

Leviticus Chapter 25 Continued

Leviticus 25:22 "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]."

Sow the land in the eighth year, and likewise dress their vines, olives, etc.

"And eat yet of the old fruit":

Even in the eighth year, of the old fruit of the sixth year, as the Targum of Jonathan adds.

"Until the ninth year; that is, as Jarchi explains it, until the feast of tabernacles of the ninth, which was the time that the increase of the eighth came into the house.

For all summer it was in the field, and in Tisri or September was the time of gathering it into the house.

And sometimes it was necessary to provide for four years on the sixth, which was before the sabbatical year, the seventh.

For they ceased from tilling the ground two years running, the seventh and the jubilee year.

But this Scripture is said concerning all the rest of the sabbatical years.

These encouraging promises, one would have thought, would have been placed more naturally after the account of the sabbatical year that followed (Lev. 25:7).

But the reason of their being inserted here seems to be, because in the Year of Jubilee they were neither to sow nor reap, nor gather in the grapes of the undressed vine, as in the sabbatical year (Lev. 25:11).

Wherefore those things are said for encouragement at the one time as at the other.

Since it might easily be concluded, that he that could provide for them every sixth year for three years to come, could once in fifty years provide for four.

"Until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store":

Some of which came in March, as barley.

Others in May, as the wheat, and others in August and September, as the grapes, olives, etc.

Which was the time of ingathering several fruits of the earth, and of finishing the whole.

In the last lesson, we were learning about the jubilee.

In the seventh year, they were not only to rest that year, but on jubilee as well, which was the fiftieth year.

God had promised, if they would follow His commands, he would keep His covenant with them.

On the 48th year their crop would be so bountiful, that they would have 3 years supply of food to carry them through this time of rest.

At the end of jubilee, they were to plant their crops again.

They would be cared for by the store of food from the year that provided the 3 years' supply.

Verses 23-34

Various regulations regarding real estate are outlined.

Because the land belonged to God, the Israelites could not permanently sell their inherited portion.

If a person had to sell his land, it was returned to him in the Year of Jubilee.

Leviticus 25:23 "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land [is] mine; for ye [are] strangers and sojourners with me."

“For the land is mine”:

God owns the earth and all that is in it (compare Psalm 24:1).

The people of Israel were, in fact, only tenants on the land by the LORD’s grace.

Therefore, ownership of property was temporary, not permanent.

The land could only be sold for the amount of time left until jubilee.

All the land reverted to the original owner at jubilee.

The land really was just on loan, or as we would say (long term lease).

Leviticus 25:24 "And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land."

Which they should possess in the land of Canaan, whatever part of it any of them should enjoy.

"Ye shall grant a redemption for the land":

That is, whenever any estate in it was sold through necessity, the buyer was obliged to grant a liberty to the seller to redeem it, when it was in his power to do it, or any or his relations, especially after two years.

So Jarchi observes, he that sells his possession may redeem it after two years, either he himself or he that is near akin to him, nor can the buyer hinder it (see notes on Lev. 25:15).

The land was definitely not to be sold for an extended period.

Each sale would have to bear a clause that the land would revert to the original owner on jubilee.

Leviticus 25:25 "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away [some] of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold."

Is brought very low, greatly reduced, and is in mean circumstances.

Hence Jarchi says, we learn, that no man may sell his field, unless his distress presses him and forces him to it.

For, as Maimonides observes, a man might not sell his estate to put money into his purse, or to trade with, or to purchase goods, servants, and cattle, only food.

"And hath sold away some of his possession":

Not all of it, as Jarchi remarks.

For the way of the earth or custom of the world teaches, that a man should reserve a field (or a part), for himself.

"And if any of his kin come to redeem it":

Come to the buyer and propose to redeem it, by giving what it was sold for, or in proportion to the time he had enjoyed it.

"Then shall he redeem that which his brother sold":

Nor was it in the power of the purchaser to hinder him, or at his option whether he would suffer him to redeem it or not.

Such a one was an emblem of our "*goel*".

Our near kinsman and Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, who came in our nature into this world to redeem us, and put us into the possession of the heavenly inheritance.

