

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Leviticus 25:13-22

Dear brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord for bringing us once again to our time of Bible study. Today, we will continue with Leviticus 25, verses 13 to 22.

Over 3,500 years ago, the LORD revealed the Jubilee to Moses, as recorded in Leviticus 25:10. The fiftieth year was to be a Jubilee, during which all the inhabitants of the land were to be set free, individuals were to return to their own families, and they were to reclaim their rightful inheritance. In other words, every 50 years, a "reset button" was to be pressed, restoring everything to God's original design. Under this system, wealth could not be accumulated indefinitely, and power could not be hoarded. Virtually everyone would encounter at least one Jubilee in their lifetime, during which wealth would be redistributed. What was possessed could not be passed to the next generation, and what was lost would be restored. This system ensured that there would be no families so wealthy as to rival nations, nor families enslaved for generations. Distinctions among people were no longer based on wealth, status, or power but on living under God's rule and obeying His statutes and ordinances.

It is evident, however, that as long as human sin remains unaddressed, humanity's ambition and desire to dominate others will persist. Therefore, people are inherently incapable of observing such a system. In the history of Old Testament Israel, there is no record of the Jubilee ever being practiced. So why would God dedicate an entire chapter to describing the Jubilee and include so many details about land, property, and the return of those who sold themselves into slavery?

First, we must recognize that as long as the problem of sin is unresolved, the Jubilee is unworkable. Throughout human history, utopias have remained mere dreams, and attempts at implementing communism have often led to tragic outcomes. The real problem is not whether a system is feasible but whether the problem of human sin has been addressed. Even the best system, when administered by sinful people,

becomes the worst system. Only when Jesus Christ came to resolve the issue of sin did the Jubilee become possible.

When Jesus came to earth for the first time, His inaugural public message, as recorded in Luke 4:19, proclaimed "the acceptable year of the LORD." In the Gospel of Matthew, we see that the purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry was to seek citizens for the Kingdom of Heaven and to establish a heavenly kingdom among them. Thus, the Jubilee that Jesus announced during His first coming was heavenly and spiritual in nature. It means that among the saints, within the spiritual church, the Jubilee can indeed be realized.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is precisely what Paul referred to when he said that the church is the body of Christ and that the saints within the church are all members of Christ's body. When one member suffers, the whole body suffers; when one member is honored, the whole body is honored. The saints are interdependent and support one another. From this perspective, the principles of the Jubilee should be applicable within the church. This is also the normal condition that the church should embody.

However, can we practice this in our local churches? Revelation chapters 2 and 3 reveal seven churches representing seven different states. Among them, perhaps the church in Philadelphia could live out such a heavenly and spiritual condition. This is also the expectation I have for the church I serve: it does not need to be large but must be spiritual, with saints who love one another, support one another, and run the heavenly race together. When Jesus comes again to establish His kingdom on earth, as described in Revelation 20, Satan and his messengers will be bound for 1,000 years. This corresponds to Isaiah 61:2, which speaks of "the day of vengeance of our God." At that time, with Satan bound, the details described in this chapter may become the societal system of the Millennial Kingdom.

Therefore, when we read the following passages, we must approach them from two perspectives: the spiritual aspect, which is fulfilled today in church life, and the practical aspect, which will be realized in the Millennial Kingdom. We cannot apply

this chapter's teachings to today's political or social systems, as these instructions are meant for God's people and require that sin has already been dealt with.

Verse 13: "In this Year of Jubilee, each of you shall return to his possession."

In the Year of Jubilee, everyone was to return to their own possession. From a spiritual perspective, we were once sold to Satan and lived under his bondage. However, through the work of the cross, Jesus Christ has set us free. In the Jubilee proclaimed by Christ, we have regained the lost inheritance, enabling us to cultivate the good land in Christ and manage the vineyard.

Verse 14: "And if you sell anything to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor's hand, you shall not oppress one another."

In today's world, the principle of trade is to earn profit; profit serves as the incentive and driving force of commerce. However, among the saints in the church, the motive for any transactions should not be profit but mutual assistance under the principle of love, emphasizing that no one should oppress another. When someone faces hardship and needs to sell something to get through difficult times, the seller should not overcharge, nor should the buyer drive a hard bargain. Transactions should be conducted fairly and reasonably, ensuring that no one is oppressed.

In the Millennial Kingdom, trade and commerce will no longer be profit-driven. During the Jubilee, everything is reset, wealth cannot accumulate, and profit will no longer be the primary concern. The focus will shift to mutual assistance in love.

Dear brothers and sisters, if there are any transactions among the saints in the church today—whether it involves lending, buying and selling, employment, or entrustment—we must first consider: this is a brother or sister in the Lord. If we proceed with the transaction, are we able or willing to bear the corresponding losses? If not, I personally think it's better to cancel the transaction. Otherwise,

after the transaction, if one party cannot bear the loss, it could damage the original relationship of life, and even disrupt the peaceful church life. This is not worth it. When we see a brother in need, it's better not to trade but to pray before God and, according to God's prompting, offer help without expecting anything in return. This warms hearts far more than any transaction.

Verses 15-16: "According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you. According to the multitude of years you shall increase its price, and according to the fewer number of years you shall diminish its price; for he sells to you according to the number of the years of the crops."

