

Jesus, the Jubilee

HOLY GOD, WHOLLY GIVEN: LENT IN LEVITICUS · LEVITICUS 25; ISAIAH 61:1-3; LUKE 4:14-21 · APRIL 13, 2025 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you." (Leviticus 25:10)

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-19)

What is the Jubilee year?

The sabbath day: a 7th day of rest after 6 days of work

The sabbath year: a 7th year of rest for the land after 6 years of cultivation

The jubilee year: after 49 years, a 50th year of even greater rest, renewal, and return:

- All land returns to original family of ownership
- The land lies fallow (unplanted)
- Release of all Israelite slaves
- Cancellation of debts

The Apparent Impracticality of the Jubilee year

The loftiness of the year of jubilee may make it seem impractical

We have no clear indication in Scripture of whether the year of jubilee was ever put into practice or not

It became a symbol of hope, even messianic hope, for God's people

Jesus and the Jubilee year

God's kingdom agenda in Jesus (Isaiah 61/Luke 4)

God's jubilee arriving Jesus

Living as God's Jubilee People with Jesus

God's jubilee people (Acts 17:6)

Living free in Jesus as God's jubilee people

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you felt most free in your life? What had bound you up? What made you feel free?
2. This week we conclude our Lenten sermon series entitled, "Holy God, Wholly Given: Lent

in Leviticus," while simultaneously beginning the journey of Holy Week with Palm Sunday. Today's message begins in Leviticus 25. Whether on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through this study, and then read that text aloud.

3. *Background: Along with the sabbath day (1 day out of every 7 days) and the sabbath year (1 year out of every 7 years), in this part of Leviticus God outlines the call for a jubilee year (1 year at the end of every 49 years).*
4. Let's begin with the sabbath year as described in Leviticus 25:1-7 and 18-22. What are the guidelines for and purpose of the sabbatical year as outlined here in Leviticus?
5. Now let's turn to the jubilee year. According to Leviticus 25:8-17 and 23-55, what should occur in the jubilee year? What is different about this in comparison with the sabbath year we already looked at?
6. What do you think would have been challenging about and encouraging about the sabbath year? Likewise, what about the jubilee year would be challenging or encouraging?
7. In the New Testament, the year of jubilee is never mentioned. However, Jesus' public ministry begins in Luke's gospel with a quotation from Isaiah steeped in imagery of the jubilee. Read Luke 4:14-21. How do Jesus' words echo the call to the year of jubilee?
8. What is one thing God speaking to you personally through this week's study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about what you shared. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and consider sharing your thoughts with someone this week.

DIG DEEPER:

- Consider memorizing Luke 4:18-19.
- Read through Leviticus 25 slowly. Think about what it may have meant to implement such a sweeping move toward freedom as the jubilee year. Next read Jesus' words at the beginning of His public ministry from Luke 4:14-21. How do these words speak to you about true freedom found in Christ?
- Explore some or all of these resources:
 - The Bible Project podcast episode, "Jubilee: The Radical Year of Release": bibleproject.com/podcast/jubilee-radical-year-release/
 - Timothy Keller, *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*
 - Norman Wirzba, *Living the Sabbath : discovering the rhythms of rest and delight*
 - Michael Rhodes and Robby Holt, *Practicing the King's Economy*

This message is available on the Eastbrook App, on CD by request, or via download & podcast at eastbrook.org/leviticus. Text questions you have to 94000 and we'll address them on our podcast.