Nor was it in the power of any to hinder his performance of it, for he is the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

This is a further exclusion that was to be in every transaction.

If a person because of poverty had to sell their land, there was a clause stating, if he or some of his relatives could raise the money to buy it back, he could.

This was a conditional sale.

They were to have compassion for each other, and help each other.

This was one of the things that separated these people from the world.

The world dealt hard and would not sell back, but an Israelite thought of his brother's needs before his own.

Leviticus 25:26 "And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;"

That is, none of kin that was able or willing to redeem it.

Otherwise no doubt there were persons in the land able to do it at any time.

But none he was in connection with, or from whom he could expect such a favor.

"And himself be able to redeem it":

Or if his hand has got, and he has found a sufficiency for his redemption, as the Targum of Jonathan.

Not that he has found anything that was lost, as Chaskuni glosses it, but by one providence or another.

By the blessing of God on his trade and business, is become rich, and it is in the power of his hand to redeem the possession he had sold, he might do it.

But, as the same writer observes, he might not borrow and redeem, but must do it with what he had got of his own since the time of sale, and which is also the sense of others.

Leviticus 25:27 "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."

How many years had passed since it was sold?

How many it had been in the hands of the purchaser, and how many were yet to come to the year of the jubilee, by which means the price of redemption might easily be settled.

Thus, for instance, if the years were alike and there was just half the time gone, then half of the price it was sold at was repaid to the purchaser.

And if not alike, then in proportion to what had passed and were to come.

"And restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it":

For the years that were yet to come.

If, as Jarchi says, he has eaten of or enjoyed the fruit of the field three or four years, deduct the price of them from the account, and take the rest.

This is the meaning, "and restore the overplus", out of the price of the sale, according to what is eaten, and give it to the buyer.

Maimonides explains it thus; that if there were ten years to the year of the jubilee, and the field was sold for a hundred pieces, if he that bought it has eaten of it three years, then the seller that redeems it must give him seventy pieces, and he must restore his field.

If he has eaten of it six years, he is to give forty pieces, and the other restores him the field.

In the Misnah it is put thus; if he sells it (his field), to the first for a hundred pence, and the first sells it to a second for two hundred, he must not reckon but with the first, as it is said, "unto the man to whom he sold it".

If he sold it to the first for two hundred, and the first sells it to a second for a hundred, he shall not count but with the last, as it is said, "to a man".

I.e. to the man which is in the midst of it, or is possessed of it.

Nor may he sell it for a distant time, that he may redeem it near, nor when in a bad condition, that he may redeem it when in a good one.

Nor may he borrow to redeem it, nor redeem it by halves.

"That he may return to unto his possession":

And enjoy it again.

As we read in a previous lesson, they were to deal fairly with each other.

They were not to charge each other interest, or want the better end of the deal.

They were to figure out how many harvests would come and pay an equal portion of the time left until jubilee.

Leviticus 25:28 "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 jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession."

The overplus, or give him what is in proportion to the time he has had it, and yet to come.

"Then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of the jubilee":

Continue in his possession, and he shall enjoy all the benefit of it till that year comes.

"And in the jubilee it shall go out":

Out of his hands or possession; or "he shall go out".

The purchaser shall go out of what he has bought, and shall have no more possession of it.

But it shall come into the hands of the seller, and that without money, as the Targum of Jonathan adds.

"And he shall return unto his possession":

The seller, and enter upon it and enjoy it as his own property, as before he sold it.

This is just saying, if he cannot raise the money to buy it back, he can wait and get it back at jubilee.

Leviticus 25:29 "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."

Which was so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun, as Jarchi.

"Then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold":

Any time within the year he pleased, either he or any near of kin to him.

And if they would, on the day it was sold, or any time after within the compass of the year, even on the day in which the year ended.

In this such a house differed from fields, which could not be redeemed under two years (see notes on Lev. 25:15).

"Within a full year may he redeem it":

From the time it was sold, paying what it was sold for.

This is to be understood, Maimonides says, of a solar year, which consists of three hundred sixty five days.

And within this space of time such a house might be redeemed.

Leviticus 25:30 "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 jubilee."

