

Day 145 – THURSDAY: May 4th

Leviticus 25

**Leviticus 25:1-55 NKJV**

And the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the LORD. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard. What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land. And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you, for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food. '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. 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. 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. 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. For it is the Jubilee; it shall be holy to you; you shall eat its produce from the field. 'In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession. And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another. According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops. Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD

your God. 'So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety. 'And if you say, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?" Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year, and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest. 'The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land. 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession. But if he is not able to have it restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be

released, and he shall return to his possession. 'If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year he may redeem it. But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee. However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country. They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the Jubilee.

Nevertheless the cities of the Levites, and the houses in the cities of their possession, the Levites may redeem at any time. And if a man purchases a house from the Levites, then the house that was sold in the city of his possession shall be released in the Jubilee; for the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel. But the field of the common-land of their cities may not be sold, for it is their perpetual possession. 'If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you. Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your God, that your brother may live with you. You shall not lend him your money for usury, nor lend him

your food at a profit. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God. '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. As a hired servant and a sojourner he shall be with you, and shall serve you until the Year of Jubilee. 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. For they are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. You shall not rule over him with rigor, but you shall fear your God. And as for your male and female slaves whom you may have—from the nations that are around you, from them you may buy male and female slaves. Moreover you may buy the children of the strangers who dwell among you, and their families who are with you, which they beget in your land; and they shall become your property. And you may take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them as a possession; they shall be your permanent slaves. But regarding your brethren, the children of Israel, you shall not rule over one another with rigor. 'Now if a sojourner or stranger close to you becomes rich, and one of your brethren who dwells by

him becomes poor, and sells himself to the stranger or sojourner close to you, or to a member of the stranger's family, after he is sold he may be redeemed again. One of his brothers may redeem him; or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him; or anyone who is near of kin to him in his family may redeem him; or if he is able he may redeem himself. Thus he shall reckon with him who bought him: The price of his release shall be according to the number of years, from the year that he was sold to him until the Year of Jubilee; it shall be according to the time of a hired servant for him. If there are still many years remaining, according to them he shall repay the price of his redemption from the money with which he was bought. And if there remain but a few years until the Year of Jubilee, then he shall reckon with him, and according to his years he shall repay him the price of his redemption. He shall be with him as a yearly hired servant, and he shall not rule with rigor over him in your sight. And if he is not redeemed in these years, then he shall be released in the Year of Jubilee—he and his children with him. For the children of Israel are servants to Me; they are My servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

## **Daily Deep Dive:**

Let's begin today with the UCG reading plan: "These words of verse 10 are engraved on the American Liberty Bell, a traditional symbol of U.S. freedom that sits outside Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. While it was first rung on July 8, 1776, to celebrate the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence, it was actually commissioned by the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly in 1751 to proclaim the Jubilee year. (Ironically, the bell was first cast in London.) In any event, it was seen by Revolutionary America as a symbol of freedom from tyranny. And the verse quoted is quite fitting in that regard. In actuality, the proclamation of "liberty" in the 50th year specifically referred to the fact that all debts were canceled, all Israelites who had sold themselves into slavery were freed, and all land went back to its original owners. The phrase "proclaim liberty" also occurs in Isaiah 61:1, where it is proclaimed to the "captives," along with "the opening of the prison to those who are bound." To whom is this referring? Those who are in "the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:26), i.e., the world at large. This is also seen as proclaiming "the

acceptable year of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:2), another name for the Jubilee. When Christ began His earthly ministry, He explained that He was fulfilling these very verses in Isaiah (Luke 4:16–21). We should easily see how this relates to the issue of debt and servitude. The penalty earned for sin is compared to debt in the Scriptures. And in Romans 6, the apostle Paul explains that the way of sin is actually a form of bondage or slavery. It is the debt of sin that has separated mankind from his intended inheritance.

Land, in this picture, is quite important. Notice this from *The Nelson Study Bible* on "Redeeming the Land": "An ancient Israelite was in desperate straits if he had to sell his family's land. Both food and income came from the proceeds of the land. Dispossessed family members would quickly become someone else's servants. Most people would work hard to avoid such a situation. However, illness, crop failure, or other misfortunes could force a person into debt to the point that his only alternative was to sell his land. Even in this distressing situation there was hope. A dispossessed family could be saved from poverty and hardship:

"First, a redeeming relative could redeem (or buy back) the land (Lev. 25:25). From the proceeds, the man could pay off



his creditors. The land stayed in the extended family; the poor family stayed on their land; and eventually the redeemer was repaid. The redeemer was the nearest male relative. If he could not fulfill this privilege and obligation, it passed down the kinship line until someone could. This is the scenario of Ruth 4: Boaz acted as a kinsman–redeemer and bought Naomi's field.

