

181031-4 Leviticus 25, Land Sabbaths, & The Jubilee – Craig Thurman

1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,

Vss. 1-7: A Sabbath rest instituted for the land.

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

Speak unto the children of Israel – tells us to whom this applies. Does not apply to the nations of the earth. What follows is a corporate observance.

When ye come into the land – marks the time when the observance is to be counted and kept. This is described in the following verses.

3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

vineyard, פְּרָם, KJV, vineyard, vine

fruit thereof, תְּבוּאָה, t^e-voo-ah'; KJV, the increase, fruits, gain, revenue; cf. Lev.25.3, 7, 12, 15, 16, 20-22 (twice)

Every individual Israelite was obliged to follow this rule: for six years the field may be sown, the vine may be pruned, and a harvest may be gotten.

4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

5 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

and when ye reap, וּבְקַצְרְכֶם, Qal infin. of קָצַר, w/2ppl. masc. suff; KJV, to reap, shorten, straiten, cut down, vex, harvest, reaper, harvester, mower; cf. Lev.19.9; 22.23; 25.5, 11

So, the 7th years the land is not tilled, sown, or reaped.

6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,

and for thy stranger, תוֹשֵׁב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מוֹשֵׁב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

Either the words *the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you* means that that which springs up of itself everyone, rich and poor, possessors of lands and those without could eat of this produce. There would not be the usual harvesting and storing of grains, etc. Rather taking what is for personal and daily need.

Or, this might mean that through observing the Sabbath of the land the LORD would cause the land to be more productive overall. I just can't say. I'm prone to agree with the first.

Verse 8-19: The Jubilee is 7 years times 7 years.

8 ¶ And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

9 Then (which marks out a time which ends the 49 years to begin the 50th) **shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee** (marg. *loud of sound, הַעֲבֹרָה*) **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.**

A trumpet was a call of the general assembly of Israel on the first day of the seventh month. (cf. Lev.24.24) The seventh month is the second of the

New Years for Israel. The 7th month is the month of Ethnaim or Tisri. The first New year was on the first day of the first month, Abib. So, on the 7th month, 10th Day is the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. This is the great day on which is proclaimed liberty. This liberty, as we shall read concerns the returning of lands to their families, and souls to their lands.

10 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 [What follows is an explanation of what Jubilee is.]; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

jubilee, יוֹבֵל, yoh-vehl, KJV, tss. once in Ex.19.13, *trumpet*, and in Jos. ch. 6 as *rams' horns*; otherwise, 14 times (# for salvation) in Lev. ch.25; 5 more in Lev.27 (total 19, # for faith); once more in Nu.36.4 (total 20, # for redemption)

Jubilee is a day when all land debt and personal bondage of the Hebrew is cancelled.

11 A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you (again, note the plural pronoun, לָכֶם: a corporate observance): **ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.**

and when ye reap, וּבְקִצְרֹכֶם, Qal infin. of קָצַר, w/2ppl. masc. suff; KJV, *to reap, shorten, straiten, cut down, vex, harvest, reaper, harvester, mower*; cf. Lev.19.9; 22.23; 25.5, 11

Again, like the land Sabbath, so in the year of the Jubilee the land is to rest.

12 For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

This means that the 7th year land rest and the Jubilee rest will fall back to back. About this John Gill says,

'...because two years would come together in which were no sowing and reaping: but that God, that could cause the earth to bring forth fruit for three years, ver. 21, could make it bring forth enough for four years ...' *Exposition of the Old and New Testaments*, vol.1, p.683

The LORD the nation on the 6th day with manna enough for the 7th day Sabbath. The Lord blessed the produce of the land of Canaan on the 6th year for the 7th year rest. Why not bless the earth to produce enough to cover for the Jubilee too? The LORD could provide for Israel so that they could live of the '*... spontaneous productions of the earth.*' Gill

13 In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.

Jubilee will regulate all land transactions.

14 And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another:

15 According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

All transactions fall into this 50 year cycle.