Either by the seller or any man of kin to him.

"Then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it, throughout his generation":

After twelve months were elapsed it was not redeemable by any, but to be held by the purchaser and his heirs for ever.

"It shall not go out in the jubilee":

From the purchaser or his heirs, to the seller or his heirs.

For houses were not like lands.

The gift of God, and held under him, but were built by men, and were their absolute property.

And therefore, they could dispose of them, and they that bought them could hold them after the above mentioned time.

Nor was there any danger of confounding tribes and families by retaining them.

This law was made to encourage persons to settle in walled towns, to make and keep them populous, and to make owners of them careful not to sell them.

The Jewish canon is this; when the day of the twelfth month is come, and it (the house), is not redeemed, it is absolutely his.

Whether he bought it or whether it was given him, as it is said (Lev. 25:30).

And if in the beginning of the day of the twelfth month he (the purchaser) hides himself, that it may be confirmed to him or be his absolutely.

Hillel, the elder, ordered that he (the seller), should put his money in the chamber (belonging to the Sanhedrim), and break open the door, and go in.

And when he would, he (the purchaser), might come, and take his money.

But otherwise, if he suffers this time to pass it is irredeemable, nor will the year of jubilee help him.

The Jews except the city of Jerusalem from this law, because, they say, that does not belong to any tribe.

We see that houses in cities are under a total different set of rules.

The year of grace, if you will, is to see if the person selling is content without the house.

This is a little like the law of truth in lending in our time.

There is a period of grace to make sure the person is satisfied with the deal.

Many older people in our society today are selling their longtime homes.

Sometimes it would be good if they could have a year to think it over, before the deal would be final forever.

Sometimes, if they could, they would get their old house back.

There are so many memories that they would stand a few inconveniences.

At any rate, this selling of the house in a city was a final sale after one year.

The house would not be returned to the original owner at jubilee.

Leviticus 25:31 "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."

As there were many in the days of Joshua, the Scripture speaks of.

The Jews suppose that such are meant, even though they were afterwards walled.

"Shall be counted as the fields of the country":

And subject to the same law as they.

"They may be redeemed":

At any time before the year of jubilee, and if not, then;

"They shall go out in the jubilee":

To the original owners of them, freely, as Jarchi says, without paying anything for them.

A house with acreage, or a house in the country, fell into the same law as acreage.

It would be restored at jubilee.

Leviticus 25:32 "Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, [and] the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time."

The six cities of refuge, and forty two others.

These and the houses in them are excepted from the above law, and only they; not such as they might purchase elsewhere.

Wherefore it follows:

"And the houses of the cities of their possession":

Which were in cities possessed by them, and which was their possession, and given them as such.

"May the Levites redeem at any time":

They were not restrained to a year, as houses in walled towns, but they might redeem them as they pleased or could.

And if they did not redeem them within the year, they might redeem them afterwards, even years after, at any time before the year of jubilee.

So it is said in the Misnah the priests and the Levites sell always, and they redeem always, as it is said (Lev. 25:32).

On which one of the commentators says, "they sell always", not as the Israelites, who cannot sell less than two years before the jubilee; but the Levites can sell near the jubilee: "and they redeem always".

If they sell houses in walled cities, they are not confirmed at the end of the year, as the houses of Israelites.

And if they sell fields, it is not necessary they should remain in the hands of the buyer two years, but they may redeem them immediately if they will.

This redemption was peculiar to the Levites.

For if an Israelite has an inheritance from his father's mother, a Levite, he might not redeem according to the manner Levites did, but according to Israelites.

And so a Levite that inherited from his father's mother, an Israelite, was obliged to redeem as an Israelite and not as a Levite.

For this perpetual redemption respected only houses that were in the cities of the Levites.

Leviticus 25:33 "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."

“Cities of the Levites”:

Compare (Num. 35:1-8; Joshua chapter 21).

We see one exception to the house in town.

Since the tribe of Levi had no land inheritance, their house was part of their inheritance, so they had a right to redeem it any time.

If they were not financially able to redeem it, they received it back at jubilee.

It was, in effect, their land.

Leviticus 25:34 "But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it [is] their perpetual possession."

