

Leviticus 25

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[0 : 00] So I'm going to read Leviticus 25 to you in its entirety, and then we'll just kind of break it up from there. The Word of God says, Then the Lord 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 the 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 after growth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather, and 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 men and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you, even your cattle and animals that are in your land shall have all its crops to eat.

You are also to count off seven Sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seventh Sabbath 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, and you shall thus consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim a release through the land to all its inhabitants.

[1 : 14] 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. On this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his own property.

If you make a sale moreover to your friend or buy from your friend's hand, you shall not wrong one another. Corresponding to the number of years after the jubilee, you shall buy from your friend, he is to sell you according to the number of years of crops.

In proportion to the extent of the years you shall increase its price, and in proportion to the fewness of the years you shall diminish its price, for it is a number of crops he is selling to you. So you shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God, for I am the Lord your God.

You shall thus observe my statutes and keep my judgments, so as to carry them out, and you may live securely in the land. Then the land will yield its produce, so that you can eat your fill and live securely on it.

[2 : 16] 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 a 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. Verse 23. The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is mine.

For you are but aliens and sojourners with me. Thus, for every piece of your property, you are to provide for the redemption of the land. If a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor that he has to sell part of his property, then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold.

Or in case a man has no kinsman, but so recovers his means as to find sufficient for its redemption, then he shall calculate the year since its sale and refund the balance of the man to whom he sold it and so return to his property.

But if he has not found sufficient needs to get it back for himself, then what he has sold shall remain in the hand of its purchaser until the year of jubilee. But at the jubilee it shall revert that he may return to his property.

[3 : 24] Likewise, if a man sells a dwelling house in a walled city, then his redemption right remains valid until a full year from its sale. His right of redemption lasts a full year.

But if it is not bought back from him within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city passes permanently to its purchaser throughout his generations. It does not revert in the jubilee.

The houses of the villages, however, which have no surrounding wall shall be considered as open fields, and they have redemption rights and revert in the jubilee. As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites have a permanent right of redemption for the houses of the cities which are their possession.

What therefore belongs to the Levites may be redeemed in a house sale and a house sale in the city of his possession reverts in the jubilee. For the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the sons of Israel.

But pasture fields of their cities shall not be sold, for that is their perpetual possession. Now, in the case of a countryman of yours becomes poor in his means and with regard to you falter, you are to sustain him like a stranger or a soldier that he may live with you.

[4 : 31] Do not take usurer interest from him, but revere your God with your countrymen that your countrymen may live with you. You shall not give him your silvered interest nor your food for gain.

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. If a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to you that he sells himself to you, you shall not subject him to a slave's service.

He shall be with you as a hired man as if he were a sojourner. He shall serve you until the year of Jubilee. He shall then go out from you, he and his sons with him, and shall go back to his family that he may return to the property of his forefathers, for they are my servants whom I bought out of the land of Egypt.

They are not to be sold in a slave's cell. You shall not rule over him with severity, but you are to revere your God. As for your male and female slaves whom you may have, you may acquire male and female slaves from the pagan nations that are around you.

Then too it is out of the sons of the sojourners who live as aliens among you that you may gain acquisition and out of their families who are with you whom they will have produced in your land. They also may become your possession.

[5 : 41] You may even bequeath them to your sons after you to receive their possession. You can use them as a permanent slaves, but in respect to your countrymen, the sons of Israel, you shall not rule with severity over one another.

Now if the means of a stranger or of a sojourner with you becomes sufficient and a countryman of yours becomes so poor with regard to him as to sell himself to a stranger who is sojourning with you or to the descendants of a stranger's family, then he shall have redemption rights after he has been sold.

One of his brothers may redeem him or his uncle or his uncle's son may redeem him or one of his blood relatives from his family may redeem him or if he prospers, he may redeem himself. He then, with his purchaser, shall calculate from the year when he sold himself to him up to the year of the Jubilee and the price of his sale shall correspond to the number of years.

It is like the days of a hired man that he shall be with him. If there are still many years, he shall refund part of his purchase price in proportion to them for his own redemption. And a few years remain until the year of Jubilee.

He shall so calculate with him in proportion to his years, he is to refund the amount for his redemption. Like a man hired year by year, he shall be with him. He shall not rule over him with severity in your sight even if he is not redeemed by these means.

[6 : 59] He shall go out in the year of Jubilee. He and his sons with him. Verse 55. For the sons of Israel are my servants. They are my servants whom I bought out of the land of Egypt.