16 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

For example, if land is sold in the beginning, just after the observance Jubilee the price for it will be a full 49 year value of whatever the potential yield of the land is determined to be. And the value is reduced as time moves closer to the next time of Jubilee.

17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.

18 *Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.*

19 *And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.*

For obedience to this law Israel shall be blessed with remaining in the land securely. However, one of the reasons that Israel was removed from the land was because they had violated the law of Jubile. (cf. Jer.34.8-17)

Verses 20-22: A question is anticipated about how the Israelites should survive through a time when the land is to rest from tilling, sowing, and pruning.

20 *And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:*

21 *Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.*

22 *And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.*

If we put ourselves in the place of the Israelite as we read we should be able to understand the reason for the question raised verse 20 and why it requires 3 years to be restored after a single year of rest for the land.

Remember that this rest occurs in the 7th month and lasts for one year. For that reason, when the year of rest of ended it will too late to till the soil and sow the seed to expect a harvest. So, the fields would be tilled and sown in the 8th year, and though harvest can be brought in later that year they would still be eating the old store as they came into the 9th year.

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

and sojourners, תושב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מושב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

This verse reiterating that the land is released to the proper owners every 50th year.

24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.

The seller of his possession has a right to redeem it anytime that he is able. That is explained in the following.

25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession,

possession i.e., parts of his fields. (cf. Ru.4.3-5, 10)

and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

Very important is the mention of the kinsman. He may redeem the loss of his relative at will. He must be able to pay the entire debt owed. And this speaks in a type of Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer. By His shed blood He paid the full price of the debt of His people, all of the election of grace, and restored us to His inheritance, and ours.

Eph 1:11 In whom [in Jesus Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession [which seems to mean, until the time the inheritance is really possessed], unto the praise of his glory.

We, the elect of God, fell in sin and lost our inheritance in Adam. Christ alone restored us to it. This restoration happened on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Fulfilling the type of the Day of Atonement, Christ's death on the cross restored those sold into bondage to sin to an everlasting inheritance, and the land under Satan dominion is restored to us, through Him, like Boaz (Ruth 3.9) raised up children from the dead upon their inheritance.

26 And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;

27 Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession.

shall be imputed, יִקָּשֶׁב, Niphal (simple passive) fut. 3psm. of קָשַׁב; Niphal is tss. imputed, accounted, reckoned, counted, esteemed; cf. Lev. 7.18; 17.4; 25.27, (Piel [intensive active]pret.), 31, 50, (Piel pret.), 52, (Piel pret.).

28 But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.

Jubilee resets the land to the original owners, or at to the original family.

Verses 29-33: Exceptions to Jubilee are city-houses: all the tribes but of Levi have only one year to redeem the house or it is become the property of the new owner not being subject to the law of Jubilee.

29 And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it.

30 And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubile.

Houses of the cities were not treated the same houses and lands of the countryside. Transactions of this sort in the city were only redeemable within a year.

31 But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubile.

32 Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.

Exceptions for the Levites to the rule of selling city-houses. They may redeem at any time, and if not, at Jubilee it is returned to them. These properties cannot be sold into perpetuity.

33 And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel.

34 But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession.

The Levites may not sell their properties outside of the walled cities.

Verses 35-38: Have brotherly love for one another.

35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay [slipped into poverty] with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

and fallen in decay, וַיִּפֹּט, the indefinite article *and*; Qal pret., 3ps. fem. of מוֹט, moth; KJV, *fallen in decay* (marg. *fail*), *moved, shaken, slipped, removed, fallen down*.

then you shall help, וְהִחֲזַקְתָּ, Hiphil (causative active) pret., 3psm. of חֲזַק; KJV, *to to harden, repair, maintain, strengthen, mend, encourage, make strong, fortify, hold fast, fasten* (taken most from the Piel (intensive) and Hiphil (causative) verbs.

or a sojourner, תּוֹשֵׁב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מוֹשֵׁב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, *a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.*

36 Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

usury, נִשְׁךְ, which is always tss. *usury* (12).