“The fields”:

These were fields that the village/city-at-large used to grow crops.

The cities or the land surrounding the city, which would someday be part of the city, could not be sold.

This is very similar to an individual in a church who cannot sell the church.

This city belonged to all the Levitical tribe to use as long as they lived.

The Levite's work was in the sanctuary, or temple.

They were not to work in the fields.

They lived of things of the sanctuary.

Verses 35-38

Instructions on dealing with the poor are outlined.

A Hebrew was prohibited from exacting “interest” from a fellow Hebrew, but he could charge interest to someone from another country (a “stranger”), who borrowed money.

The rich were not to oppress the poor but were to show compassion instead, based on God's compassion to Israel.

Unfortunately, this law was not always followed (Neh. 5:1-13).

Leviticus 25:35 "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."

"He be a stranger, or a sojourner":

The law required gleanings (leftovers after harvest), for the Israelite as well as the stranger (compare 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19-21).

We see the teaching about families here.

They were to help each other, not turn them out to the world.

The following is a New Testament teaching on the same thing.

1 Timothy 5:8 "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

We must never turn our brothers and sisters away when they are in need.

Leviticus 25:36 "Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee."

"Usury of him, or increase":

Usury or excessive interest was prohibited for all (Psalm 15:5).

Even fair interest was otherwise prohibited in dealing with the poor (see notes on Deut. 23:19-20; 24:10-13).

The basics of life were to be given, not loaned, to the poor.

Usury in the Scripture above, means interest on a debt.

They were not to try to make money of this brother who is already in bad financial shape.

They were to help each other.

Leviticus 25:37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

Lend him money, expecting and insisting upon a large interest for it.

This is to be understood of persons in poor and necessitous circumstances, of which the text only speaks.

Otherwise, if persons borrow money to gain by it, to carry on a greater trade, or to make purchase with it, it is but reasonable that the lender should have a share of profit arising from thence.

"Nor lend him thy victuals for increase":

By which it should seem that those two words, used in (Lev. 25:36).

Though in the main they signify the same thing, yet may be distinguished, the one as concerning money, the other food.

And which latter is not to be given by way of loan to a person in want of it, but freely. As for instance, if a man gives a poor man a bushel of wheat, on condition he gives him two for it hereafter, this is lending or giving his victuals for increase.

In other words, feed him and don't charge him later for the food.

It seems that any money loaned to him was to be loaned without interest.

This is his brother.

He is not to leave him in worse shape by charging interest on the loan.

Leviticus 25:38 "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."

"To give you the land of Canaan":

The LORD cites His generosity in giving them a land that was not theirs as a motive for their generosity toward their countrymen.

We see from this that God reminds these people, what you have and what you are is because God blessed you.

God has gone into covenant with these people to bless the people.

The only thing they have to do is to believe God and keep His commandments.

We Christians are in covenant relation with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our covenant was sealed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Our part of the covenant, we must keep is spoken of in:

Romans 10:9-13 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Leviticus Chapter 25 Continued Questions

1. What year were they to plant a crop again after the jubilee?
2. What will they eat of until the crop comes in?
3. What year was jubilee?
4. Why was the land not to be sold forever?
5. What did the LORD call the Israelites in verse 23?
6. What happened to the land at jubilee?
7. What clause was in all land sales by the Israelites?
8. Who could redeem the land for them, if they were very poor and sold the land?
9. What would be the redemption price, if he could raise the money to buy it back?
10. If he was too poor and could not redeem it, when did he get his land back?
11. How long did a person have to redeem a dwelling house in a city?
12. What happened, if they did not redeem it in this period of time?
13. Houses that were not inside a walled city were treated as what?
14. The houses of whom were exceptions to the rules about the houses inside walled cities?
15. Why were the rules different for them?
16. Why could the fields of the suburbs of their cities not be sold?
17. What can we relate this to today?
18. What does 1 Timothy 5:8 teach us?

19. What is usury?
20. Could they charge their relative for what he ate?
21. What 3 things did God remind these people of (in verse 38)?
22. Who are we Christians in covenant relation with?
23. What are we obligated to do to keep the covenant with Him?