

IT'S JUBILEE TIME!

Leviticus 25:8-23 (“Jubilee” occurs 23 times in the KJV—16 are in Lev. 25.)

➡ Brief background of our annual Jubilee in August.

Jubilee was originally a **Jewish celebration**.

The Hebrew calendar was based on the number seven (v. 8).

1. Every 7th day was called the “Sabbath.” God commanded no work was to be done on that day. It was for worship and fellowship.
2. Every 7th year was a “Sabbath Year.” In that year, no sowing or reaping could be done. The Lord miraculously provided enough crops in the sixth year to last until the end of the eighth year.
3. Every 7th Sabbath year, would usher in “the Year of Jubilee.” At the end of 49 years, the year of Jubilee would begin (50th year).

- The word “*Jubilee*” is a derivative of *Jubal*, the inventor of musical instruments (Gen. 4:21). Music ushered in the year of Jubilee by the musical sound of the trumpet (v. 9).
- Our English word “jubilation” comes from “Jubilee.”
- Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines the word “Jubilee”—“shout for joy.” Christians have SOMETHING TO SHOUT ABOUT!

I. A time of *RELEASE*. Slaves were set free from bondage (25:10, 39-41, 54).

A. An Israelite could sell himself into the service of another to pay a debt, but he could not sell himself or his family forever into slavery— The Lord alone owned the sons of Israel since He had redeemed them from Egypt (25:42, 55).

B. At the start of the Year of Jubilee, people were commanded to release their bond-servants so that they could return to their own families. How could the Jews celebrate Jubilee if some of their family were in bondage and away from their loved ones?

C. Jubilee is likened to this age of grace when the truth of the gospel is heralded like a trumpet to those in bondage to sin and captives of Satan.

➡ Jesus Christ settled the sin question. He paid the penalty.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*” (John 8:36).

2. *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”* (Gal. 5:1).
 - ➡ Released from bondage!
 - Bondage to lust / pornography / sex
 - Bondage to alcohol / drugs / meth / tobacco.
 - Bondage to anger / bitterness
 - Bondage to fear / greed / legalism / peer pressure
3. Debts cancelled (vs. 14, 17).

What if we were to try this today? The average American owes \$7,000 on credit cards. The trumpet would sound and all the debts would be completely erased! Did I hear someone say, “Amen?”

Every farmer who hocked their farm due to poor crops would receive their land back with joy. Sound like a pipe dream? Sounds too good to be true?

Jesus cancelled the sin debt when He cried on the cross—
“It is finished.” Paid in Full! It is finished, and you go free when you believe the truth of the Gospel.

II. A time of *RESTORATION*. (vs. 13-17). Mortgaged lands returned back to the original owner.

- A. No mortgage could extend beyond the day of Jubilee because all debts were cancelled and lands reverted back to the original owner.
 - If you were to buy a piece of property three months before the Year of Jubilee, knowing it would be restored to its owner in three months, you would pay only a fraction of its price (vs. 15-16). If the Year of Jubilee was three years away, you'd pay a little more. And if it was forty-nine years away, you'd pay full price.
 - APPLICATION: The further away one was from the Jubilee, the more valuable the property was. The same is true concerning that Jubilee in the sky when Jesus returns. The closer we get to heaven or the Lord's coming, the less valuable our earthly possessions become to us. If I am consumed with my possessions... my hobbies... my career, it is an indication that I'm not living in the reality of Christ's soon return.

- B. All that man lost in Adam is restored in Christ!
- C. Jubilee was **God's 'Reset' button**—it was the 'Reboot' in the system—the 'Ctrl-Alt-Del' in the universe.
 - **Jubilee meant New beginnings!** Since lands returned to the original owners, debts were cancelled, and slaves were set free, everyone was given a fresh start.
 - The Jubilee was a new start for everyone. It was a chance to get a new beginning, a point of hope.

III. A time of **REST** (vs. 11-12).

- A. It would require **faith** to celebrate the year of Jubilee.
 1. The previous year—the 49th—would have been a Sabbath year when crops would not have been cultivated.
 2. The Jews had to trust God to provide for them for the forty-ninth and fiftieth years, and also during the fifty-first year while they waited for the harvest.
- B. God wouldn't fail them. God promised to BLESS (vs. 20-21).
 - ➡When you obey the Lord, He promises to take care of you (Mt. 11:28)!
- C. We need to rest to recharge our batteries. When God commands us to rest, we need to rest. He'll give us enough during the time we work, to provide during the times He commands us to rest.

