan Moseley, et al - Exalting Christ in Leviticus**

Lev 25:44-46 address the servitude of non-Israelites. Rather than limit comments to these three verses, the list below consists of 12 facts about slavery in the Bible. The list, which includes a reference to Leviticus 25, is an attempt to put Leviticus 25 in the context of what the entire Bible says about the issue of slavery.

1. The Bible affirms that all people of all ethnicities are equally created in the image of God and have equal ability to experience salvation in Jesus (Gen 1:27; Acts 10:34; 11:1-18; Gal 3:28).

2. Practices such as the subjugation of a people group and treating people as commodities are wicked and

reveal the depth of humanity's depravity (1 Tim 1:9-10).

3. The Old Testament allows enslavement of non-Israelites, but it was limited to a specific time in history when God used it as His judgment on the people groups who had rejected Him and oppressed Israel (Lev 25:44-46; Isa 14:1-2). God also commanded Israelites to love their neighbors and to treat the weak compassionately, commands that would eventually undermine the institution of slavery (Lev 19:13-18).

4. Old Testament laws regulating slavery recognized the worth of persons and the inviolability of the family and required release in the case of harsh treatment (e.g., Exod 21:7-11).

5. The slavery of fellow Israelites described in the Old Testament was allowed by God only to provide relief from debt and included provisions for the release of slaves (Lev 25:26,29; Deut 15:12-15).

6. In the New Testament slaves are addressed directly, indicating that God sees them as persons who are responsible for their own behavior, not owned by someone else (Col 3:22-24).

7. The kind of slavery practiced in American history is condemned in 1 Timothy 1:9-10 (called "kidnappers," "enslavers," or "slave traders") as "contrary to sound doctrine" along with murder, homosexuality, and lying.

8. The New Testament teaches that if a slave has the opportunity for freedom, he should take advantage of it (1 Cor 7:21-24).

9. The gospel of Jesus Christ equalizes people, since slaves are free in Christ and freemen are slaves to Christ (1 Cor 7:21-24; Philemon 16-17).

10. The New Testament emphasizes that no matter what our status (married, single, divorced, free, or enslaved) we are to use it as an opportunity to serve God and advance the gospel (1 Cor 7:18-24; Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:22-24).

11. The Bible does not advocate bloodshed or rebellion in overturning evil structures of society like slavery. Instead, Christians live with love and grace. As we share the gospel through example and words, people receive Jesus, their hearts are changed, and then societal structures change. Once the gospel is applied by enough people in a society, the elimination of slavery is inevitable.

12. The New Testament teaches that the workplace is a mission field, where both masters and servants live like Jesus and proclaim the gospel. Viewed from this spiritual and eternal perspective, the slave who knows Jesus always has an advantage over the master who does not (Titus 2:7-15).

Applying biblical texts about slavery to a contemporary context can be complicated. The slavery mentioned in the Bible is not the same as the phenomenon of slavery in the antebellum southern United States. The context of the slavery mentioned in the Old Testament was the ancient Near East, and the context of the slavery mentioned in the New Testament was the Roman Empire. The institution of slavery was different in each of those contexts, and different in turn from any contemporary context. However, the list above supplies clear principles that we can apply in any context. We should also remember that we are no better than the people who enslaved persons in different periods in history. The impulse to grab power and subjugate people is part of our fallen nature. Also, racism supports slavery, and followers of Jesus should be active in aggressively fighting racism as a virulent evil.

**Leviticus 25:45** 'Then, too, it is out of the sons of the sojourners who live as aliens among you that you may gain acquisition, and out of their families who are with you, whom they will have produced in your land; they also may become your possession.

