1. **Intro:**

1.1. On our toes! – Dr. Laura Letter. (well written, yet not!)

1.2. **Outline:** 7th year Sabbath; Jubilee & Property; Jubilee & Poverty; & Jubilee & Slavery.

2. **7TH YEAR SABBATH! (1-7)**

2.1. When you come into the land – (conditional)

2.1.1. When Ezra came back into the land (after the captivity) he re-thought, re-taught, & re-applied God’s law, once the people were back in their God-given homeland.

2.2. **Q:** Do you trust God to take care of you?

2.2.1. What faith this must have taken.

2.2.2. What discipline this must have taken to not walk through your vineyard & “accidentally” break a branch…in the right spot (pruning vs.4).

2.2.2.1. Or, (asking/yelling) “which of the kids spilt the fertilizer all over one of the fruit trees?”

2.2.2.2. Or, with a hand full of seed, yelling to the wife, “honey, I’m going to scatter these seeds for the birds!”

2.3. **Q:** Is He your Jehovah Jireh or not?

2.3.1. **Q:** Are you trusting in your savings, stocks, mutual funds, 401k’s, CD’s, or Roth Ira’s?

2.4. **Q:** Why else was this year important? - This year of rest was also supposed to be given over to Bible Study!

2.4.1. **Read - Deut.31:9-13**

2.5. **Q:** So, did they obey this?…No!

2.5.1. By not obeying, this is what brought upon them 70 yrs of captivity.

2.5.2. **See 2 Chron.36:21** & note below it.
3. **JUBILEE & PROPERTY! (8-34)**

3.1. **2 Main themes:** “My Land” (23); & “My Servants” (42).

3.1.1. There is a *Spiritual Purpose* here (God owns everything, so we must trust Him for everything); *Ecological Purpose* (to rest the land); *Humanitarian Purpose* (to rest the people); *Creature Purpose* (to rest the beast); & there is a *Economic Purpose* (to balance the economy for the poor & afflicted).

3.1.2. Had they obeyed the year of Jubilee the rich would have had a hard time exploiting the poor.

3.1.3. God is concerned with ecology & the way we treat His creation.

3.1.3.1. Obviously many take this to a way-out extreme. (Chaining themselves to trees, etc.)

3.1.3.2. *Earth day* is ok! (conservation of the world’s natural resources)

3.1.3.3. But we are to be stewards of His backyard. *We are His guests!*

3.2. **JUBILEE! (8-17)**

3.3. JUBILEE = to blow a trumpet (shofar/rams horn)

3.3.1. It was a time to “Proclaim Liberty” (10) to people in debt, to the land itself, to slaves, & even to the work animals!

3.3.2. *Liberty* or freedom is a wonderful word!

3.3.2.1. Q: Are you in *financial bondage*? What are you doing to get out of it? Maybe you just need better financial planning?

3.3.2.2. *Suggest - “Crown Ministries”* (Irv & Melinda Cohen) [next group?]

3.4. *(13-17)* Here is an exhortation to be honest in business!

3.4.1. *(14)* How easy it is today for some to flex their financial muscle to “wrong one another”.

3.4.2. *(15,16)* It is ok to make money off land purchases, but **NOT** by misrepresentation, deception, or fraud.

3.4.3. *(17)* If only these 2 sentences could be inserted into all our transactions today!

3.5. So the Lord loans His land to them so they may have the sense of responsibility & proprietorship.

3.5.1. People usually take care of what they themselves own!

3.5.2. *Paper today* (Californian) “77% of home owners in our area are owner/occupied, in s/w county” (hard to rent, but statistically & practically it keeps up the neighborhoods)
3.6. Like the announcement of the Year of Jubilee the gospel is Good News to the spiritual poor, because our debts have been paid, & are completely forgiven.

3.6.1. Today He offers rest & freedom to all who trust Him.

3.6.2. We are now living in the year of Jubilee.

3.6.3. Lk.4:18,19 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

3.6.4. See – Lk.7:36-50

3.7. PROVISIONS! (18-22)

3.8. (18) In safety – “in security or confidence”.