"If a man did not have any relative who would redeem his land, he could save enough to buy it back himself. The purchase price would be prorated according to the number of years left until the next Jubilee year, the fiftieth year (Leviticus 25:26, 27). A man might have to wait until the Jubilee year to reclaim the land of his inheritance (Leviticus 25:28). Even in this most desperate situation there was the hope and promise that at the Jubilee year the family would be able to return debt–free to their land and make a fresh start.

"The law of redemption and the law of the Jubilee year are vivid symbols of what Jesus Christ did on the Cross for every person [1 Corinthians 6:20; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18—19]. What our first father and mother lost in the Garden [i.e., man's dwelling in the paradise of God and opportunity to eat from the Tree of Life], we cannot retrieve

by any means [on our own]. We cannot go back to Eden [of ourselves]. Yet Jesus Christ, our elder Brother, redeemed it for us. We have been evicted from our inheritance, but in the Year of Jubilee, we will be allowed to return (cf. Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 36:33–35; Revelation 2:7; Revelation 22:1–2, 14). We will live with Jesus in Paradise." Moreover, we will at last inherit the whole universe with Him (Romans 8:16–19; Hebrews 2:8–9; Revelation 21:7), which was God's intent for mankind from the beginning (compare Deuteronomy 4:19). What a glorious redemption—of both us and our heritage." [END]

Verse 5 – For six years they were allowed to plow, sow, cultivate, etc...the land, but on the 7th year, the land was given a Sabbath rest for a year, which was “to the Lord”. They were not to plant, plow, or work the land in any way, nor were they to harvest the land in the traditional way of going through the whole field and picking everything for profit, selling, etc...

The Hebrew here is literally, “nor gather the Nazarite grapes”. This word also means “consecrated or devoted ones”. In the same way that one would consecrate themselves to God through taking a “Nazarite vow”, which required that a man not cut his hair, these

grape vines were to be “unpruned/unkept” and consecrated to God in this way.

Barnes notes states: “Vine undressed – That is, “unpruned”; literally “Nazarite vine”, the figure being taken from the unshorn locks of the Nazarite.”

Matthew Poole’s commentary states: “the grapes which thou hast separated or set apart to the honour of God, and to the ends and uses appointed by God; or the grapes of that year, which are in this like the Nazarites’ hair, not cut off by thee, but suffered to grow to the use of the poor.”

[END]

Gill’s commentary states: “That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap,.... That which sprung up of itself from grains of corn, shed in the harvest of the preceding year, without any ploughing or sowing; he might reap it, but not as at other times, the whole of it, and gather it as his own property, but only somewhat of it in common with others for his, present use: neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed; which was on this year forbid to be dressed; the grapes of which he might gather in common with others, but not as in other years, all of them, and as peculiarly his own: the words may be rendered, “the grapes of thy separations” (p); either such as in other years

he used to separate for himself, and forbid others gathering them, but now made them common; or which he did not labour in the cultivation of, but abstained from it:" [END]

Verses 6 & 7: Everyone, including animals, was to freely be able to eat from what was produced, but the owner of the land could not harvest more than their food for profit, etc... It was simply for food for everyone. What a beautiful Sabbath picture, a time ultimately pointing to the Kingdom of God when all will be satisfied and in peace together with their needs met.

Verse 17 – God’s people were not to be like the rest of mankind’s kingdoms. God’s people were to love and look out for each other, not oppress each other.

Verse 19 – We again see this beautiful picture of everyone’s needs met and living in peace and safety.

Verse 21 – God would perform a miracle in the sixth year and ensure enough food that would get them through the Sabbath year, as well as the next year which they would begin planting, sowing, and working the land again.

Verse 23 – This is a perspective we should continue to have today, that everything we have ultimately belongs to the one who created it. We are thankful for our blessings and we long for the homeland that God has promised us (compare Hebrews 11:13–14, Ephesians 2:19).

Verse 34 – John Gill’s commentary states: “The suburbs to the cities of the Levites reached two thousand cubits on every side of their cities, Num\_35:5; in which they had fields to keep their cattle in, and these belonged to them in common; every Levite had not a particular field to himself as his own property, and which is the reason why it might not be sold, nor might they agree together to sell it, for then they would have nothing to keep their cattle in” [END]

Verse 37 – They were not to charge those who were already poor interest because that only harmed them further. They were not to profit off a poor brother.

Verse 55 – It’s clear here that God sees all of His people as His servants and not permanent servants of mankind. He has redeemed them, therefore they belong to God permanently. This did not apply to foreigners because they were not God’s. We as Christians, at baptism, commit our

lives to God, we were redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ, and we now belong to God permanently.

Sadly what God meant as a blessing, the Jubilee year, seems to have never been followed. There is no record of Israel ever obeying God in these principles.