■ Isa 56:3-6

NLT You may also purchase the children of such resident foreigners, including those who have been born in your land. You may treat them as your property,

**Possession** (0272) (**ahuzzah** from achaz = to grasp, to take hold, take possession) is a feminine noun meaning something seized or grasped a picture of the root verb achaz we see when Jacob "took hold" of Esau's heel (Gn 25:26); Samson "took hold" of the city gate (Judges 16:3) and Ruth "held" the cloak as Boaz poured six measures of barley into it (Ruth 3:15). Given this meaning of the



root (achaz to seize) it is a somewhat ironic wordplay that the land of Canaan (Israel's inalienable possession) was conquered by Israel "seizing" the promised land as ordained by God. In Psalm 2 the Father makes a promise to His Son declaring "Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the [very] ends of the earth as Your **possession**." (Ps 2:8).

**Ahuzzah** is usually translated **possession** (slaves only in Lev 25:45, 46) or **property** and has the nuances of either "personal property" or more frequently, "landed property." Jehovah rather than giving the Levites land (although they did own houses in the Levitical cities) would be their possession (Nu 18:20; Ezek. 44:28). In regard to property, **ahuzzah** refers primarily to the **possession** of Promised Land in Canaan by Israel. While the Promised Land is said to be the possession of Israel, the true Landlord is the Lord Himself ("for the land is Mine" Lev 25:23) Who Alone is strong and sovereign enough to give Abraham and his seed the land as an everlasting possession. (Ge 17:8), this being the first use of ahuzzah. Ahuzzah refers to a **burial site** in Ge 23:4,9,20.

**Vine - 'achuzzah (272 ,אָחֻצָּה), "property; possession."**

This word appears 66 times, with most of its appearances being in Genesis-Joshua and Ezekiel. Essentially 'achuzzah is a legal term usually used of land, especially family holdings to be passed down to one's heirs. In Gen. 17:13 (an early occurrence of the word) Abram is promised the territory of Palestine as a familial or tribal possession until the indiscriminate future. In Gen. 23:20 (cf. vv. 4, 9) the word bears a similar meaning. The difference appears to be that here no feudal responsibilities were attached to this "possession." However, the rather small lot belonged to Abraham and his descendants as a burial site: "And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth" (Gen. 23:20).

In Lev. 25:45-46 non-Israelites could also be inheritable property, but a fellow Israelite could not. The "inheritable property" of the Levites was not fields but the Lord Himself (Ezek. 44:28).

**Brown-Driver-Briggs Expanded Definition -ahuzzah - אָחֻצָּה noun feminine possession**

— א' Genesis 47:11 11t.; construct אָחֻצָּה Genesis 17:8 21t.; suffix אָחֻצָּת Psalm 2:8; — *possession*, P & late; of landed property Genesis 47:11; Leviticus 14:34; Leviticus 25:10,13,25,27,28,33 (houses); Leviticus 25:41; Leviticus 25:45; Leviticus 21:46; Numbers 27:4; Numbers 32:5,22,29; Numbers 35:8; Deuteronomy 32:49; Joshua 21:12,39; Ezekiel 44:28; Ezekiel 45:5,6,7 (twice in verse); Ezekiel 45:8; Ezekiel 46:18 (3t. in verse); Ezekiel 48:20,21,22 (twice in verse); 1 Chronicles 7:28; 1 Chronicles 9:2; 2 Chronicles 11:14; 31:1; Nehemiah 11:3; with אָחֻצָּה' אָרְצָה = *land possessed, one's own land* Genesis 36:43; Leviticus 14:34; Leviticus 25:24; Numbers 35:28; Joshua 22:4,9,19 (twice in verse), compare אָחֻצָּה' אָרְצָה Leviticus 27:24; with אָחֻצָּה' שָׂדֶה, Leviticus 27:16,22,28, compare Leviticus 27:21; with אָחֻצָּה' עֵיר, Leviticus 25:32,33; אָחֻצָּה' בְּנִיחָה = *possession by right of inheritance* Numbers 27:7; Numbers 32:32, & אָחֻצָּה' Numbers 35:2 compare אָחֻצָּה' בְּנִיחָה Ezekiel 46:16 (but Co as Numbers 27:7 so B); אָחֻצָּה' קֶבֶר Genesis 23:4,9,20; Genesis 49:30; Genesis 50:13; אָחֻצָּה' עוֹלָם Genesis 17:8; Genesis 48:4; Leviticus 25:34; in promise to Davidic king אָחֻצָּה' וְאָחֻצָּתָךְ Psalm 2:8 ("אָחֻצָּה'"); figurative of י' as portion of Levitical priests Ezekiel 44:28 ("אָחֻצָּה'").

