



TEXT: LEVITICUS 25

INTRODUCTION:

- Today we are going to look at the Year of Jubilee
- The Year of Jubilee (from Heb. yôbēl, “ram’s horn”) is the last cycle of worship in the life of the nation of Israel
- The national life of Israel was built around four cycles of worship built around the Sabbath or Shabat in Hebrew
- The word Shabat comes from the root Shin-Beit-Tav and means to cease, to end, to rest

The first cycle of worship is the Sabbath Day

- It occurred on the seventh day and was dedicated to worshipping the Lord
- Everyone was to cease from their labors and rest

The second cycle of worship is the Day of Atonement

- Occurred in the seventh month
- It was also known as the Sabbath of Sabbaths and was referred to as the day of new beginnings

The third cycle of worship was referred to as the Sabbath Year

- Occurred every seven years
- In the seventh year the land was to rest for one year
- It was a reminder that the land belonged to the Lord

The final cycle of worship occurred after Seven Sabbath Years

Leviticus 25:8–10 (NKJV)

The Year of Jubilee

⁸ ‘And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. ⁹ Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. ¹⁰ And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.



The 50th Year was referred to as the Year Of Jubilee and the entire year was holy unto the Lord

- It was a time of rest, restoration and release
- It began with the blowing of the Rams horn on the Day of Atonement

At the moment the horn was sounded three things happened

- #1: All work ceased for one year.
- It was to be a time of rest for the soil as well as people (Lev. 25:11)

Leviticus 25:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather *the grapes* of your untended vine. ¹² For it *is* the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field.

- #2: All land was to revert to the original owner (Lev. 25:10–34; 27:16–24).

Leviticus 25:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ ‘In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. ¹⁴ And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor’s hand, you shall not oppress one another.

- #3: All debts were cancelled.
- Every Israelite who had sold himself because of poverty and remained unredeemed was to be freed along with his children (Lev. 25:39–46).

Leviticus 25:39–43 (NKJV)

The Law Concerning Slavery

³⁹ ‘And if *one of* your brethren *who dwells by you* becomes poor, and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to serve as a slave. ⁴⁰ As a hired servant *and* a sojourner he shall be with you, *and* shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. ⁴¹ And *then* he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers. ⁴² For they *are* My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. ⁴³ You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God.



In the year of Jubilee we see a picture of the life of grace

- It begins with the forgiveness of sins and is followed by freedom from slavery to sin, ceasing from dead works and the restoration to the place that He created us for.

What I want to do is look at five key principles found in the year of Jubilee

FIRST PRINCIPLE: Forgiveness (Redemption)

- The moment the Rams horn sounded on the Day of Atonement (Lv 25:9) the Lord proclaimed his people clean before him from all their sins (Lv 16:30).
- The forgiveness of sins ushered in the jubilee year.
- With the forgiveness of sins came the cancellation of all debts
- Because God cancelled our debts, we were to cancel each other's debts

That is why Paul writes...

Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV)

³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

- Brotherly generosity is urged (Lv 25:35–38),
- Liberty is granted (vv 39–43),
- Slavery in perpetuity is forbidden (vv 47–55) because god makes slaves into brothers, brings them into the Lord's service, and cancels the bondage that would otherwise be theirs forever.
- In this way the year of Jubilee is the Lord's: that they should imitate the excellencies of him who brought them out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pt 2:9).

SECOND PRINCIPLE: Freedom

- The moment the trumpet sounded shackles were broken and slaves were set free
- They weren't set free for a year and then returned to slavery
- They were set free for good and returned to their families

Leviticus 25:41 (NKJV)



⁴¹ And *then* he shall depart from you—he and his children with him—and shall return to his own family. He shall return to the possession of his fathers.

- How are slaves freed today? Through the sounding of the gospel

J Vernon McGee says...

The year of Jubilee is likened to this age of grace when the Gospel is preached to slaves of sin and captives of Satan.

I am reminded of Luke 4 where Jesus stood in the temple and said...

Luke 4:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

- This is the freedom that is ours in Christ.

THIRD PRINCIPLE: Faith

- Keep in mind in the year of jubilee they were not to work
- So the crops were not produced
- The previous year was also a sabbath year where the land didn't produce a crop
- That's two years in a row with no food being produced
- Now if you're like me you are going to ask - how are they going to eat?

God already thought of that one

Leviticus 25:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ ‘And if you say, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?” ²¹ Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years.

- Here is a principle of grace: grace provides so that God’s people can enjoy what God commands us to do (cf. Ex 16:29).



We see this in the law of the sabbath

Exodus 16:29–30 (NKJV)

²⁹ See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.” ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

- When God commands a year off, he enables them to take it.
- The last season of sowing and reaping would have been the forty-ninth year; in the final seventh year in the series the people would live off the casual growth; and in the fiftieth year nothing but the sheer attentive faithfulness of their God could provide for them (Lv 25:21).
- Here indeed their faith would be put to the test, for God spoke a word of majestic promise and called on them to believe.
- At the heart of their jubilee they took God at his word and found him faithful

FOURTH PRINCIPLE: Friendship (Lordship)

- The Year began with the blowing of the Ram's Horn announcing the Year of God's favor
- Gods favor was demonstrated by restoring the land back to its original owner
- Why? When God brought his people into possession of the land, he gave to each his inheritance.
- That inheritance was to be from generation to generation
- Why? Because God was looking out for His friends
- What happened when they got into financial trouble and needed cash?
- In a given circumstance a man might be compelled to sell his land in whole or part, but it must come back to him:

Leviticus 25:23 (NKJV)

Redemption of Property

²³ ‘The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land *is* Mine; for you *are* strangers and sojourners with Me.

Two things we notice in this verse.

- The land belongs to God
- We are strangers and sojourners with God



- Whether you've bought it or not God is the one who decides who gets the land
- How often do we forget that our homes belong to the Lord
- Our businesses belong to the Lord
- How often do we forget that this world is not our home
- Don't build attachments to things you're going to leave behind
- Keep in mind that God blesses you so that you can be a blessing in this life because you're not taking it with you
- Where does this keep the focus? On friendship with God and each other

FIFTH PRINCIPLE: Fun (Rest)

- The correlative of redemption is rest.
- Rest from the toil of harvesting, for the people of God were to live hand to mouth, gathering only what and when need dictated (vv 5–7);
- Rest from the anxious burden of debts incurred, and rest from slavery (v 10).
- Like the Sabbath this rest would have meant exactly what it said: freedom from toil; relaxation, refreshment, recreation.
- The Lord frees his people not for unbroken idleness, but for the redirection of life toward himself.
- The jubilee year was thus a deliberate opting out of the rat race;
- It called a halt to materialism
- It abandoned concern over the pressure to stay alive.
- It reordered priorities, giving a chance to appraise the use of time and the selection of objectives.
- For a whole year the people of God stood back, rested, ceased

Did you know that God commands you to rest and have a good time?

- Why? Because God created human beings not human doings
- I'm learning this late in life
- I'm a hard worker and when work takes over your life you can get to the point where your identity becomes so wrapped up in what you do that you forget who you are
- In fact we even refer to ourselves based on what we do
- The only thing that should define us is who we are in Christ

Do you who the bible says you are?



- You are a highly favored, radically forgiven, dearly loved child of God and nothing on earth can keep you from the love of God

Romans 8:38–39 (NKJV)

³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So we see five principles that operate in the year of jubilee

- Forgiveness
- Freedom
- Faith
- Friendship
- Fun

FINALLY: When Jesus stood in the synagogue in Luke 4, He announced the year of the Lord's favor.