

Sermon #68 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title:            **STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS**  
   **WITH GOD**

Text:            Leviticus 25:23-34

Subject:        *Our Pilgrimage with God*

Date:            Tuesday Evening — September 24, 2019

Readings:     *Lindsay Campbell and David Burge*

Introduction:

**The year of jubilee was established by God, established at the time God gave the law to Israel on Mt. Sinai. As we have seen, it was distinctly a picture of God's great grace in Christ, a picture of the salvation of God's elect.**

- The blowing of the jubilee trumpet was symbolic of the preaching of the gospel.
- Jubilee itself portrayed the grace and glory God promises to chosen sinners in Christ.
- As jubilee began on the day of atonement, the whole of God's salvation comes to chosen sinners by and because of the atonement Christ made for our sins at Calvary.

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**All the blessings of grace and glory, all the blessings of God's salvation, both in this world and in the world to come, are...**

- Free gifts of God's grace (Ephesians 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 1:9),
- Gifts of God's free grace bestowed upon to chosen sinners through the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7),
- And free gifts of grace bestowed upon sinners by the demands of God's holy law (Romans 3:23-26).

**Neither the blessings of grace that we enjoy now in the experience of salvation nor the blessings of our God in heavenly glory depend upon or are in any way conditioned upon our works. Salvation is, in its entirety, the gift of God.**

**THE REASON FOR JUBILEE**

1<sup>st</sup> — **Let me show you God's reason for establishing the year long Jubilee sabbath.** — We have seen in this chapter that in the year of jubilee...

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- all debts were immediately cancelled,
- all who had been in bondage were set free,
- every man who had lost his inheritance had it returned to him,
- and all the children of Israel kept a year long sabbath.

That is exactly what Christ has done for us in salvation; and that is exactly what we shall enjoy in heavenly glory, because he redeemed us with his precious blood.

Oh, poor souls, you who are yet laboring in bondage under sin's dominion, hear the jubilee trumpet and go free! Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and walk in liberty!

Then, after giving the jubilee law and declaring what was to be done in the year of jubilee, the Lord **God explains the reason why he gave such specific and strict laws about this great year of liberation beginning in verses 23 and 24.**

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(Leviticus 25:23-24) “The land shall not be sold forever: for the land *is* mine; for ye *are* strangers and sojourners with me. (24) And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.”

After briefly mentioning the law of the kinsman redeemer in verses 25-28, he continues talking about houses and lands.

(Leviticus 25:29-34) “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 forever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubilee. (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 jubilee. (32) Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites,

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*and* the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time. (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 jubilee*: 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.”

**SABBATH LAWS**

As a ceremonial institution the year of jubilee completed the picture of the sabbatical laws of the Old Testament. **The seventh day sabbath and seventh week, and the seventh year sabbath all spoke of the rest of faith in Christ** (Matthew 11:28-30). These were all connected with the various institutions of divine worship on earth in the Mosaic Age, portraying our present enjoyment of God’s grace and salvation in Christ.

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**The jubilee (50<sup>th</sup> year) sabbath was different.** Though God commanded it, there is no record that Israel ever observed it. **This sabbath portrayed that great sabbath that yet remains, the everlasting sabbath of eternal glory.** — **It was God’s promise, in type, to those who are strangers and sojourners with him, of a better sabbath beyond this veil of tears.**

**THE LAND**

2<sup>nd</sup> — In verse 23 the Lord states emphatically, **“The land shall not be sold forever.”** Why? What was the reason for this command? It was just this. — **The land of Canaan represented our heavenly inheritance, the gift of God’s free grace in Christ, an inheritance that cannot be lost, forfeited, or destroyed either by the fierceness of our foes nor by the failures of our flesh.**

(Romans 11:29) “For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.”

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(Ecclesiastes 3:14) “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him.”

**THE HOUSES**

Then, the Lord makes a specific exception. Look at verses 29-30.

(Leviticus 25:29-30) “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 forever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubilee.”