**Ahuzzah** - 66x in 58v - Usage: possession(40), possessions(2), property(19), site(5).

Genesis 17:8 "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Genesis 23:4 "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you; give me a burial **site** among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

Genesis 23:9 that he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he owns, which is at the end of his field; for the full price let him give it to me in your presence for a burial **site**."

Genesis 23:20 So the field and the cave that is in it, were deeded over to Abraham for a burial **site** by the sons of Heth.

Genesis 36:43 chief Magdiel, chief Iram. These are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites), according to their habitations in the land of their possession.

Genesis 47:11 So Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had ordered.

Genesis 48:4 and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.'

Genesis 49:30 in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site.

Genesis 50:13 for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite.

Leviticus 14:34 "When you enter the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put a mark of

leprosy on a house in the land of your possession,

Leviticus 25:10 'You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of you shall return to his family.

Leviticus 25:13 'On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property.

Leviticus 25:24 'Thus for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land.

Leviticus 25:25 'If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold.

Leviticus 25:27 then he shall calculate the years since its sale and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it, and so return to his property.

Leviticus 25:28 'But if he has not found sufficient means to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hands of its purchaser until the year of jubilee; but at the jubilee it shall revert, that he may return to his property.

Leviticus 25:32 'As for cities of the Levites, the Levites have a permanent right of redemption for the houses of the cities which are their possession.

Leviticus 25:33 'What, therefore, belongs to the Levites may be redeemed and a house sale in the city of this possession reverts in the jubilee, for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the sons of Israel.

Leviticus 25:34 'But pasture fields of their cities shall not be sold, for that is their perpetual possession.

Leviticus 25:41 'He shall then go out from you, he and his sons with him, and shall go back to his family, that he may return to the property of his forefathers.

Leviticus 25:45 'Then, too, it is out of the sons of the sojourners who live as aliens among you that you may gain acquisition, and out of their families who are with you, whom they will have produced in your land; they also may become your possession.

Leviticus 25:46 'You may even bequeath them to your sons after you, to receive as a possession; you can use them as permanent slaves. But in respect to your countrymen, the sons of Israel, you shall not rule with severity over one another.

Leviticus 27:16 'Again, if a man consecrates to the LORD part of the fields of his own property, then your valuation shall be proportionate to the seed needed for it: a homer of barley seed at fifty shekels of silver.

Leviticus 27:21 and when it reverts in the jubilee, the field shall be holy to the LORD, like a field set apart; it shall be for the priest as his property.

Leviticus 27:22 'Or if he consecrates to the LORD a field which he has bought, which is not a part of the field of his own property,

Leviticus 27:24 'In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom he bought it, to whom the possession of the land belongs.

Leviticus 27:28 'Nevertheless, anything which a man sets apart to the LORD out of all that he has, of man or animal or of the fields of his own property, shall not be sold or redeemed. Anything devoted to destruction is most holy to the LORD.

Numbers 27:4 "Why should the name of our father be withdrawn from among his family because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's brothers."

Numbers 27:7 "The daughters of Zelophehad are right in their statements. You shall surely give them a hereditary possession among their father's brothers, and you shall transfer the inheritance of their father to them.

Numbers 32:5 They said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession; do not take us across the Jordan."

Numbers 32:22 and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you shall return and be free of obligation toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours for a possession before the LORD.

Numbers 32:29 Moses said to them, "If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, everyone who is armed for battle, will cross with you over the Jordan in the presence of the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession;

Numbers 32:32 "We ourselves will cross over armed in the presence of the LORD into the land of Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us across the Jordan."

