

**NOTES**  
**ON**  
**THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS**

by

Charles H. MacIntosh

-----

*"Things new and old."*

-----

Copyright © 1862

by

F. H. Revell

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage Ministry of a century ago

*~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~*

**Leviticus 25**

The intelligent reader will discern a strong moral link between this and the preceding chapter.

- in Leviticus 24 we learn that the house of Israel is preserved for the land of Canaan.
- in chapter 25 we learn that the land of Canaan is preserved for the house of Israel.

Taking both together, we have the record of a truth which no power of earth or hell can obliterate. "**All Israel shall be saved,**" and "**the land shall not be sold forever.**" The former of these statements enunciates a principle which has stood like a rock amid the ocean of conflicting interpretations; while the latter declares a fact which many nations of the uncircumcised have sought in vain to ignore.

The reader will, I doubt not, observe the peculiar way in which our chapter opens.

**"And! the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai."**

The principal part of the communications contained in the Book of Leviticus is characterized by the fact of its emanating "**from the tabernacle of the congregation.**" This is easily accounted for. Those communications have special reference to the service, communion, and worship of the priests, or to the moral condition of the people, and hence they are issued, as might be expected, from "**the tabernacle of the congregation,**" that grand center of all that appertained, in any way, to priestly service.

Here, however, the communication is made from quite a different point. "**The Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai.**" Now, we know that every expression in Scripture has its own special meaning, and we are justified in expecting a different line of communication from "**mount Sinai**" from that which reaches us from "**the tabernacle of the congregation.**" And so it is. The chapter at which we have now arrived treats of the Lord's claims as Lord of all the earth. It is not the worship and communion of a priestly house, or the internal ordering of the nation; but the claims of GOD in government, His right to give a certain portion of the earth to a certain people to hold as tenants under Him. In a word, it is not to the Lord in "**the tabernacle**" - the place of worship; but the Lord in "**Mount Sinai**" - the place of government.

**"And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto the Lord. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, and for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat"** (Ver. 1-7).

Here, then, we have the special feature of the Lord's land. He would have it to enjoy a sabbatical year, and in that year there was to be the evidence of the rich profusion with which He would bless those who held as tenants under Him. Happy, highly privileged tenantry!

What an honour to hold immediately under the Lord! No rent! No taxes! No burdens! Well might it be said, "**Happy is the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is the nation whose God is the Lord.**" We know, alas! that Israel failed to take full possession of that wealthy land of which the Lord made them a present, He had given it all. He had given it forever. They took but a part, and that for a time. Still, there it is, The property is there, though the tenants are ejected for the present. "**the land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.**"

What does this mean, but that Canaan belongs specially to the Lord, and that He will hold it through the tribes of Israel? True, "**the earth is the Lord's,**" but that is quite another thing. It is plain that He has been pleased, for His own unsearchable purposes, to take special possession of the land of Canaan, and to submit that land to a peculiar line of treatment, to mark it off from all other lands, by calling it His own, and to distinguish it by judgments, and ordinances, and periodical solemnities, the mere contemplation of which enlightens the understanding: and affects the heart.

*Where, throughout all the earth, do we read of a land enjoying a year of unbroken repose - a year of richest abundance?*

The rationalist may ask, "How can these things be" The skeptic may doubt if they could be; but faith finds a satisfying answer from the lips of the Lord:

**"And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store" (Ver. 20-22).**

Nature might say, "What shall we do for our sowing?" GOD's answer is, **"I will command My blessing."** GOD's **"blessing"** is better far than man's **"sowing."** He was not going to let them starve in His sabbatic year. They were to feed upon the fruits of His blessing, while they celebrated His year of rest - a year which pointed forward to that eternal Sabbath that remains for the people of GOD.

**"And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land" (Ver. 8, 9).**

*It is peculiarly interesting to note the various methods in which the millennial rest was held up to view, in the Jewish economy.*

Every seventh day was a sabbatical day; every seventh year was a sabbatical year; and every seven times seven years there was a jubilee. Each and all of these typical solemnities held up to the vision of faith the blessed prospect of a time when labour and sorrow should cease; when **"the sweat of the brow"** would no longer be needed to satisfy the cravings of hunger; but when a millennial earth, enriched by the copious showers of divine grace, and fertilized by the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness, should pour its abundance into the storehouse and winepress of the people of GOD. Happy time! Happy people! How blessed to be assured that these things are not the pencilings of imagination, or the flights of fancy, but the substantial verities of divine revelation, to be enjoyed by faith which is **"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."**

Of all the Jewish solemnities the jubilee would seem to have been the most soul-stirring and enrapturing. It stood immediately connected with the great day of atonement. It was when the blood of the victim was shed, that the emancipating sound of the jubilee trump was heard through the hills and valleys of the land of Canaan. That longed-for note was designed to wake up the nation from the very center of its moral being, to stir the deepest depths of the soul, and to send a shining river of divine and ineffable joy through the length and breadth of the land. "In the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. Not a corner was to remain unvisited by **"the joyful sound."** The aspect of the jubilee was as wide as the aspect of the atonement on which the jubilee was based.

