

## Leviticus 25:1-7 | Sunday September 21, 2025

In Leviticus God has been giving His people an extensive list of laws explaining how to live in His presence. God has instructed them in worship, morality, wholeness, purity and even what feasts they are to celebrate. Instructions and laws have been given for every aspect of life and how it is to reflect God's character. No part of society has been left out. These laws also reveal what Jesus' life and ministry would accomplish, and what He still will accomplish. Then in chapter 25 God gives instructions on two unique Sabbaths that they are to observe, the Sabbatical year, and the year of Jubilee. These two Sabbaths are each a yearlong will cause a large impact on life in Israel. **These Sabbaths will help Israel's economy and view of money reflect God.**

### Leviticus 25:1-13 ESV

(1) The LORD spoke to Moses **on Mount Sinai**, saying, (2) "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, **When you come into the land** that I give you, **the land shall keep a Sabbath** to the LORD. (3) For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, (4) but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. (5) You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. (6) The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired worker and the sojourner who lives with you, (7) and for your cattle and for the wild animals that are in your land: all its yield shall be for food. (8) "You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you **forty-nine years**. (9) Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. (10) And you shall consecrate **the fiftieth year**, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. **It shall be a jubilee for you**, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. (11) **That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you**; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. (12) For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field. (13) "In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property.

This chapter is unique because these instructions are not God calling from the tabernacle but were given to Moses when he was on mount Sinai. They can only be applied once Israel is in the promised land. God expands on the weekly Sabbath and desires **for the land to experience a Sabbath every 7th year**. Then after seven sabbaticals or every 50th year is to be the year of Jubilee.

### Leviticus 25:2-4 ESV

(2) "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, **When you come into the land** that I give you, **the land shall keep a Sabbath to the LORD**.  
(3) For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits,  
(4) **but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land**, a Sabbath to the LORD. You **shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard**.

The rest God desired for His people to be reminded of each week was expanded to an entire year. In the Sabbatical year, the Jewish farmers were to let the land rest. The land was to experience an amplified Sabbath, a **šabāṭôn**. They were not allowed to plant seed, prune, or systematically harvest anything that grew naturally. There are tremendous practical benefits to letting the land regain nutrients for an entire year. Yet this command has huge implications for the economy and how Israel as a society was to function. **It also required a tremendous amount of trust, that God would provide as He promised.**

#### **Psalm 34:8-10 ESV**

(8) Oh, **taste and see that the LORD is good!** Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

(9) Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints, **for those who fear Him have no lack!**

(10) The young lions suffer want and hunger; **but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.**

It is promises like this and others in scripture that remind us how God provides for us as we trust in Him. **This is not every want and desire we have**, but we will have no true lack. It is one thing to know that it is God who provides for us, as we feel in control of providing for ourselves. **It is another entirely to be put into a position to rely on God's provision.** This is a tough truth to learn when we lose a job, it challenges us to reflect on who we were relying on. If God was the one providing the crops when Israel planted the fields, then He is still the God providing when they were called not to.

#### **Leviticus 25:5-7 NLT**

(5) And **don't store away the crops that grow on their own** or gather the grapes from your unpruned vines. The land must have a year of complete rest.

(6) But **you may eat whatever the land produces on its own during its Sabbath.**

This applies to you, your male and female servants, your hired workers, and the temporary residents who live with you. (7) Your livestock and the wild animals in your land will also be allowed to eat what the land produces.

God promises for the land to grow plenty of volunteer plants, to provide food of the people and all their livestock.

The landowner is not allowed to harvest, store up food, or sell it. The nation was allowed to go out as they had need and pick out of any field. God was going to provide. **It was a year that equalized the rich and poor, both were out in the field picking what they needed for the day.**

#### **Exodus 23:10-12 ESV**

(10) "For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield,

(11) but **the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat;** and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

(12) "Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, **may be refreshed.**

The sabbatical year was meant to help the poor. Instead of relying on the edges of the field that were not to be harvested they now had access to the entire field. **Also notice all work is not**

**forbidden**, this is a rest for the land. This would have been an amazing year to work on projects, recreation, and enjoy a daily reliance on God. **He wanted His people from the rich to the poor, even to the animals to be refreshed in Him.** Refreshed in this verse means **to breath freely.** David encouraged us to taste and see that God is good. He is not a harsh taskmaster that is constantly demanding more. **He wants us to rest and enjoy Him.** Too often we view God the same way the older brother of the prodigal son did.

#### **Luke 15:25-32 ESV**

(25) “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, **he heard music and dancing.**

(26) And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

(27) And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’

(28) But **he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out** and entreated him, (29) but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years **I have served you**, and I never disobeyed your command, yet **you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends.**

(30) But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’

(31) And he said to him, ‘**Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.**

(32) It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

We tend to focus on the younger son and the incredible grace the Father shows to Him. There is a very important lesson found in the older son.