These verses address how to determine pricing when buying or selling land. First, we must recognize that the ownership of the land belongs to God. In Exodus 19:5, God declared, "For all the earth is Mine." The land was created by God, and its ownership naturally belongs to Him. After the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they were given land as inheritance according to their tribes and families. What they held was the right to use the land.

Therefore, the value of a piece of land is not determined by its size but by how much value it can produce during its use. This concept is advanced and fair. For farmland, it depends on the annual harvest; for pastureland, the value lies in the livestock it supports; for a mining area, the value depends on the minerals it produces annually. Similarly, this principle can be applied to price tools or other objects based on their productive capacity.

With this data, pricing is calculated based on the Jubilee as the reference point. For instance, if the land is sold in the 10th year after the Jubilee, there are 40 years of use remaining, so the value equals the annual yield multiplied by 40. If sold in the 40th year, only 10 years remain, so the price equals the annual yield multiplied by 10. This method ensures the value of land is publicly recognized, not determined by the fluctuating supply-and-demand dynamics of free trade. Transactions are motivated by love and mutual assistance rather than profit.

In the church life today, all saints are accepted as God's children through the grace of Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaimed the Jubilee during His first coming, and these saints who are blessed in Jesus have entered into His Jubilee. This Jubilee is no longer a matter of time but a domain—a spiritual church represents this domain.

Relationships among brothers and sisters in the church should follow the principles of the Jubilee. This principle is illustrated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:14-15: "But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality. As it is written, 'He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack.'" In a spiritual church, this principle of equality arises not from legal regulations but from the saints' love for one another, freely and willingly giving. This makes for a beautiful testimony and an appealing church life.

Verse 17: "Therefore you shall not oppress one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the Lord your God."

Mutual love and assistance, rather than oppression, should define relationships. Saints must fear God and recognize Him as the source of all blessings. If we are prosperous today, it is not because of our capabilities or experience but due to God's abundant provision. We should not withhold God's grace while ignoring saints in need. If we face lack, it is God's way of training our faith. Instead of seeking human help, we should turn to God, rely on Him, and seek His provision. God will, in His perfect timing, move all things—including fellow saints—to meet our needs. Everyone must fear God and acknowledge that He is our Lord; His love ensures we will not be put to shame.

Verse 18: "So you shall observe My statutes and keep My judgments, and perform them; and you will dwell in the land in safety."

Those who fear God will observe and keep His statutes and judgments, and God promises that they will dwell in safety upon the land. God has not promised us wealth or luxurious living, but He has promised that we will dwell safely in the land He has given us. A spiritual church that truly knows God and understands His commission will find all its needs met by God. He will provide a spiritual land of abundance where the saints can dwell in safety and fulfill God's entrusted duties.

Verse 19: "Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety."

God promises that the land will yield its fruit, and we will eat to our satisfaction and dwell safely on the land He has given us. The church does not fear poverty, small numbers, or difficult external circumstances—it fears only a lack of reverence and obedience to God. If an inexperienced group of believers submits to God's guidance and establishes a church in a desolate place, God promises that the land will yield fruit. This means that even among inexperienced believers, God will raise up spiritual provision to meet the needs of all, enabling them to dwell in safety.

Verse 20: "And if you say, 'What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we shall not sow nor gather in our produce?'"

The seventh year is the Sabbath year, during which, according to God's ordinance, no sowing or pruning of vineyards is allowed, nor can any spontaneously grown produce be harvested, as it is designated for those in need. So, what shall people eat in the seventh year? This is a very reasonable question.

Verses 21-22: "Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth

year and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest.”

Here, God gives us the answer. In the sixth year, the year preceding the Sabbath year, God will command His blessing, and the land will yield a triple harvest to provide for three years. During the seventh year, when no sowing occurs, the first year of supply will suffice. In the eighth year, sowing resumes, and the second year of supply will sustain them until the new harvest comes. The eighth year's harvest will then meet the ninth year's needs. In this way, every seven years, an additional year's supply is produced.

Some might think that God's calculation is mistaken, but it is not. God's provision is designed to account for the Jubilee year: the 49th year is a Sabbath year with no sowing, and the 50th year, the Jubilee year, is also a year of rest. Thus, for two consecutive years, they will rely on the harvest of the 48th year. Even in the 51st year, before the harvest, the remaining supply from the 48th year will sustain them. God's blessing in the sixth year, enabling the land to produce three years' worth of food, ensures that there will be ample provision during the Jubilee period when no sowing occurs.

Detailed minded believers may notice that every seven years, there is an additional year's supply, so over six Sabbath years, there will be six extra years' worth of harvest. The seventh Sabbath year aligns perfectly with the Jubilee's needs. In total, over 50 years, six extra years of harvest are provided, averaging 12% additional yield annually. This demonstrates that God has already included the requirement for tithes in His provision. What we can offer is truly a gift of grace, not the result of our labor or effort, but a blessing from God in His grace.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. From the regulations concerning the Jubilee, we see that You are indeed a God of abundant provision. You are also full of mercy, knowing that we are of little faith. Therefore, in the sixth year before the Sabbath year, You provide triple the spiritual supply so that we can truly rest during the Sabbath year. Lord, help us to apply the principles of the Jubilee in today's church life. Bless my church and every saint within it, enabling us to transcend self-interest

and learn to meet the needs of others, filling what is lacking. Let the testimony of love become the church's most striking banner, and let those who come among us experience that God is truly present in our midst. Bless my church, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.