Numbers 35:2 "Command the sons of Israel that they give to the Levites from the inheritance of their possession cities to live in; and you shall give to the Levites pasture lands around the cities.

Numbers 35:8 "As for the cities which you shall give from the possession of the sons of Israel, you shall take more from the larger and you shall take less from the smaller; each shall give some of his cities to the Levites in proportion to his possession which he inherits."

Numbers 35:28 because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest. But after the death of the high priest the manslayer shall return to the land of his possession.

Deuteronomy 32:49 "Go up to this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab opposite Jericho, and look at the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the sons of Israel for a possession.

Joshua 21:12 But the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as his possession.

Joshua 21:41 All the cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the sons of Israel were forty-eight cities with their pasture lands.

Joshua 22:4 "And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, as He spoke to them; therefore turn now and go to your tents, to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan.

Joshua 22:9 The sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home and departed from the sons of Israel at Shiloh which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, to the land of their possession which they had possessed, according to the command of the LORD through Moses.

Joshua 22:19 'If, however, the land of your possession is unclean, then cross into the land of the possession of the LORD, where the LORD'S tabernacle stands, and take possession among us. Only do not rebel against the LORD, or rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves, besides the altar of the LORD our God.

1 Chronicles 7:28 Their possessions and settlements were Bethel with its towns, and to the east Naaran, and to the west Gezer with its towns, and Shechem with its towns as far as Ayyah with its towns,

1 Chronicles 9:2 Now the first who lived in their possessions in their cities were Israel, the priests, the Levites and the temple servants.

2 Chronicles 11:14 For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.

2 Chronicles 31:1 Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah, broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the Asherim and pulled down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, as well as in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the sons of Israel returned to their cities, each to his possession.

Nehemiah 11:3 Now these are the heads of the provinces who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities-- the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants.

Psalms 2:8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.

Ezekiel 44:28 "And it shall be with regard to an inheritance for them, that I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no possession in Israel-- I am their possession.

Ezekiel 45:5 "An area 25,000 cubits in length and 10,000 in width shall be for the Levites, the ministers of the house, and for their possession cities to dwell in.

Ezekiel 45:6 "You shall give the city possession of an area 5,000 cubits wide and 25,000 cubits long, alongside the allotment of the holy portion; it shall be for the whole house of Israel.

Ezekiel 45:7 "The prince shall have land on either side of the holy allotment and the property of the city, adjacent to the holy allotment and the property of the city, on the west side toward the west and on the east side toward the east, and in length comparable to one of the portions, from the west border to the east border.

Ezekiel 45:8 "This shall be his land for a possession in Israel; so My princes shall no longer oppress My people, but they shall give the rest of the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes."

Ezekiel 46:16 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "If the prince gives a gift out of his inheritance to any of his sons, it shall belong to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance.

Ezekiel 46:18 "The prince shall not take from the people's inheritance, thrusting them out of their possession; he shall give his sons inheritance from his own possession so that My people will not be scattered, anyone from his possession."""

Ezekiel 48:20 "The whole allotment shall be 25,000 by 25,000 cubits; you shall set apart the holy allotment, a square, with the property of the city.

Ezekiel 48:21 "The remainder shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy allotment and of the property of the city; in front of the 25,000 cubits of the allotment toward the east border and westward in front of the 25,000 toward the west border, alongside the portions, it shall be for the prince. And the holy allotment and the sanctuary of the house shall be in the middle of it.

Ezekiel 48:22 "Exclusive of the property of the Levites and the property of the city, which are in the middle of that which belongs to the prince, everything between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin shall be for the prince.

**Leviticus 25:46 'You may even bequeath them to your sons after you, to receive as a possession; you can use them as permanent slaves. But in respect to your countrymen, the sons of Israel, you shall not rule with severity over one another.**

- And ye shall (KJV): Isa 14:2
- they shall be your bondmen for ever (KJV): Heb. ye shall serve yourselves with them, Lev 25:39
- ye shall not rule (KJV): Lev 25:43

NLT passing them on to your children as a permanent inheritance. You may treat your slaves like this, but the people of Israel, your relatives, must never be treated this way.