The older son is offended by the music, dancing, and celebration of the younger son. He even refuses to go in and enjoy the celebration. The father continues to show how much grace He has by coming out to talk to the older son. The older son is bitter and says He never had a young goat, or celebration with his friends. **The older son does not view being in the fathers house as something to enjoy but someone to serve.** The older son is focused on what he has done for the father. **He has forgotten the joy of being a son.** He has forgotten how gracious and loving the Father is. The father reminds Him that all He has is also the son’s. He always could have enjoyed a party and the father was always willing to kill a goat or calf. The father wanted him to enjoy being a son. God desires the same for us. He wants us to rest in Him and enjoy all that He has done. To marvel and celebrate that we can call Him father. **God asking Isreal to take a year off to rely on Him and be refreshed reveals His character.** This refreshment went even farther than the land.

#### **Deuteronomy 31:10-13 ESV**

(10) And Moses commanded them, “**At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths,**

(11) when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that He will choose, **you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.**

(12) Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may **hear and learn to fear the LORD your God**, and be careful to do all the words of this law,

(13) **and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear**

**the LORD your God**, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”

Part of celebrating the Sabbatical year was the reading of the law that was to take place during the Feast of Booths. As Isreal gathered in Jerusalem and made booths (tents) to stay in the law was to be read. It was to spark conversation amongst the people and help each other learn how to fear God. Parents were to instruct their children. God was to be talked about and worshiped with a reverential awe. **It was to be a year of refreshing, growing and release.**

#### **Deuteronomy 15:1-2 ESV**

- (1) **“At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release.**
- (2) And this is the manner of the release: **every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor.** He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, **because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.**

All the debts between Jews were to be completely forgiven at the end of the sabbatical year. Land will be dealt with later at the year of Jubilee.

#### **Deuteronomy 15:4-5 ESV**

- (4) **But there will be no poor among you;** for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess—
- (5) **if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God,** being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.

God is setting up an amazing system with many opportunities for people to succeed and overcome debt they might find themselves in. He wanted to materially bless them in the land and desired for there not to be any poverty. All they had to do is walk with Him.

#### **Deuteronomy 15:7-11 ESV**

- (7) **“If among you, one of your brothers should become poor,** in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, **you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother,**
- (8) **but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.**
- (9) Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ **and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing,** and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin.
- (10) **You shall give to him freely,** and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.
- (11) **For there will never cease to be poor in the land.** Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’

God knows the human heart so well. Isreal had the opportunity for their to be no poor in the land, and yet due to sin and their refusal to walk in God’s truth their will never cease to be poor in the land. He even warned them not to despise the sabbatical year and the release of debts. In our sinful selfishness why would I want to help someone on year 6 when I had no chance to be paid back. God wanted them to look to Him. He promised to bless them. **The sinful heart of humanity undoes the benefits of holy, righteous laws. This is why we did not need a new law, but a new heart.** The release of debts at the sabbatical points to what Jesus

accomplished for us.

### Colossians 2:13-14 ESV

(13) And you, who were **dead** in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God **made alive** together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

(14) **by canceling the record of debt that stood against us** with its legal demands.

This He set aside, nailing it to the cross.

**As believers we have enjoyed a cancelling of our debts, just like what took place on the Sabbatical year.** This is possible because Jesus paid for all our sins. We stood condemned and dead and He paid it all and made us alive. Our debt is fully cancelled. We have been given new life to enjoy Him and be refreshed in Him.

Isreal serves as a warning though. As great as the Sabbatical year sounds in theory, it required a tremendous trust and submission to God. It is truly heartbreaking that **there is no evidence of Isreal following the Sabbatical Year in the Old Testament.** These unfollowed Sabbaths will factor into Isreal's judgment for the exile.

### 2 Chronicles 36:17-21 ESV

(17) Therefore He brought up against them **the king of the Chaldeans**, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. **He gave them all into his hand.**

(18) And **all the vessels of the house of God**, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, **all these he brought to Babylon.** (19) And **they burned the house of God** and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels.

(20) He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia,

(21) to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, **until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.**

Isreal did not walk with God year after year. God would send many prophets to warn them and call them back and they refused to enjoy His presence. So God sent Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar to conquer them. The items in the temple were carried off and the temple was destroyed. **The Jews were exiled out of the land for 70 years, 1 year for every sabbatical year they had missed.** There is a chance that the early generations followed the Sabbath year for the timeline to all work out, but we have no record of it. After exile the Pharisees will follow the Sabbath year, (they even had exemptions on their taxes for it). This should serve as a sober warning of what it cost God's people when we refuse to walk with Him. When we squander being refreshed by Him. Our debt has been cancelled, and we have been given new life, lets walk in it!

### Romans 8:12-15 ESV

(12) So then, brothers, **we are debtors, not to the flesh**, to live according to the flesh.

(13) For if you live according to the flesh **you will die**, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, **you will live.** (14) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. (15) For you did not receive **the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you**

**have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"**