

#19

JUBILEE & JESUS

MINI BOOK

MIKE MAZZALONGO

bibletalk^{.TV}

Copyright © 2024 by Mike Mazzalongo

ISBN: 9781945778445

BibleTalk.tv

14998 E. Reno

Choctaw, Oklahoma 73020

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation Used by permission.
(www.Lockman.org)

These were a collection of regulations that guided the economic life of the people from year to year, and culminated each half century in what was referred to as the Year of Jubilee. We are no longer under this system, but I believe that it contained valuable lessons that continue to be relevant for our decision-making and conduct to this day.

BACKGROUND

First of all, we need to understand that the terms "Sabbatical Year" and "Jubilee" refer to different things but are both part of a single system.

A. Sabbatical Year

The Lord then spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a sabbath to the Lord. Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the Lord; you shall

not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year. All of you shall have the sabbath products of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you. Even your cattle and the animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat.

- Leviticus 25:1-7

God commanded His people to give the land a rest every seventh year and live by what it produced on the sixth year. When they questioned how they would be able to

survive when doing this (i.e. it would be two years before they could harvest again), God answered that every sixth year He would provide a harvest that yielded three years' worth of food (vs. 20-22), which would be sufficient for their needs.

But if you say, "What are we going to eat on the seventh year if we do not sow or gather in our crops?" then I will so order My blessing for you in the sixth year that it will bring forth the crop for three years. When you are sowing the eighth year, you can still eat old things from the crop, eating the old until the ninth year when its crop comes in.

- Leviticus 25:20-22

B. Jubilee

The command to allow the land a rest every seven years was followed by the instruction concerning Jubilee.

'You are also to count off seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven sabbaths of years, namely, forty-nine years. You shall then sound a ram's horn abroad on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement you shall sound a horn all through your land. You shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, and each of you shall return to his own property, and each of

you shall return to his family. You shall have the fiftieth year as a jubilee; you shall not sow, nor reap its aftergrowth, nor gather in from its untrimmed vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you. You shall eat its crops out of the field.
- Leviticus 25:8-12

The term Jubilee meant "horn of a ram" which the Jews used as a trumpet. The connection was that after seven cycles of these Sabbatical years, on the tenth day of the seventh month (Day of Atonement), the trumpets would sound throughout the land announcing the Year of Jubilee. The Book of Leviticus provides details concerning what was supposed to happen during this fiftieth year.

- All property sold reverted back to the original owners and family as designated by God at the time of the Exodus.
- All slaves were freed or purchased back.
- All debts were forgiven and considered paid in full.
- The land would rest and there would be no planting or harvesting. They were sustained with the previous years' crops.
- It would be a time of feasting and celebration.

This cycle of Sabbaths and Jubilees imposed a very unusual economic system on the Jews, but it also provided many benefits as well:

1. Prevented Greed/Empire Building

- There was a definite limit to what you could own and how long you could keep it.
- You could grow in wealth and power but these were limited by time and amount. Eventually you had to restore purchased land to its original owner, debts were forgiven, and indentured servants had to be freed. This prevented long-term oppression over one group by another.

2. Prevented Generational Slavery

- There was a time limit for the service of those who may have experienced a bad harvest and were forced to sell themselves into

slavery in order to sustain their families.

- In this way there was hope, even in the worst of circumstances, that your land or freedom would be fully returned to you eventually.

3. Provided Economic Guidelines and Stability

- The value of land and slaves was fixed according to the proximity to the year of Jubilee (e.g. The further away from Jubilee, the greater the value since there would be more time of service by a slave and a higher number of harvests for the land; the closer to Jubilee, the lesser the value, etc).

4. Guaranteed Harmony and Peace

- The system provided stability for that society.
- Prices were fixed.
- The people had hope for the future even if they had setbacks.
- Each family had a guarantee that their house and land would be returned to them eventually.

For the Jews, the Jubilee system provided justice and a number of personal benefits. It was also meaningful beyond what it represented economically and socially.

A. It Represented God's Mercy

- Debts were forgiven (not just paid back, but literally wiped out).

- Land was freely returned to original owners and their families.
- Slaves were not only set free but were provided with resources to enable them to begin a new and independent life.
- The people had enough food to live on even though they did not plant or harvest every seven years.

Through the Jubilee system God demonstrated, in a concrete way, that He truly cared for the earthly welfare of His people.

B. It Represented God's Sovereignty

- The point of giving back the land to the original owner appointed by God was to remind them that the land belonged to God, not man.

- That no crop was planted or harvested on the seventh year was to remind them that God was Lord of Harvest who provided the harvest, not the earth.
- That slaves were freed to remind them that everyone was a servant of God and accountable to Him.

Jubilee taught the Jews that God owned everything, since all things were created by Him, and men were merely stewards of these things for a time.

C. It Represented God's Demand

- God required that His people show justice and mercy, and Jubilee was the opportunity for them to do so in a dynamic way. You couldn't take advantage of a fellow Jew by enslaving him forever or leaving

him homeless. One day you had to restore these people.

- Jubilee motivated the people to treat each other in a just and merciful way — or answer to the Lord in punishment. It sewed justice and mercy into the very fabric of their social customs and laws.