**Leviticus 25:47 'Now if the means of a stranger or of a sojourner with you becomes sufficient, and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you, or to the descendants of a stranger's family,**

- sojourner or stranger wax rich (KJV): Heb. the hand of a stranger, etc. obtain, etc. Lev 25:26 1Sa 2:7,8 Jas 2:5

NLT "If a resident foreigner becomes rich, and if some of your Israelite relatives go bankrupt and sell themselves to such a foreigner,

**Ryrie** - Lev 25:47-55 If an Israelite sold himself to a foreigner, he could be redeemed by a near relative, by himself, or automatically during the year of jubilee.

#### **John Bennett - Leviticus 25:47–55 THE PRICE OF HIS REDEMPTION**

'A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization', said Samuel Johnson. Our chapter continues to focus on the needs of the poor. A situation is anticipated in which a poor Israelite could be enslaved to a wealthy immigrant neighbour. No doubt the alien had prospered by hard graft as many do, but observe that he was to be subject to the laws of his adopted land as were the indigenous people. His slave could be redeemed or would go out free in the year of jubilee.

A potential redeemer for the slave is described as 'one of his brethren', v. 48, or 'any that is nigh of kin', v. 49, or 'himself', v. 49. As in a normal situation, the kinsman-redeemer principle comes into play, as illustrated beautifully in the little book of Ruth. With regard to 'the redemption of (the) soul', a treasure-trove of wealth could never effect it, Ps. 49:6–8, and yet there is the need for a kinsman-redeemer in that sphere too. The eternal Son of God was eligible. He is God 'manifest in the flesh,' 1 Tim. 3:16. He was sent 'in the likeness of sinful flesh', Rom. 8:3. Just as His people are sharers in flesh and blood, He 'took part of the same', Heb. 2:14. In His manhood He identified with us and thus is qualified to be our Redeemer.

The price of the slave's redemption was determined by the proximity of the year of jubilee. By contrast, the redemption of the soul 'is precious', requiring nothing less than the death of the Redeemer. To redeem from the curse of the law, He became 'a curse for us', Gal. 3:13. To redeem us from all iniquity, He 'gave himself for us', Titus 2:14. To redeem from a vain manner of life, His 'precious blood' was shed, 1 Pet. 1:18–19. Peter was inspired to write that this redemption was not by 'silver and gold', a great relief to him, for he had none! Acts 3:6. We bless God for 'the redemption that is in Christ Jesus', Rom. 3:24, and rejoice that our 'redeemer liveth', Job 19:25.

Our chapter concludes with a reminder that in the ultimate, God's people are His servants. Being 'bought with a price', 1 Cor. 6:20, demands consecrated living and devoted service.

'Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my heart, my life, my all!' ISAAC WATTS

**Leviticus 25:48 then he shall have redemption right after he has been sold. One of his brothers may redeem him,**

- Lev 25:25,35 Ne 5:5,8 Ga 4:4,5 Heb 2:11-13

NLT they still retain the right of redemption. They may be bought back by a close relative--

**Then he shall have redemption right** - (Hebrew = [geullah](#); [lutrosis](#) = redemption - act of freeing or releasing, deliverance Lu 1:68,

2:38, Heb 9:12) **Geullah** refers to deliverance of a countryman that had been sold for debt.

**One of his brothers may redeem him** - Redeem is the great Hebrew word [goel/ga'al](#) (Lxx = [lutroo](#)) Redemption, a contractual agreement which existed in the slave culture, offered the potential for emancipation to indentured individuals under certain conditions. Slaves could be bought out of slavery or some other sort of indentured status by family members or other interested parties who would pay the ransom price.