In verses 31-34 he declares that the houses in the country villages and the houses of the Levites were to be counted as part and parcel with the land. Being

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built upon the ground, joined to the ground, they were counted one with the land. They could not be sold forever. The houses in the country villages, among the vines and fig trees were considered one with the land. The houses of the Levites were, like the land, the Lord's provision for the priestly tribe. Like the land itself, these could never be lost permanently.

But the houses of the walled cities were looked upon differently. They could be bought and sold repeatedly. Why? Because **the land of Canaan was the heritage of redemption and grace by covenant promise**. It was "*a grant of redemption*" (v. 24). But the walled cities of the land and the houses built upon the walls that men had erected were the works of men. And the works of men, no matter how noble and impressive, have nothing to do with the gifts of grace!

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3<sup>rd</sup> — Now, go back to verse 23. Here, the Lord ascribes another reason why the land was not to be sold forever. — God’s Israel was a nomadic nation of strangers and sojourners with him through the land. He owned the land. It was his and his alone. They were but temporary tenants.

(Leviticus 25:23) “The land shall not be sold forever: for the land *is* mine; for ye *are* strangers and sojourners with me.”

Though the land of Canaan was typical of our eternal inheritance with Christ, it was still but an earthly parcel of ground. It was no more permanent than any other part of the earth; and the Lord reminded Israel of this by declaring that so long as they lived on the earth, they were but strangers and sojourners. But, most importantly, they were strangers and sojourners with him. Let us learn this lesson and learn it well. Oh, may God the Holy Ghost write it upon our hearts!

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**Proposition:** You and I, my brothers and sisters in Christ, are strangers and sojourners with God in this world (Psalm 39:12).

(Psalms 39:12) “Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for **I am a stranger with thee**, and a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.”

**We are pilgrims passing through the earth, but for a brief time.** Here, we have no abiding city. **Everything here is temporary. Everything in that land to which we go is permanent and eternal** (2 Corinthians 4:18-5:1; Hebrews 11:8-16).

(2 Corinthians 4:18) “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.”

(2 Corinthians 5:1) “For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved,

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we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

(Hebrews 11:8-16) “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. (9) By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: (10) For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. (11) Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. (12) Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. (13) These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they

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were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (14) For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. (15) And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. (16) But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”

**A. W. Pink** wrote, “The figure of the ‘stranger’ applied to the child of God here on earth, is very pertinent and full. **The analogies between one who is in a foreign country and the Christian in this world, are marked and numerous.**

— In a strange land one is not appreciated for his birth, but is avoided (John 15:19).

— The habits, ways, language are strange to him (1 Peter 4:4).

— He has to be content with a stranger’s fare (1 Timothy 6:8).

— He needs to be careful not to give offense to the government (Colossians 4:5).

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— He has to continually enquire his way (Psalm 5:8).

— Unless he conforms to the ways of that foreign country, he is easily identified (Matthew 26:73).

— He is often assailed with homesickness, for his heart is not where his body is (Philippians 1:23).”

**SEEKING A COUNTRY**

The Holy Spirit draws his own conclusion to this confession. — “*For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country*” (v. 14). **The word translated “country” would be better translated “Fatherland.”** Heaven is our Fatherland, the land where our Father dwells, the land he possesses as his own and for his children. The Fatherland is the land where the children want to live, have a right to live, and seek to live.

**A CHOICE MADE**

Because they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth, they chose not to go back to Chaldea. — “*And*

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*truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned” (v. 15).*

Chaldea, the land from which they had come, was never very far away. There were no obstacles to prevent them from returning. But they were never inclined to return. Abraham made his servant take an oath, swearing that he would do nothing to induce Isaac to return to that pagan land. Though Jacob did once sojourn there, he did not and could not stay. His God would not allow it. Why? Because they looked for their happiness and satisfaction somewhere else.

God’s people are strangers in this world. **A stranger is a person who is away from home and away from his homeland. A sojourner is one who is moving through one place on his way to another.** That is exactly our position in this world.

I’m but a stranger here,  
Heaven is my home:  
Earth is a desert drear —

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Heaven is my home.

