

The Book of Leviticus

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Section Outline

- I. Sacrificial System (Leviticus 1–7)**
 - II. Ministry of the Priesthood (Leviticus 8–10)**
 - III. Laws of Purification (Leviticus 11–15)**
 - IV. Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16)**
 - V. Covenant Ordinances (Leviticus 17–24)**
 - VI. Conclusion of the Sinai Covenant (chapters 25–26)**
 - A. Further Applications of the Sabbatical Principle (chapter 25)**
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- 1. The Sabbatical Year—7th Year Observances (25:1-7)**

The sabbatical principle involved in the sabbatical year and in the Jubilee year involves the land God gave to Israel.

 - During the seventh year the land was to lay fallow.
 - People and animals alike could gather the natural produce of the land.
 - Indentured Hebrew slaves had the option to discontinue their service (Exodus 21:2).
 - Debts of fellow Israelites were to be forgiven at the end of seven years.
 - ✓ Some interpreters believe this meant only that the debtor was released from any payments during the seventh year.
 - At the conclusion of the seventh year, on the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths, the whole Law of Moses was read publicly (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).
 - All the land of Israel belonged to the Lord (Leviticus 25:23; Isaiah 14:25; Jeremiah 2:7; Ezekiel 36:20).
 - ✓ Observing the sabbatical year was a means of acknowledging that all provision (even the land itself) came from the Lord.

The specific applications of this for modern believers should include the following:

- acknowledging that everything one has belongs to God and must be used for his glory;
- taking care of what has been entrusted to them so that it will be productive for God;
- making what they have available to others so that unity and harmony result; and
- finding ways to prevent people from being enslaved or indebted for long periods of time.

— Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the LORD: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2002), 455

2. The Jubilee Year—50th Year Observances (25:8-55)

- ❑ After seven sabbatical year observances (49 years), on the Day of Atonement, a ram's horn trumpet is to be blown to proclaim liberty, release (vv. 8-12).
 - ✓ Jubilee's observance was very similar to that for the sabbatical year, but it added that every Israelite was to return to the land that had been their family's original allotment (v. 10).
- ❑ Observance of Jubilee (vv. 13-55)
 - ✓ Fairness in business practices in the light of temporary holdings (vv. 13-17, 23-28).
 - ✓ Trusting God for provision and security (vv. 18-22).
 - ✓ Exceptions involve houses in the cities and the cities of the Levites (vv. 29-34). Focus, again, is on producing land belonging to the Lord.
 - ✓ Strengthening rather than oppressing the poor (vv. 35-55).

Verse 55 declares the reality that every Israelite must keep in mind: they are all the servants/slaves of the Lord.
- ❑ Compare the concept of Jubilee with the following passages:
 - ✓ Isaiah 61:1-3 (see, also, Luke 4:17-19)
 - ✓ John 8:30-36
 - ✓ Romans 8:18-25

Summary of Applications from Leviticus 25:

- All believers must live in accordance with the fact that all we have is from God.
- Compassion, benevolence, and generosity should characterize our dealings.
- We're strangers on earth awaiting our future release from the presence of sin.