**Leviticus 25:49 or his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or one of his blood relatives from his family may redeem him; or if he prospers, he may redeem himself.**

- or if he be (KJV): Lev 25:26

NLT an uncle, a nephew, or anyone else who is closely related. They may also redeem themselves if they can get the money.

### THE NEAREST RELATIVE: A KINSMAN REDEEMER

This passage invokes the concept of the **kinsman-redeemer** ([goel/ga'al](#)) - one who pays. We see this truth saturated throughout the book of Ruth (Ru 2:1; 3:10-18; 4:1-10) where Ruth's "Kinsman-Redeemer" Boaz beautifully foreshadows the greatest Kinsman-Redeemer, Christ about Whom Isaiah prophesied "'A Redeemer ([goel/ga'al](#); Lxx = [rhuomai](#) = one who rescues from danger) will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares the LORD." (Isa 59:20, quoted by Paul in Romans 11:26-[note](#))

**Leviticus 25:50 'He then with his purchaser shall calculate from the year when he sold himself to him up to the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall correspond to the number of years. It is like the days of a hired man that he shall be with him.**

- reckon (KJV): Lev 25:27
- price of his sale (KJV): This was a very equitable law, both to the sojourner to whom the man was sold, and to the Israelite who had been sold. The Israelite might redeem himself, or one of his kindred might redeem him; but this must not be done to the prejudice of his master. They were therefore to reckon the years he must have served, from that time till the jubilee; and then taking the current wages of a servant, per year, at that time, multiply the remaining years by that sum, and the aggregate was to be given to his master for his redemption. The Jews hold that the kindred of such a person were bound, if in their power, to redeem him, lest he should be swallowed up among the heathen; and we find (Ne 5:8) that this was done by the Jews on their return from the Babylonish captivity.
- according to the time (KJV): Lev 25:40,53 De 15:18 Job 7:1,2 14:6 Isa 16:14 21:16

NLT The price of their freedom will be based on the number of years left until the next Year of Jubilee-- whatever it would cost to hire a servant for that number of years.

**Calculate** ([02803](#))([chasab/hasab](#)) means to consider, to think, to calculate, to reckon oneself, to impute. The first OT use of **chasab** is in Genesis 15:6-note which teaches that the way of salvation has always been by faith to which God "calculated" (reckoned, imputed) righteousness to Abraham's "spiritual bank account." In a sense Abraham experienced that glorious a taste of the deeper significance of the Year of Jubilee and well might have sung this old hymn...

[Fair shines the morning star:](#)

The silver trumpets sound,  
Their notes re-echoing far,  
While dawns the day around:  
Joy to the slave; the slave is free;  
It is the year of Jubilee.

Prisoners of hope, in gloom  
And silence left to die,

With Christ's unfolding tomb,  
Your portals open fly;  
Rise with the Lord—He sets you free;  
It is the year of Jubilee.

Ye, who have sold for naught  
The land your fathers won,  
Behold how God hath wrought  
Redemption through His Son;  
Your heritage again is free,  
It is the year of Jubilee.

Ye, who yourselves have sold  
For debts to justice due,  
Ransomed, but not with gold,  
He gave Himself for you!  
The blood of Christ hath made you free;  
It is the year of Jubilee.

Captives of sin and shame,  
O'er earth and ocean, hear  
An angel's voice proclaim  
The Lord's accepted year;  
Let Jacob rise, be Israel free;  
It is the year of Jubilee.

**Leviticus 25:51 'If there are still many years, he shall refund part of his purchase price in proportion to them for his own redemption;**

LXE And if any have a greater number of years than enough, according to these he shall pay his ransom out of his purchase-money.

CSB If many years are still left, he must pay his redemption price in proportion to them based on his purchase price.

ESV If there are still many years left, he shall pay proportionately for his redemption some of his sale price.

KJV If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for.

NET If there are still many years, in keeping with them he must refund most of the cost of his purchase for his redemption,

NIV If many years remain, he must pay for his redemption a larger share of the price paid for him.