I am the Lord your God. I appreciate your patience in reading Leviticus 25 and I hope that you saw there the highlighted items of God's possession.

But I hope you also see the application of all these things that are supposed to be done in light of the fact that he says, I am the Lord your God. That is, even their daily acquisitions and their daily businesses and their daily living would be lived with the reality that he is the Lord their God and they ought to live with temporary ownership of all things.

Living a life of temporary ownership. Now before we really dive into the passage and I kind of hinted to it a little bit this morning, we understand the reality that both the Old Testament and the New Testament acknowledge slavery.

It is a sad reality that we must accept that many people in our own nation in times gone by used passages such as this to really use it as a means to promote slavery.

[8 : 11] There were preachers in the South here that would stand in pulpits and use such passages as we read as a promotion of slavery or at least as a right to continue to maintain slaves.

But we need to understand that slavery is seen a lot differently in Scripture than it is historically in our own nation. In its setting, by the time that God is ordering Moses to write these things and he is revealing them to them, slavery was something that was very prominent in Asia Minor.

Something that every other nation did around them and something that they would have been very familiar with, they themselves having just left slavery. And what we see was God was at least promoting among the nation of Israel a more fair treatment of slavery and really a disbanding of enslaving one another.

So while he acknowledges it, he is also setting a higher standard for it. In the New Testament it's the same thing. And it's the reality that we come to. There are a number of things that we would like for the Word of God to be very clear upon in telling us what we should and should not do.

This is not the message by the way. This is just something in light of the message. Okay? But what we find is the Word of God is more intent on changing our hearts and changing our worship.

[9 : 29] I've run across people not here but in the past as I was pastoring I had a gentleman one time come to me and told me I needed to preach a series on tithing and stewardship and he really was pushing me to do that in the church where I was at at that time happened to really be struggling financially and I reminded him that tithing was a matter of the heart and I could tell and convince people how much they should give but if I would tell them about Jesus Christ and they fell in love with the Savior then they would give.

And I would much rather people fall in love with Christ and let God dictate their wallet than me set a standard that may be just a bare minimum for their wallet. Right? Because what I have found is love compels us to give a lot more than duty does.

And it's the same way scripture handles it. You say wait a minute Old Testament says they should give a tenth. Right. That was the baseline and they were also living in a time of legalistic. We're not living in that. Right? So what we understand too is that God was more intent on changing people's hearts and drawing them to himself and therefore we lead to a right understanding of slavery.

God did not come down and say quit doing this quit doing that he really came down to influence and affect people's lives which led to I don't know if you've ever seen the movie Amazing Grace that speaks not so much of John Newton and the song but speaks of the abolition movement of slavery in England and all the events that went into that it was a direct result of God having his people in the right place at the right time moved by the spirit and influencing a country.

But anyway so we see here in Leviticus 25 how we ought to live with temporary ownership so that's enough of the side note let's get to the message. We see a number of things here number one we see in this passage a word of hope there is a word of hope it says then the Lord said to Moses at Mount Sinai so where are they at?

[11 : 17] They're at Mount Sinai that's the mountain of the law right? So evidently by this time because they've already completed the tabernacle which took some time and they had seen this vision right? So they had been wandering for some time here so their time of really wandering around and having been set free from Egypt and they're in this delayed pattern the Lord is speaking to Moses here at Mount Sinai some think that this was after their refusal to enter the promised land some think that this is after they're going to Kadesh Barnea and refusing to go in because they saw the people like giants I don't necessarily agree nor disagree with that all we know is the text tells us that he is still at Mount Sinai and it is here that the Lord is speaking to him and it speaks to him a word of hope because the Lord says to him when you come into the land which I shall give you this is something we found from the very beginning when God calls his people out of Egypt he speaks to them this word of hope he speaks to them as a certain reality a settled fact you will come to the land that I will give you this is why their refusal to enter that land should confound us because over and over again

God reassures them I will give you the land you are going into the land I know you're in a wilderness at the moment I know that things around you don't seem that pleasant I know that this seems to be a very desolate area but here is the word of hope I will take you into the land God speaks with settled conviction and he speaks very intentional promises here and he is speaking this promise of something that will come about he is speaking this promise of something that is settled in the courtroom of heaven something that is already a settled fact and he is speaking to them while living in a place of temporary residence of something that would be a place of eternal dwelling he tells them something that is going to happen when we come to the gospel according to John and we see Jesus at his last supper with his disciples following the last supper there are all these promises that Jesus extends to them and as I go through that