IV. A time of **REUNION** (v. 10).

- A. **New beginnings!** Since lands returned to the original owners, debts were cancelled, and slaves were set free, everyone was afforded a fresh start. Everyone could be reunited with their family.
- B. **The purpose behind Jubilee**—Jubilee was the great equalizer—God's plan to maintain an economic balance. If the institution of Jubilee been observed, it would have made Israel the most prosperous and perfect nation that ever existed.
 1. The jubilee tended to abolish poverty. It gave unfortunate families an opportunity to begin again with a fresh start. It helped the poor, without doing injustice to the rich (v. 16).
 2. It tended to abolish slavery. It lifted the dread of a life in bondage from the heart of a slave—It instilled a sense of HOPE—Something to look forward to!

3. The land would get rest so it would stay fruitful and rich.
4. Reminder God was the real Owner of the land and the Jews were only “tenants” with the Lord in the land (v. 23).

V. A time of *REJOICING*. It was the most anticipated and joyful period under the Mosaic Law.

- The Hebrew word for Jubilee is “*jobel*” [“the joyful shout”]. At the blowing of the trumpet announcing Jubilee, all slaves were set free... all debts were cancelled... and all mortgaged properties reverted back to the original owners.

The year of Jubilee would **begin on the day of atonement** (v. 9). There can be no joyful sound apart from atoning blood. It is only through the shed blood of Christ that we have any cause to rejoice!

- ➡ Can you imagine what Jubilee must have been like for a Jew who was a slave, or heavy in debt with his lands mortgaged.

I see that Jew sold into slavery, taken from his family. All he could think about was Jubilee... I can picture someone in debt, and couldn't do anything about it... I can see a Jew that had to sell his land because of failed crops and unfortunate circumstances...

He's waiting... Counting the years... 20...10...5...1 Counting the months... counting the days... waiting for the sound of the trumpet. When... when... when will the trumpet sound?

Then suddenly—Throughout all the land, the trumpet sounds!

I think I know what those slaves, and those laden in debt would say when they heard the music of the trumpet: “It's Jubilee time! It's Jubilee time! It's Jubilee Time! ...It's finally here!”

“Break out the tambourine / flute / drum / harp / cymbals / horns, and make a joyful noise!”

HALLELUJAH! Let's tell everyone we come in contact with! It's Jubilee Time!

I'm free! I'm free to return my family. My debt is cancelled! I can return to my lands. I'm free! I'm free! It's Jubilee time!

SUMMATION: Now here is a strange truth—Although God gave Israel this 50 year “reset button,” there is no definitive record that Israel ever “pushed” it! Incredible! *WHY???*

- Was it because they lacked faith to trust God to supply?

- Wanting to retain control of bondservants?
- Keep possession of lands?
- Keep people indebted?

If Israel would have observed the principles of Jubilee, their economic system would have prospered... the land would have provided all they needed... and everybody would have been cared for.

But, because they didn't do it, the rich got richer... the poor got poorer... and the land was ruined. This is one reason God sent them in to captivity (to give the land a rest).

Before we come down too hard on the Israelites, we should look in the mirror. While we don't observe Jubilee as prescribed in the Law of Moses, we can enjoy the "spirit" of Jubilee in our lives today.

- To experience Jubilee in your life, it begins by **releasing people from the debt** you hold on them because you think they let you down, disappointed, or hurt you. It involves forgiving people and releasing them from their debt (Mt. 6:12; 18:27).
- Second, you will experience Jubilee only to the degree that you **quit trying to earn God's blessings**. When the trumpet sounded signaling the beginning of the Year of Jubilee, it applied to everyone equally. Every person could have enjoyed the blessings of Jubilee. All they had to do was receive it. So, too, God has blessing for you if you'll just receive them.
- Third, the Year of Jubilee was to be a **year of restoration**. God wants to restore what you've lost because of sin.
 - ➡ It could be a ministry... relationship... Hope... Peace... Joy (Ps. 51:12)!

JESUS IS OUR JUBILEE—He is our **Liberator**... our **Debt-canceller**... our **Rest**... our **Fresh start / New beginning**... the **Restorer** of everything that Adam lost... He is our reason to REJOICE!

One day, another trumpet will sound and all Christians will go to that great Jubilee in the sky! When that trumpet sounds...

- We'll be freed from this body of sin.
- We'll be released from this world of sin.
- When Jesus returns to earth, there will be a 1,000 year Jubilee REST. This earth will be restored to it's ORIGINAL OWNER!

➡ We don't have to wait for the Rapture—You can experience to joy of Jubilee NOW! We are going to that *"Happy Jubilee"* (song)