NLT If many years still remain until the jubilee, they will repay the proper proportion of what they received when they sold themselves.

YLT 'If yet many years, according to them he giveth back his redemption money, from the money of his purchase.

**His own redemption** - (Hebrew = [geullah](#)) Our debt could never have been repaid, except by Christ Jesus our Redeemer Who paid the costly price to set His people free forever!

**Leviticus 25:52 and if few years remain until the year of jubilee, he shall so calculate with him. In proportion to his years he is to refund the amount for his redemption.**

- Jubilee (KJV): The jubilee was a wonderful institution, and of great service to the religion, freedom, and independence of the Hebrews. It was calculated to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor, and reducing them to perpetual slavery; and to hinder

their obtaining possession of all the lands by purchase, mortgage, or usurpation. It was further intended, that debts should not be multiplied too much, lest the poor should be entirely ruined; that slaves should not always continue in servitude; that personal liberty, equality of property, and the regular order of families might, as much as possible, be preserved; and that the people might thus be strongly attached to their country, lands, and inheritances.

NLT If only a few years remain until the Year of Jubilee, then they will repay a relatively small amount for their redemption.

**Leviticus 25:53 'Like a man hired year by year he shall be with him; he shall not rule over him with severity in your sight.'**

- Lev 25:43 'You shall not rule over him with severity, but are to revere your God.

LXE as a hireling; he shall be with him from year to year; thou shalt not oppress him with labour before thee.

CSB He will stay with him like a man hired year by year. A foreign owner is not to rule over him harshly in your sight.

ESV He shall treat him as a servant hired year by year. He shall not rule ruthlessly over him in your sight.

KJV And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.

NET He must be with the one who bought him like a yearly hired worker. The one who bought him must not rule over him harshly in your sight.

NIV He is to be treated as a man hired from year to year; you must see to it that his owner does not rule over him ruthlessly.

NLT The foreigner must treat them as workers hired on a yearly basis. You must not allow a foreigner to treat any of your fellow Israelites harshly.

YLT as an hireling, year by year, he is with him, and he doth not rule him with rigour before thine eyes.

**Leviticus 25:54 'Even if he is not redeemed by these means, he shall still go out in the year of jubilee, he and his sons with him.'**

- in these years (KJV): or, by these means
- then (KJV): Lev 25:40,41 Ex 21:2,3 Isa 49:9,25 52:3

NLT If any Israelites have not been redeemed by the time the Year of Jubilee arrives, then they and their children must be set free at that time.

## SET FREE IN THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Although noted above this old hymn is so good we will repeat it here...

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow, The gladly solemn sound,  
Let all the nations know, To earth's remotest bound;  
The Year of Jubilee is come!  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.  
Jesus, our great High Priest,  
Hath full atonement made: Ye weary spirits, rest,  
Ye mournful souls, be glad; The Year of Jubilee is come!  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home . . .  
Ye slaves of sin and hell, Your liberty receive,  
And safe in Jesus dwell, And blest in Jesus live;  
The Year of Jubilee is come!  
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."



**Leviticus 25:55 'For the sons of Israel are My servants; they are My servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.**

- my servants (KJV): Lev 25:42 Ex 13:3 20:2 Ps 116:16 Isa 43:3 Lu 1:74,75 Ro 6:14,17,18 Ro 6:22 1Co 7:22,23 9:19,21 Ga 5:13

NLT For the people of Israel are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God.