**"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee ye shall return**

**every man unto his possession"** (Ver. 8-13).

All estates and conditions of the people were permitted to feel the hallowed and refreshing influence of this most noble institution. The exile returned; the captive was emancipated; the debtor set free; each family opened its bosom to receive once more its long-lost members; each inheritance received back its exiled owner. The sound of the trumpet was the welcome and soul-stirring signal for the captive to escape; for the slave to cast aside the chains of his bondage; for the manslayer to return to his home; for the ruined and poverty-stricken to rise to the possession of their forfeited inheritance. No sooner had the trumpet's thrice-welcome sound fallen upon the ear, than the mighty tide of blessing rose majestically, and sent its refreshing undulations into the most remote corners of the Lord's highly-favoured land.

**"And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another: according to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee. According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee. Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the Lord your God"** (Ver. 14-17).

*The year of jubilee reminded both buyer and seller that the land belonged to the Lord, and was not to be sold.*

"**The fruits**" might be sold, but that was all - the Lord could never give up the land to any one. It is important to get this point well fixed in the mind. It may open up a very extensive line of truth. If the land of Canaan is not to be sold - if the Lord declares it to be His for ever, then for whom does He want it? Who is to hold under Him? Those to whom He gave it by an everlasting covenant, that they might have it in possession as long as the moon endureth - even to all generations.

There is no spot in all the earth like unto the land of Canaan in the divine estimation. There the Lord set up His throne and His sanctuary; there His priests stood to minister continually before Him; there the voices of His prophets were heard testifying of present ruin and future restoration and glory; there the Baptist began, continued, and ended his career as the forerunner of the Messiah; there the Blessed One was born of a woman; there He was baptized; there He preached and taught; there He laboured and died; from there He ascended in triumph to the right hand of GOD; thither GOD the Holy Ghost descended, in Pentecostal power; from thence the overflowing tide of Gospel testimony emanated to the ends of the earth; thither the Lord of glory will descend, ere long, and plant His foot "**on the mount of Olives**;" there His throne will be re-established and His worship restored. In a word, His eyes and His heart are there continually; its dust is precious in His sight; it is the center of all His thoughts and operations, as touching this earth; and it is His purpose to make it an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.

*It is, then, I repeat, immensely important to get a firm hold of this interesting line of truth with respect to the land of Canaan.*

Of that land the Lord hath said, "**IT IS MINE.**" Who shall take it from Him? Where is the king

or the emperor, where the power, human or diabolical, that can wrest "**the pleasant land**" out of the Lord's omnipotent grasp? True, it has been a bone of contention, an apple of discord to the nations. It has been, and it will yet be, the scene and center of cruel war and bloodshed. But far above all the din of battle and the strife of nations, these words fall with divine clearness, fullness, and power, upon the ear of faith - "**the land is mine!**"

The Lord can never give up that land, nor those "**twelve tribes**," through whom He is to inherit it for ever. Let my reader think of this. Let him ponder it deeply. Let him guard against all looseness of thought and vagueness of interpretation, as to this subject. GOD hath not cast away His people, or the land which He swore to give unto them for an everlasting possession.

"**The twelve loaves**" of Leviticus 24 bear witness to the former; and "**the jubilee**" of Leviticus 25 bears witness to the latter. The memorial of the "**twelve tribes of Israel**" is ever before the Lord; and the moment is rapidly approaching when the trump of jubilee shall be heard upon the mountains of Palestine. Then, in reality, the captive shall cast off the ignominious chain which, for ages, has bound him. Then shall the exile return to that happy home from which he has so long been banished. Then shall every debt be cancelled, every burden removed, and every tear wiped away.

**"For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her (Jerusalem) like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many . . . For I know their works and their thoughts; it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory, And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow; to Tubal and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord"** (Isaiah 66:12-23).

And, now, let us look for a moment at the practical effect of the jubilee - its influence upon the transactions between man and man.

**"And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another according to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt**

**buy of thy neighbour, and according to the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee."**

The scale of prices was to be regulated by the jubilee. If that glorious event were at hand, the price was low; if far off, the price was high. All human compacts as to land were broken up the moment the trump of jubilee was heard, for the land was the Lord's; and the jubilee brought all back to its normal condition.

This teaches us a fine lesson. If our hearts are cherishing the abiding hope of the Lord's return, we shall set light by all earthly things. It is morally impossible that we can be in the attitude of waiting for the Son from Heaven, and not be detached from this present world. **"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand"** (Philippians 4).

A person may hold "the doctrine of the millennium," as it is called, or the doctrine of "the second advent," and be a thorough man of the world; but one who lives in the habitual expectation of CHRIST's appearing must be separated from that which will be judged and broken up when He comes. It is not a question of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, which is quite true; or of the transitory and unsatisfying character of the things of time, which is equally true. It is far more potent and influential than either or both of these. It is this, **"The Lord is at hand."** May our hearts be affected and our conduct in all things influenced by this most precious and sanctifying truth!

~ end of chapter 25 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

\*\*\*