JUBILEE AND JESUS CHRIST

One of the interesting features of Old Testament study is that within its pages you find many previews of what was to come in the future. For example:

- Noah's Ark that carried eight souls to safety through the flood was a preview of the church that would carry the saved through the judgement.

- The children of Israel walking through the parted waters of the Red Sea to safety was a preview of believers who would come through the waters of Baptism to be safe from the second death.

There are many such previews given through people, prophecies, and events. The Year of Jubilee was also a preview of the future, but not of an event in the future. Jubilee was a preview of a person who was to come in the future. For those of us who live over three thousand years after the Year of Jubilee was begun, Jesus Christ is our Jubilee, and here is why:

1. He is Our Savior

Not all of the Jews who were slaves had forfeited their homes and required repatriation at the time of Jubilee, but we

in the present age have all been enslaved to sin and await condemnation (Romans 3:23). All of us have lost our heavenly home with God, have been separated from our spiritual family, and we owe a debt to God for our moral failures that we can never hope to repay. When Jesus came and died on the cross and then resurrected from the dead:

- He freed us from the slavery to sin and death by offering us forgiveness (Acts 2:38), as well as the power to overcome sin through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:13).
- He paid for our debt of sin so we are no longer condemned (I Peter 2:24).
- He added us to the family of God which is His church (Acts 2:41).

- He gave us back our heavenly home with God (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

Jesus, therefore, is the fulfillment of mercy previewed by Jubilee long ago. Jesus embodies and extends God's fullest expression of mercy and justice for all who believe in Him.

2. He is Our Lord

Paul says that all that has been created, has been created for and through Jesus Christ.

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the

firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

- Colossians 1:16-18

Jubilee was instituted to remind the Jews that the land and what it produced; the nation, its people, as well as its riches all belonged to God in the first place. God has revealed to us in His word that not only the land and people belong to Him, but that everything in the material and spiritual world was created by Jesus and for His personal use as well.

In this way the Godhead points man to Christ, not only as the merciful savior but as the sovereign Lord, previewed in Jubilee as well.

3. He is Our Judge

Through Jubilee God required His people to act a certain way towards one another and strangers as well. Through Jesus Christ, God continues to demand that we:

- Love one another - John 13:35
- Forgive one another - Matthew 6:12

For the Jews, this was a requirement that was enforced by law every fifty years. For us, the demand to love and forgive is part of our daily lives as Christians. The difference is that through Christ this law is written on our hearts, so to speak, and we are enabled to do it each day by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us (Romans 8:13).

Like the Jews, however, we will be judged for failing to keep the requirements of love

and forgiveness by the Lord of Jubilee — Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY

The Year of Jubilee was an important moment in Jewish life because regardless of their condition, the people could look forward to this time with the hope:

- That all would be forgiven.
- That all would be made right.
- That they could go home again and start over.

This time came for them every fifty years and they agonized in their slavery and poverty until that day finally arrived. We, on the other hand, have our Jubilee before us each and every day because the Bible

says, "Now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2).

- Today, all of our sins and errors can be washed away in the blood of Christ (Acts 22:16).
- Today, we can be free from the condemnation of death (Romans 8:1).
- Today, we can obtain our heavenly home and all the blessings of God for eternity ("This day you will be with me in Paradise" - Luke 23:43).

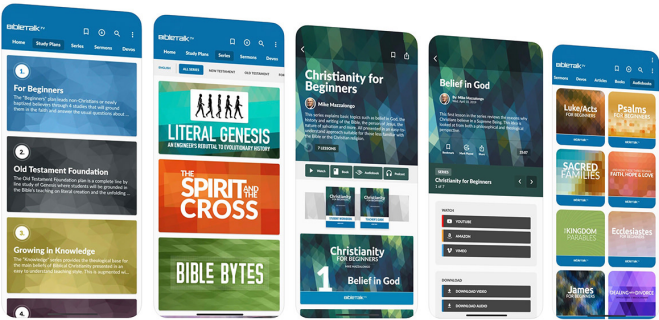
One last point about Jubilee. When the Jews died in between Jubilee years, they remained in the state of poverty or slavery that they were in at the point of death. This was a warning for us today that we should not remain without Christ while alive,

because after death, there will be no payment for sin or freedom from slavery. We remain in the state in which we die - slave or free, forever. Don't miss your Jubilee! Acknowledge your faith in Christ by repenting of your sins and being baptized in His name, and receive forgiveness, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life with God in Heaven (Acts 2:36-38).

**READ IT,
LEARN IT,
PASS IT ON...**



DOWNLOAD OUR APP



TAKE QUIZZES COMPLETE STUDY PLANS RECEIVE CERTIFICATES

33%



BibleTalk.tv/plans

BibleTalk.tv is an Internet Mission Work.

We provide video and textual Bible teaching material on our website and mobile apps for free. We enable churches and individuals all over the world to have access to high quality Bible materials for personal growth, group study or for teaching in their classes.

The goal of this mission work is to spread the gospel to the greatest number of people using the latest technology available. For the first time in history, it is becoming possible to preach the gospel to the entire world at once. BibleTalk.tv is an effort to preach the gospel to all nations every day until Jesus returns.

The Choctaw Church of Christ in Oklahoma City is the sponsoring congregation for this work and provides the recording facilities and oversight.

bibletalk.tv/support