**For** - Notice the little preposition "for" (there are over 7000 "for's" in Scripture) and if the [context](#) indicates, as it does in this passage, that the "for" is a [term of explanation](#), pause and ask yourself what is the Spirit seeking to explain? **In fact, stop reading right now and observe the previous passages and see if you can determine what Jehovah is explaining.** Notice how pausing to ponder will always force you to examine the [context](#). You can (and should) practice this simple discipline every time you encounter a for, and while not every instance is a term of explanation, a "for" at the beginning of a verse is almost always is used with that grammatical sense. **I guarantee that if you begin to "pause and ponder," you will radically rejuvenate your "Read Through the Bible in a Year" program!** You might even get a small journal and begin to keep notes on what the Spirit illuminates and how this truth can be applied to your daily life. As you practice [interrogating the text \(for, therefore, but, so that, etc\) with 5W/H](#) questions such as "What's the for explaining?", you will begin to learn to (1) [Read the Bible inductively \(power point overview\)](#) and to (2) [Meditate](#) (see also [Primer on Biblical Meditation](#)) on the Scripture. Meditation or "chewing the cud" of the Scripture (cf Mt 4:4, Job 23:12 [note](#), [Jer 15:16-note](#)) so to speak is a vanishing discipline in our fast paced, hi tech, low touch society, but a spiritual discipline which God promises to greatly bless (See Ps 1:1-[note](#), Ps 1:2-[note](#), Ps 1:3-[note](#), Joshua 1:8-[note](#), cf Ps 4:4, 19:14, 27:4, 49:4, 63:6, Ps 77:6, 77:12, Ps 104:34, Ps 119:15, 119:23, 119:27, Ps 119:48, 119:78, Ps 119:97, 119:99, Ps 119:148, 143:5, Ps 145:5) From the preceding passages which "organ" of our being is most often involved/engaged in meditation? What are the subjects or the focus of meditation? **Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like eating without chewing.**

Jehovah is explaining why they will be set free in Jubilee. They belong to Him. He brought (and bought) them. He is their God. If this is true in the Old how much greater is the truth recorded by Paul in the New...

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, Whom you have from God, and that **you are not your own**? For [term of explanation](#) you have been bought with a price (1 Peter 1:18-[note](#), Titus 2:14-[note](#)): therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Cor 6:19-20-note)

**Ross has an excellent summary application of some of the major principles in Leviticus 25-** The Jubilee Year forms a marvelous climax to the sacred calendar of the Hebrews. Both Jubilee (looking to release) and Sabbath (looking to rest) are types of the rest and release brought in by Christ and brought to fruition in the kingdom. Both are consequent upon atonement. In ancient Israel it was not until the blood was shed and the living goat led away into the wilderness, bearing the sins of the people into oblivion, that the trumpets pealed their exultant notes, proclaiming liberty and rest, restitution and rectitude for the people. So too it is because of the death of Jesus Christ that (1) Christianity has come to sinful humankind with all its tidings of good and wealth of salvation (John 1:29; Eph. 1:6); (2) spiritual blessings are inherited by the believer (Rom. 5:11); (3) the church will enjoy the Sabbatic glory of rest and release in the world to come (Rev. 21:1-4); and (4) the eternal jubilee will make all things new, especially a completely new social order of freedom and bliss (Rev. 21:23-22:5). What is the old social order that is removed? The evils remedied by the Jubilee Year were debt, slavery, destitution, and exhausting toil. I make a twofold discussion of the antitype of the Jubilee Year (but only after dealing in depth with the passage): the jubilee of the heart (our present experience in Christ) and the jubilee of the kingdom (the physical and spiritual reality in the world to come). The present form and the future form of the kingdom parallel the previous discussion about the Sabbath. All of this takes place through the sacrifice of Christ, who then becomes the herald of the great jubilee, announcing the year of the LORD's favor (Isa. 61:1-3). The basic principle to stress in this chapter as the rationale behind the laws is the LORD's oft-repeated expression: "The land is mine, for you are strangers and sojourners with me." God is sovereign over the affairs of the world; thus he has the right to release from bondage or slavery whom he wishes, to remove the land from the rich and distribute it as he wishes. This truth kept any Israelite in the physical world, and should keep any minister in the spiritual world, from personalizing the work given to him or her, from taking credit for it, or from jealously guarding it as his or her own. It is a sacred trust to be removed some day when the LORD makes all things new. The truth in this passage ought to humble us in our work before God. (Holiness to the Lord)