I read these promises of hope I believe there are nine promises found in John 14 15 well John 13 actually we can go back to John 13 and see where it begins John 13 14 15 and 16 and in John 17 you have the high priestly prayer right the very first promise that Jesus speaks to the believers we sang about just a minute ago he says I go to prepare a place for you and if I go to prepare a place to you I will come and bring you so that you can be where I am too friend the reason I do not doubt my state of eternal existence is because it has already been told me I've already received that word of hope right and here we see it at Mount Sinai Jesus is not speaking to believers here this is God speaking to Moses and he's telling them this is something that is going to happen what we need to understand that with God it's never a matter of if it is always a matter of when God doesn't care if it takes 40 years to get there when it should be a four day journey but it is going to happen the things which God has promised us we need to understand this when we read the word of God what we are reading are words of hope and the very word of God will come about and it will come about just as he says it is and it's not a matter of if these things are going to happen the reality is it's a matter of when these things are going to happen so if we come upon something and we say well we don't see this happening yet then the reality is that it will happen and we know that because he has said it and as the old saying goes that settles it so before God gives them these regulations on how to live a life of temporary ownership he gives them first a fact of hope listen he is speaking to slaves who have just recently been redeemed they have been called out of Egypt and at this moment they are free and they own nothing so if you say well okay you're going to live a life of temporary ownership you say well that would be great because I don't own anything so it doesn't matter

I'm a slave right I've been a slave and I've been building these things all my life all I've ever known is slavery but God says no you're going to be enriched and you're going to be blessed and when you go there I want you to live as a temporary owner not as a permanent resident here so what we see is that God starts this conversation with them as a word of hope and his word definitely shall not fail them nor will it cause them to doubt though they did doubt the second thing which is primarily the focus of the passage is not only is there a word of hope there is a call to trust there is a call to trust and he says to them when you come into the land which I shall give you we're in Leviticus 25 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 here is a call to trust the Jewish people are primarily an agrogarian society that is they lived and promoted their business off agricultural means they are in the wilderness and God is making them a promise

I'm going to take you to a luscious fruitful land and when you go into that fruitful land the land is going to bear fruit for you and it's going to bear much fruit for you and you will work the ground and it will produce the rains will fall the spring rains and the late rains will fall and the land will be very productive as a matter of fact one of the most productive strips of land in all of the world is in that locale you know about it because it's pretty much on the news just about every day it's called the Gaza Strip anybody ever wonder why there's so much warfare over the Gaza Strip it's because the Gaza Strip is the most fertile piece of land in just about all of the world guess where it is right in the heart of the promised land which God was calling his people to even in the desert regions of that land if you were to go down there where the nomadic shepherds still live you will walk upon some areas in this desert just like a desolate region and you will find fruit groves of orange trees and what happens is they plant these orange trees and they put these funnels around them and they put this black plastic in this funnel and it's all going down so when the dew falls the dew gathers on the plastic and waters these orange trees and that land is very very fruitful and he is calling these people who have been slaves think about never owned a thing and now they're going to inherit houses they did not build wells they did not dig and gardens they did not plant and they're going to be fruitful

[17 : 55] I mean they're going to be a land flowing with milk and honey right it's almost like inheriting a just ginormous fortune here and God tells them this astounding thing work the land for six years but on the seventh year don't touch it it would be the equivalent of God telling us to take a year off of work without pay but trust him see here this is a call to trust not only was this their means of produce but this is also their means of groceries right they financially gained from it but they ate off of it as well and God says you may work it for six years but on the seventh year don't touch it you can eat what grows wild what's there what comes up naturally but so can everybody else in your land you can't pick it and sell it you can take it and eat it but you can't gather it and take it to the market because everybody can walk around but notice it is a Sabbath to the Lord because it's for his glory he takes it just another bit level and he says okay now I want you to count off seven sevens which primarily get you to 49 and on the 49th year is a Sabbath right because on the 49th year you are to do nothing and then on the year following the 50th year the 50th year should be a year of Jubilee and guess what you shall do nothing so now he's asking you to take two years off work with no pay and no promise of food he says you shall trust me and you say well if you ask what are we going to eat he said

I will so order my blessings upon you that what you reap in the sixth year will be enough until you reap again did you notice that God says if you will trust me the Sabbath deal here the whole Sabbath is all about trust man was not made for the Sabbath but the Sabbath was made for man even in our own day and time a day of rest it is all about trust do we trust what God can provide for us enough that we can stop of our own doings and labor for him what God is saying is you need to trust what I give you not trust what you can earn or trust what you can do or trust how much work you can put forth he is calling them to stop it is a call to trust he says don't do a thing just see if I will provide for you now history tells us as a matter of fact scripture tells us they never did it never as a matter of fact the prophet says that they went into their land

