



# The Quarry Gospel Church

BIBLE STUDY - 09.06.21

## BIBLE STUDY - LEVITICUS - 18.THE MANUAL OF HOLINESS - Leviticus 17-26

### Part 8 - GOD'S WORD ON ECONOMICS - THE SABBATH YEAR AND YEAR OF JUBILEE - Ch.25

#### INTRODUCTION

- The Bible is a "radical" book - written by a "radical" God - *Isaiah 55:8*.
- God in the Old Testament just as radical as Jesus in the New Testament.
- Leviticus reveals God's "radical" way of life for His people.  
(seen as such even today- e.g. Jubilee 2000 called on cancellation of 3rd world debt).
- The heart of Chapter 25:

***v.23 - "the land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers."***

God reminds man that he owns nothing!

- Chapter 25 is God's antidote to man's foolishness in the realms of money and property (see also *1Timothy 6:8-10*). He ordains a "full reset" every 50 years and levels out the extremes of wealth and poverty.
- 2 sections - the Sabbath Year (*vv1-7*) and the Year of Jubilee (*vv8-55*).

#### 1. THE SABBATH YEAR (vv 1-7)

- Cycle of 7 years working the land to be treated as pattern of days in the week - God's pattern established in creation. In 7th year the land was to be rested from planting or working.
- The people would live off the harvest of the 6th year until the harvest of the 8th year - a two year period.
- God promised there would be enough to cover the years of rest both in a Sabbath year and year of Jubilee (*vv18-22*).
- Purpose of the Sabbath year:
  - a) God prevented His people from abusing the land. Today land is often abused and rendered useless over time or destroyed to our detriment.
  - b) God challenged His people to decide where their trust really lay in these years - with God or with their own efforts. The same exercise of faith should engage us today: *Matthew 6:33; Psalm 112:3; Psalm 37:23-25*.

#### 2. THE YEAR OF JUBILEE(vv 8-55)

- The year of Jubilee - after 7x7 years - 50th year, beginning on the Day of Atonement.
- Began with sounding of trumpets - signifying liberty (*vv10-12*)
- In addition to all the Day of Atonement represented there was to be freedom from debt, slavery, lost property and lost relationships.
- It was an opportunity to "level up" society once more.

### Implications for Jewish Society:

- A) vv14-19 : There was no "property speculation". The value of land like modern day lease - diminishing in proportion to number of years remaining until the next Jubilee. In a Jubilee year the land reverted to the original owners - (as laid out in God's distribution of the Promised Land).
- B) God protected His people from their own foolishness which might have resulted in an inheritance lost forever. Each Jubilee, each tribe received back its allotted inheritance from the hand of God.
- C) The Jubilee followed a Sabbath Year: with great blessing came the responsibility of trust and obedience as they would have to trust God for 3years between harvests (6th to 9th year). See *Luke 12:48*.

### The Workings of the Year of Jubilee - a "radical approach":

- A) vv25-28 If an Israelite fell into debt:
  - i) First action - to sell property - to relative if possible, but if not possible to someone else.
  - ii) If financial situation of debtor improved - they were free to buy back the property at the same price (but adjusted for any years that had elapsed, the price being fixed in proportion to number of years until next Jubilee.
  - iii) If no action until Jubilee it would then be returned to the debtor owner.
- B) vv35-38 If selling property did not deal with the debt, it became the responsibility of the nearest relative to:
  - i) hire the debtor for service/labour; or
  - ii) loan the debtor the money to pay the debt at 0% interest.  
(The debtor was not to be exploited for profit.)
- C) vv 39-46 In extreme circumstances the debtor might sell themselves into service. N.B. "Service" was not "Slavery":
  - i) They could not be 'sold on';
  - ii) They could not be treated "ruthlessly" - i.e. they could not be given "back-breaking labour", but should be treated with respect.In all these actions the "relative/rescuer" was to fear God.
- D) vv47-53 If they sold themselves to a "*rich alien or temporary resident*" - they did not lose the right to redeem themselves.
- E) vv54-55 The Year of Jubilee provided the "ultimate backstop":
  - i) All land was returned to the original owner;
  - ii) The man in service was set free.

### N.B. - 2 exceptions:

- i) Houses in cities did not have to be returned after one year of ownership (except Levitical houses).
- ii) Slaves who were aliens or temporary residents could be "owned" and handed down to future generations.

## APPLICATION OF JUBILEE LAWS TODAY

- **We are called to promote Social Justice:**

God champions the cause of the poor and destitute.

*Acts 20:35; Hebrews 13:16; Proverbs 19:17; Proverbs 21:13;*

*Matthew 5:42; Luke 6:38; Luke 12:33.*

- **We are called to Authentic Worship:**

Authentic worship involves all areas of our lives, inside and outside the church, in our business lives as well as our spiritual lives.

*Isaiah 58:6.*

- **We are called to Merciful Living:**

Ch.25 - no comment on reason for debt! Families are called to be merciful regardless of whether or not the debt is due to the foolishness of the debtor.

*Luke 6:35-36; James 2:12-13.*

- **We are called to hope! - JUBILEE IS THE "GREAT RESET"**

For us the 2nd Coming of Christ will be the Great Reset - a new beginning - a return to how it should be!

*1 Thessalonians 4:16-18;*

*Luke 4:14-19* - Jesus identifies Himself as "Jubilee" - **JESUS IS OUR JUBILEE!**