

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

BIBLE TEXT : Leviticus 25:1-46

LESSON 89 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isaiah 61:1).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Leviticus 25:1-46 (KJV)

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,
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.
³ Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;
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.
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,
⁷ And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.
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 shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee 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.
¹⁰ 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

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Instructions from Mount Sinai

- 1 The Lord speaks to Moses from Mount Sinai to keep a Sabbatical year when they come into the land He is to give them, Leviticus 25:1, 2
- 2 Six years they are to sow and reap, Leviticus 25:3;
Exodus 23:10 (KJV)
¹⁰ And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:
- 3 The seventh year is to be a year of rest, a Sabbath for the Lord, Leviticus 25:4;
Hebrews 4:9 (KJV)
⁹ There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.
- 4 They and the strangers in the land are to eat that which grows of itself, Leviticus 25:5-7;
2 Kings 19:29 (KJV)
²⁹ And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

II The Fiftieth Year

- 1 They are to number seven Sabbatical years, or 49 years, Leviticus 25:8
- 2 The jubilee trumpet is to sound on the Day of Atonement throughout all the land, Leviticus 25:9
- 3 The fiftieth year is to be a year of Jubilee or freedom. Every man's possessions that have been sold revert to him, Leviticus 25:10-13;
Isaiah 61:1-2 (KJV)
¹ The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*;
² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
Isaiah 63:4 (KJV)
⁴ For the day of vengeance *is* in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.
Luke 4:19 (KJV)
¹⁹ To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
- 4 If they have bought or sold their possessions they are to regulate the price according to the years from the current Jubilee. Leviticus 25:14-16;
Leviticus 27:17-25 (KJV)
¹⁷ If he sanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy estimation it shall stand.
¹⁸ But if he sanctify his field after the jubile, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.
¹⁹ And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth *part* of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.
²⁰ And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.
²¹ But the field, when it goeth out in the jubile, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.
²² And if a *man* sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which *is* not of the fields of his possession;
²³ Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, *even* unto the year of the jubile: and he shall give

every man unto his family.

¹¹ A jubile 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 thy vine undressed.

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

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

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:

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.

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.

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*.

²³ The land shall not be sold for ever: 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.

²⁵ If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away *some* of his possession, and if any of his kin come

thine estimation in that day, *as* a holy thing unto the LORD.

²⁴ In the year of the jubile the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, *even* to him to whom the possession of the land *did* belong.

²⁵ And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.

5 They are not to oppress one another, but are to fear God, Leviticus 25:17-19

III Abundant Crops

1 Should they ask what they should eat the seventh year, the Lord tells them He will bless their crops the sixth year and they will bear enough for three years, Leviticus 25:20, 21

2 They are to sow the eighth year and yet eat of the old store until the ninth year, Leviticus 25:22;

Joshua 5:11-12 (KJV)

¹¹ And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.

¹² And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

IV Redemption of the Land

1 The land is not to be sold forever, since it belongs to God, Leviticus 25:23, 24

2 If sold through necessity, a kinsman may redeem it before the year of Jubilee but if not able to redeem it. it is to return to its owner in the year of Jubilee, Leviticus 25:25-28

3 Laws are given regulating the sale of houses in walled and un-walled cities and those owned by the Levites, Leviticus 25:29-34

4 They may take no usury from a brother nor make him a bondman, Leviticus 25:35-42;

1 Corinthians 7:23 (KJV)

²³ Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

5 They are not to rule over him with rigor, Leviticus 25:43-46;

Ephesians 6:9 (KJV)

⁹ And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Colossians 4:1 (KJV)

¹ Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

NOTES:

Year of Jubilee — a Type

The Year of Jubilee seems to be a type of the Gospel dispensation, *when* all who believe in Christ are redeemed from the bondage of sin and are given a right to an inheritance among those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus. It was a year of general release of debts and obligations, of bondmen and bondwomen, and of lands and possessions which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged.

For six years they were to sow their seed and reap their fields. but in the seventh year they were not to plant or reap. The Lord would send His blessing on their crops the sixth year and their fields would produce enough for three years. That alone would be a wonderful miracle and only God could promise such a thing as that.

The seventh year was to be a year of rest, a Sabbath unto the Lord. They, and their land, and their cattle were to have a year of rest When they had celebrated seven of those Sabbatical years, 49 years altogether, they were to have an extra Sabbath. The fiftieth year was to be a year of Jubilee, having all debts canceled and the right of inheritance restored.

Laws of Equality

to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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

This is the grandest set of laws ever given to regulate both capital and labor. There was no chance for the rich to oppress the poor, and no chance for the poor to sit idly by. They were to be equal, as brethren. These laws, if properly kept, would almost surely maintain an equality of conditions among the people.

No doubt the motive of these laws was to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor and making slaves of them, and to keep a few from getting possession of all the lands.

Zedekiah

In Jeremiah's time, when the king of Babylon was fighting against Zedekiah, king of Judah, Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people at Jerusalem to proclaim liberty unto them, and that every man should let his servants go free (**Jeremiah 34:8-9 (KJV)** ⁸ *This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them;* ⁹ *That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother*). The people responded and let their servants go. But afterward they turned and caused their servants to be brought back into subjection to them. It displeased the Lord that they had broken the covenant; and through Jeremiah, the Lord said, "Behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth" (Jeremiah 34:17).

The Lord had told them *in* the beginning that if they did not obey His statutes He would scatter them among the heathen and bring their land into desolation. "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" (Leviticus 26:34, 35).

The Lord permitted the Children of Israel to be taken captive into the land of Babylon and remain there for seventy years until the land had fulfilled her Sabbaths (**2 Chronicles 36:21 (KJV)** ²¹ *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*).

Redemption Through Christ

We were slaves of the devil; we had sold ourselves for nought; we had forfeited our right to Heaven and its eternal glories. But "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died" for us — the ungodly — redeemed us through His own precious Blood, and has given us an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Saint Luke records one of Christ's early sermons: "When he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book. and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:17-21). The real year of Jubilee had come. Here was freedom for every sin-bound soul. The inheritance lost through Adam could be restored through Jesus Christ. Truly the acceptable year of the Lord had come!

Day of Atonement

Jesus must needs die for the sins of the people so that they could be set free. The great liberty or redemption from the

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.

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:

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.

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.

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

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.

thraldom of sin, published under the Gospel, was assured when the great Atonement, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, was offered up.

The year of Jubilee was signalized by blowing of the trumpet. At the consummation of all things, Jesus said of Himself: "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:31).

Then will come God's great Sabbath of rest, the grand Jubilee of a thousand years of peace. The writer of the Book of Hebrews tells us, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God," and warns us lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What does the year of Jubilee represent?
- 2 Explain why God's laws are equal.
- 3 Why did the Lord bless their crops the sixth year?
- 4 Were the Israelites allowed to use their brethren as bondmen?
- 5 If a possession had been sold when could it be redeemed?
- 6 Could a stranger redeem one's possession?
- 7 By whom are we redeemed?
- 8 When is the acceptable year of the Lord?
- 9 When do you think the grand year of Jubilee will be?