God says they went into their land with ease and prosperity grew fat and denied me rather than trusting the Lord who gave them the land they began to trust the land in which they dwelt on they began to offer their sacrifices to the land most of the Baals and the Asher's and all those things you read of those were sacrifices or those were gods of the land with a lower case g that the people of that land the Canaanites would offer to the God of fertility so that their crops would produce or the God of the rain or the God of the sun so rather than trusting in the Lord God who owned it they began to trust in the false gods around them and they never did this they would never trust him enough listen to me it only took six years for them to fail to trust him you know why this is a reality that we need to acknowledge it is easy to trust the Lord our God when it's in a desperate situation when we're wandering around in the wilderness and we do not know where our next meal is going to come from and we don't know where we're going to get our next glass of water and when nothing around us happens and we're in the wilderness it's easy to trust there because we have nothing of our own to trust when we're in the wilderness and we're walking around in a circle for 40 years and we see the pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night we don't have any means to plant we don't have any gardens to grow we don't even have a well to pull water out of it's easy to trust because we have nothing else to trust in you know where it's hard to trust it's hard to trust in a comfortable environment it's hard to trust in the land of ease in the land of prosperity in the land of comfort this is why even around the world today we see many believers in other countries who step out in great leaps of faith and trust God to do magnificent things that others around the world simply can't do simply because they're living in the ease and the prosperity this is also why in some nations where have recently been open to the gospel their prayer is that it would become closer to the gospel so that faith will become harder not easier and just in case we think that God overlooks this you know how long they went without keeping a sabbath 490 years 490 years they never kept a sabbath 490 years would be 70 sabbaths that they missed does anybody remember when they went to Babylon do you know how long they were in Babylon 70 years because God says if you won't let the land rest by trusting me then I will take it back and kick you out of it for 70 years as a matter of fact it says that the reason they went to the Babylonian captivity is because they failed to trust the Lord their God and the land did not have is it about the land has nothing to do about the land

God says you can't trust me once every 7 years and I'm going to make you trust me for 70 years in a land that's not your home God pays attention when he calls us to live a life of trust and as soon as they began to think that that was their land that they owned it God took it back and he said I'm going to take it back and remind you that it is not yours as a matter of fact we see this reality and I've told you this before but it's one of these great events through history that most people don't talk about because it's astounding to most scholars and it's astounding to most historians is because the nation of Israel failed to trust God every 7 years they failed to give it at Sabbath for 490 years which led to 70 Sabbaths and they went from a very monotheistic a very polytheistic culture right they had many gods they worshipped many many gods they did the one true God brought them into the promised land while in the promised land they adopted the worship of false gods and they were very polytheistic which means worshipping many gods as poly means and they went into 70 years of captivity and they came out still to this day one of the most monotheistic cultures in all the world because God reminded them none of those things are your God now they're still wrong on their aspect of worship at times they're still living

Old Testament truths instead of accepting Christ but that day is coming so here we see a call to trust third we see that to live a life of temporary ownership is a life of surrender a life of surrender which gets us to this 50th year this 50th year he said count out for me seven sevens which gets you to 49 and then sound the trumpet on the 10th day the day of atonement which would lead to the beginning of the 50th year and that 50th year is to be consecrated it is to be holy to the Lord it is a year of Jubilee the first thing you need to understand is that the year of Jubilee start with man getting right before God before they could get right between one another right because as Tony Evans says you cannot have the God of blessing until you have the God of redemption so what we see here is the day of atonement so their sins were taken care of first and then they began to take care of everything else they sounded a trumpet and now we see the release of the captives we see every man returning back to his own possession this is a

[25 : 37] I say a life of surrender because the reality is that no man really owns anything permanently so if we were to do a deal you were to buy my land or I was to buy your land the reality is I would only own that land until the year of Jubilee and at the year of Jubilee it would go back to you so again we just go ahead and settle this the nation of Israel never did this this is why we see such the way God was establishing culture and the way he was establishing society is that the rich would not get richer and the poor would not get poorer you may be going through a season but you would always have the hope of going back to your land right people couldn't gather up all the land and they couldn't monopolize it because he was setting up a culture of at least I wouldn't want to call it equal opportunity but whatever you inherited you was going to maintain it was going to revert back to you you may have trials and struggles personally that you went through but there was always the hope that even if you didn't make it to the year of Jubilee your family would go back to your land during the year of Jubilee because God was the right owner what we see here this had to be a life of surrender because you would realize purchasing something I'm not really the owner of this