De 23:19 Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:

20 Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

38 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.

Properly, the one being helped is indebted to his brother which came to his aid. If he is ever restored he should repay the debt. What is condemned here profiting off of a brother's *desperate need*; adding usury or expecting more victuals in return.

Ex 22:25 If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

The attitude that they were to have to their neighbor was the same as that which the LORD took of them. Israel was once impoverished and captive in Egypt and the LORD showed them grace, not law. He did not deliver them based on any thought to gain from them anything.

Otherwise the Scriptures do not condemn the use of usury. If someone wishes to borrow money from another to prosper himself in some way by to buy a house, an ox, a new cart ... charge usury. The Parable of the Talents tells us that much.

Lu 19:23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

The servant was given a sum to conduct the business of the nobleman, and the expectation was that there would be an increase in that amount when he returned.

In verse 39, But when an Hebrew becomes another's property he is to be released at Jubilee.

39 ¶ And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:

40 But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile:

as a sojourner, תושב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מושב and the verb ישב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

The issue of Israelites selling or being sold into slavery (cf. Ex.23), for poverty or for crimes there is a time element which could vary anywhere from 6 years to 49 years. In some instances the servant was to be released on the 7th years. In others, perhaps not until as long as whenever the time of Jubilee came, which could have been as long as 49 years. In either case all are released at the time of Jubilee.

41 And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

42 For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.

43 Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.

*with rigour, בְּפֶרֶךְ, the preposition בְּ, by, with; masc. sing. noun פֶּרֶךְ;
KJV, rigour (5), cruelty (1).*

Always treat brethren as brethren, not as one would treat an heathen slave.

Certainly the Israelites knew well what *rigour* meant.

*Ex 1:13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:
14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.*

So, when the brethren fall into hard times, hire them and give them work. Pay them what they are worth. This helps strengthen them so that they might in time be able to be restored, if the LORD will.

44 Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

Slaves are made of the heathen, not of the brethren.

45 Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you,

of the strangers, תּוֹשֵׁב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מוֹשֵׁב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

possession, לְאִחְזָה, fem. sing. noun, אֶחָזַק, w/ prefixed preposition לְ, for or to, ; KJV, always tss. with the English possession; the verb, אָחַז, to take, to fasten, to hold, bar, to handle, to take hold of, catch hold of, etc.

46 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

Contrary to condemning slavery, the LORD regulated it. Slave became the property of the owner. Those of the heathen which came to be sold could be bondmen, but never the seed of Abraham.

47 And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee,

or stranger, תּוֹשֵׁב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מוֹשֵׁב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee,

sojourner, תּוֹשֵׁב, masc. noun (see also the masc. noun מוֹשֵׁב and the verb יָשַׁב) KJV, a sojourner, a foreigner, a stranger, inhabitant; prominent in ch. 25, vss. 6, and for thy stranger; 23, and sojourners; 35, or a sojourner; 40, as a sojourner; 45, of the strangers; 47, or stranger and sojourner.

or to the stock of the stranger's family:

48 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:

49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

50 And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubile: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.

51 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.

52 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.

53 And as a yearly hired servant [in other words, as an employee] shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight.

54 And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubile, both he, and his children with him.

55 For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

So, the children of Israel were not to be lords over one another, but brethren – because they are all servants of the LORD.

Jubilee is a great day of liberation of property and servants. Every one of the Hebrews are restored to their inheritance on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. So Christ has purchased us, the election of grace, *to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away ...*

1Pe.1.4 We, the elect of God, have been released from sin's servitude to the inheritance, and the inheritance has been released from Satan's dominion to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, our kinsman Redeemer, when He died and atoned to God by His shed blood on the cross – for us.

This is a long text and a lot of details to be considered. There are lots of things to consider, and things we haven't yet understood. I hope that we have taken something away from this time of study that would help us as we wait for the return of our blessed Lord Jesus one day soon.