3.9. (19) Eat your fill – “abundance!”

3.10. (21) Who gives the increase?

3.11. Did you know…that there is no evidence that they ever celebrated the Year of Jubilee?

3.12. LAND! (23-28)

3.13. (23) For the land is mine – {This land is my land, this land “ain’t” your land…}

3.13.1. Ps.50:10-12 “For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine. "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.”

3.13.2. Isn’t this a great reminder to us…It’s not yours! “It’s not your house, car, back patio, green grass, driveway, etc.”

3.13.3. So, if God wants to sell His house, or even loose His house, He’s the owner!

3.13.3.1. Remember, a steward in scripture “owned nothing” he only managed the owner’s things! {Sojourners = “My tenants”}

3.14. WALLED CITY! (29,30)

3.15. VILLAGE! (31)

3.16. So I guess…“It takes a Village” to get your house back!
3.17. **LEVITES!** (32-34)

3.17.1. The Levites get a parsonage as part of their stipend.

3.18. **People before Property!** (we have this flip-flopped)

3.18.1. The Children of Israel couldn’t say, “we did it ourselves”, “we are self-made men”. They knew it was God that rescued them out of Egypt.

3.18.1.1. If they ran upon **bad times** they wouldn’t ultimately lose their place, extended family would come to their aid, if they needed money it would be lent to them interest free.

3.18.2. **“The fate of their brother was more important than merely making money!”**

4. **JUBILEE & POVERTY!** (35-38)

4.1. (38) The Key was…remember I brought you out of Egypt when **you** were poor & had **fallen into poverty**. {Treat them as well}

4.1.1. Since the Lord had **created** them, **chose** them, & **redeemed** them out of Egypt…then He could place this on them!

4.2. Loans to needy friends were not to have interest.

4.2.1. Remember “helping someone” isn’t always “free-bee’s”!

4.2.2. Ask, “what will really help them?” Sometimes it’s giving them a fish, other times it is showing them how to catch a fish, other times it is

4.3. **“A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization,”**

5. **JUBILEE & SLAVERY!** (39-55)

5.1. Slavery – was not evil in itself. It was the possible **harshness** & **cruelty** that could be evil.

5.1.1. (Smith Bible Dict.) “The institution of slavery was **recognized**, though not **established**, by the Mosaic Law, w/a view to anticipate its hardship & to secure to every man his ordinary rights.” ¹

5.1.2. **Cases for Slavery were:** Poverty (you could sell yourself to another Hebrew, to support your family, to obtain maintenance & purchase a surplus sufficient to redeem his property), **Theft** (to pay back when restitution couldn’t be paid back), & **Paternal Authority** (limited to the sale of your daughter, of tender age, to be a maidservant or work until she became his or his son’s wife…like a “dowry” given as was not unusual)

¹ Smith Bible Dictionary; Slavery
5.1.3. Slavery existed many centuries before the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law forbade them to enslave one another. God had to eliminate slavery in Israel before He could deal with it in the Gentile nations (i.e., judgment starts in the house of God).

5.1.4. Slavery fell into disuse subsequent to the Babylonian Captivity.

5.1.5. Even in the NT you never find Paul or Jesus attacking slavery, although the Roman Empire had approx 60 million slaves at that time.

5.2. The church & slavery – “The church of Jesus Christ has thrived under many kinds of political & economic systems & isn’t dependent on any of them, but the church must always champion the rights of the poor & the oppressed & use every spiritual weapon to defeat the oppressors.”

5.2.1. “Had the early church launched a militant crusade against slavery, it would have identified Christianity, as a political movement, & this would have hindered the spreading of the Gospel in the Roman world.”

5.2.2. The Lord chooses to change People. - Politics & Societies change comes from 1st the change in individuals…never reverse those! (book by – Cal Thomas)

5.3. (55) So, don’t sell your life to Visa, Mastercard, etc. – you are His!

5.4. “God owns the land, we are His servants, & we must use His resources wisely,…for His Glory!”

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1 Samuel Johnson (British writer)

2 Warren Wiersbe; pg.132

3 Warren Wiersbe; pg.131