I'm only purchasing how many crops I get from this you were to count the number of years until the Jubilee and you were buying a number of crops you were not buying the land because God says for the land is mine the reality is that it was a surrender even as your servants if you had servants who were your Jewish people who had sold themselves to you maybe they had entered into financial hardship and they endured themselves to you and they were there to serve and all these things and they were waiting and they were laboring in your fields when the year of Jubilee they were set free you had to let them go you had to surrender that this is why they didn't do it because who wants to do that right who wants to surrender everything and really not own anything but this is what God is calling his people to to live a life of surrender because the reality is is that it was already his anyway and it was going to revert back because who dictated who got what land God did right when they divided up the land the reason we have the divisions of the land in the Old Testament is because God is determining who gets where now there's trouble when you start wanting more land than what God gave you all you have to do is look at the tribe of Dan and go to read the book of Judges if you haven't in a long time you see the tribe of Dan the reason their trouble started is because they didn't have enough land so they thought so they went after more land and then all of a sudden they entered into welcoming idolatry into the nation of Israel but what we see here is living a life of surrender because even that which we purchased would not really be ours the only thing that you could purchase that would remain with you permanently was a house inside of a walled city as long as that house didn't belong to a Levite okay because the Levites didn't have any pasture land so their house was their ownership right so it would always go back to the Levite but a house in a walled city an individual would have a year or two buy back from you but after that year they did not buy it back from you then you could live there and some say well why a house in a walled city and I love what

Warren Wiersbe says about it Warren Wiersbe says walls were signs of security and a house inside of a walled city was probably one of the most securest locations you could have been in and who wants to buy a house move their family in there just to know that at any time you could have to move them out so we just see here that it's not like land but it was a house in a walled city and God had given the stipulation for that because this was an individual residence so we see here there's a word of hope a call to trust and a life of surrender and the fourth and final thing is there is a testimony of redemption living this life of temporary ownership gives us a testimony of redemption because we are introduced to something that matters in scripture and that is the kinsman redeemer we find here that in verse 25 if a fellow countryman of yours becomes so poor that he has to sell part of his property then his nearest kinsman is to come and buy back what his relative has sold not only his property but even his person right if he becomes so poor that he has to sell himself as a slave which was a very popular thing at that time and he would be an indentured servant of an individual then there was the possibility that a near kinsman could come and buy his freedom or if he prospered during that time he would buy his freedom now it was completely impossible to enslave a Jewish person why?

because that would be dual ownership because God says I redeemed you you are mine so you can't belong to God we just need to note this here you can't belong to God and somebody else right?

you are his and his alone so there is the possibility here of redemption what we see here as he goes through the text and speaks of this redemption this near kinsman redeemer who could come and buy back that which was sold or come and buy back that individual who was a slave and if he did not make it until no one would show up to buy him back or to buy the land back then he would have to wait to the year of jubilee but always there was a freedom that was anticipated now a kinsman redeemer is very important to us because we see it in the book of Ruth right?

[30 : 41] we meet a kinsman redeemer his name is Boaz who went and was the kinsman redeemer for Ruth and it is from Ruth that we have Obed and from Obed we have David and from David we have the true kinsman redeemer who is Jesus Christ because he is the near kinsman of all mankind who has come and bought back that which was taken and that is ourselves it was taken captive by Satan taken captive by sin and enslaved to do that which he has called us to do that is to serve Satan and Jesus has come back and is the near kinsman redeemer who can set us free because he has the right and he has the means but the two things that we highlight here is that we live in temporary ownership because number one it says the land is mine and at the end it says for the sons of Israel are my servants they are my servants whom I bought out of the land of Egypt

I am the Lord your God everything which God's people were called to operate within everything that they were called to at least have ownership of was to be in ownership in light of who they belonged to they were temporary owners because the land they were to possess was not theirs as a matter of fact the very being that they were they were not their own God was the one who owned it all and they were just called to be temporary owners of all things Leviticus chapter 25 let's pray Lord we are so thankful that you've given us this night and Lord we rejoice in every opportunity we have to come and look at your word we pray that these truths of God would lead us to a greater understanding of you and a greater understanding of ourself Lord but also would lead us to a greater life of faithfulness in all that you have entrusted us with Lord may we always trust you may we always obey you completely and may it be for your glory and we ask it in Christ's name Amen so

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[35 : 04] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[37 : 34] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.