Dangers and sorrows stand  
Round me on every hand,  
Heaven is my fatherland —  
Heaven is my home

- Our Father is there.
- Our Elder Brother is there.
- Most of our family is there.
- Our inheritance is there.
- Soon, we shall be there.
- We seek no satisfaction here.

**A stranger is one who never quite fits in with the crowd around him.** He can never really be comfortable in their company; and they are not comfortable in his. — *“The world knoweth us not.”*

**WITH GOD**

That may seem a little sad to those who neither know us nor our God and Savior. We are strangers and

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sojourners in this world; but that is not the end of the statement. The Lord God says, “*ye are strangers and sojourners with me.*” **We are strangers and sojourners with God our Savior.** That means that we are always under our heavenly Father’s watchful eye, omnipotent protection, and tender care. We are ever in the company of our God and Savior. We live in Christ and with Christ, but more — Christ is our Life (Philippians 4:4; Colossians 3:1-4; Ephesians 2:4-5).

(Ephesians 2:4-5) “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)”

(Philippians 4:4-7) “Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And



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the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

(Colossians 3:1-4) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

**APPLICATION**

Now, turn with me to John 13, and I will me wrap this up (John 13:36-14:3).

(John 13:36-38) “Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. (37) Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I

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will lay down my life for thy sake. (38) Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.”

(John 14:1-3) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father’s house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”

(Psalms 39:1-13) “I said, **I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue**: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. (2) I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, *even* from good; and my sorrow was stirred. (3) My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue, (4) **LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is;**

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**that I may know how frail I am.** (5) Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

(6) Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

(7) And now, Lord, what wait I for? **My hope is in thee.** (8) Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

(9) **I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.** (10) Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. (11) When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man *is* vanity. Selah.

(12) Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for **I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner,** as all my fathers *were*. (13) O spare me, that I may

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recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.”

**What do these things tell us about God’s people in this world? How do they apply to us?** Spiritually, believers today are precisely like those people. Many who profess faith in Christ do depart from him. But when the Lord Jesus asked his disciples, “*Will ye also go away,*” Peter answered for all. “*Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life*” (John 6:65-69). We “*desire a better country.*”

**All who know God, all who live by faith desire, yearn for, and pant after a better country, a heavenly country. We long for a country where everything is better!** A heavenly country! Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called our God: for he has prepared for us a city.

**Here is the inconceivable greatness and glory of our Fatherland.** — It is a land prepared specifically for us, the people of God’s peculiar love. In preparing this land for us and bringing us home to it, the Lord

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God fully answers all the hopes, expectations, and desires that are aroused in our hearts and minds by him calling himself our God and us his people. When we are at last brought home to glory, we will, beholding that which we now only see afar off, say, “Now I understand what he meant when he said, ‘*I will be their God, and they shall be my people!*’”

**TRAVELING TO ANOTHER COUNTRY**

Every year I travel to foreign countries preaching the gospel of Christ. I have crossed the borders of our nation north, south, east, and west many times. Whenever you leave this country and cross into another, three things are required.

1. You must have a birth certificate (passport) to prove your citizenship.
2. You must have a visa from the country receiving you.
3. You must have a clean record, no criminal record.

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Soon I will leave this land of sorrow and sin. I hope to enter into the bliss and glory of heaven. I hope to stand forever accepted as a citizen of the New Jerusalem. Here is the basis of my hope.

**A BIRTH CERTIFICATE** — The Lord God has given me a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17). There is in me a new man, created of God in righteousness and true holiness.

**A VISA** — I have a right to enter into heaven itself by the blood of Christ, because I am robed in his righteousness. God says, “It must be perfect to be accepted,” and in Christ I am perfect! He has made me perfectly righteous before God!

**A CLEAR RECORD** — The Lord Jesus Christ has purged away all my sins with his own precious blood. Therefore God will never charge me with any sin (Romans 4:8). When I stand before God and he searches the books for iniquity and sin under my name, he will find none (Jeremiah 50:20). — **Do you have what God requires?**

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**Illustration:** *The Preacher and the Businessman*

Amen!