

Summary

As far as scholars know, Jubilee was never enacted in ancient Israel – until the coming of Jesus.

The Levitical law of Jubilee was the most radical, pervasive sociological construct of freedom imaginable. Every seventh day and every seventh year, the people and the land rested. The year of Jubilee was after the 49th year – seven times seven years. It was the Sabbath of Sabbaths of Sabbaths. According to Levitical law, everything reset during the year of Jubilee. Slaves were to be set free. Land was to be returned to its original owners. And debts were to be cancelled.

No longer bound by the slavery of their forebears, a new generation could walk into unprecedented freedom. Jubilee means a new start. In this final week of missions' emphasis, we focus on freedom's call to a new generation who can embrace their God-given destiny with the confidence that Jesus has become their jubilee.

Getting to Know Each Other

1. Jubilee was called the “year of the Lord’s favor.” Share about a time in your life when you received unmerited favor (a blessing that you clearly didn’t earn). How did it make you feel?

Getting Into the Bible

Read Lev. 25:8-12

“You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field.”

Read Lev. 25:39-42

““If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave: he shall be with you as a hired worker and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee. Then he shall go out from you, he and his children with him, and go back to his own clan and return to the possession of his fathers. For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves.”

1. What does the Jubilee say about the character of God – what must be true about Him as the inventor and initiator of the Jubilee cycle?
2. What does the Jubilee say about us – our relationship to work, one another and God Himself?

Application

1. Jesus said the year of Jubilee was fulfilled in His earthly ministry – Reconsider the various kinds of people for whom this spells freedom, based on Isaiah 61:1-2.

As you read the text are there any ways you are particularly burdened for students or young adults? How might the Lord be initiating Jubilee through you?

Read Is. 61:1-2

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³ to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
that they may be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.*

2. Here are 3 particular aspects of the Jubilee. It was a special year of...
 - (1) Amnesty – slaves were freed
 - (2) Redemption – debtors were released,
 - (3) Restoration – lost property was returned.¹

What aspect of Jubilee do you think is most attractive and liberating for our current American culture? How can you envision the church, the body of Jesus, bringing Jubilee into that part of our culture?

3. As described in the sermon, Jubilee was a “Sabbath of Sabbaths of Sabbaths”. How hard is it for you to find time for Sabbath (not in the legalistic sense but in the refreshing, truly delightful and restful sense)? Have you found some life patterns of rest and recreation that have been particularly helpful? Share.

Taking it Home...

This section is designed for you to have Scripture readings for up to 5 days/week until the next time your group meets. For each reading we suggest you use this format to invite God to work in and through you by His Word and Spirit...

1. Read the day's Scripture, asking the Holy Spirit what He wants to show you and what action He wants you to take.
2. Take action on what the Lord says in and through His Word.
3. Share it with someone else.
4. Be prepared to share some of the highlights with your group at your next gathering

¹ Ryken, 168.

Sermon Series: Freedom's Calling
Message: Freedom for the Next Generation Through Jubilee
Text: Lev. 25:8-12, Lev. 25:39-42

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Reynolda Church, EPC

Reading #1: 2 Samuel 7 (God's Covenant with David)
Reading #2: Psalm 72 (The King who would come from David)
Reading #3: Luke 1 (David's Promise comes true)
Reading #4: Luke 2 (David's Promise comes true)
Reading #5: Matt. 1:1-17 (Jesus, Son of David)