

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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THE BLESSINGS
OF
THE JUBILEE

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The preaching of the gospel is the sounding, the trumpeting, of the jubilee. In the preaching of the gospel, we proclaim glad tidings, good news. This good news is that we can be returned to our lost possession and that we can be freed from slavery, from bondage. According to the type in [Leviticus 25](#), the jubilee has two main blessings. These blessings are the return to the lost possession and the release from slavery.

THE JUBILEE AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

The New Testament jubilee was proclaimed by the Lord Jesus in [Luke 4:18 and 19](#). He sounded out the trumpet of the New Testament jubilee when He declared, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are

oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” After this jubilee was proclaimed, it was experienced by many whose cases are recorded in the Gospel of Luke. All these cases, therefore, are illustrations of the New Testament jubilee.

Among the many illustrations of the jubilee in the Gospel of Luke, the best is the case of the prodigal son being returned to his father, to his father’s household, and to his inheritance. After the prodigal had spent all, a severe famine occurred, and he began to be in want ([Luke 15:14](#)). He then “went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed hogs. And he was longing to be satisfied with the carob pods which the hogs were eating, and no one gave him anything” ([vv. 15-16](#)). When he came to himself, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have an abundance of bread, but I am perishing here with famine! I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants” ([vv. 17-19](#)). Here we see that the prodigal wanted to be as those who sowed, reaped, and harvested (things which were forbidden in the year of jubilee) by exerting his own effort.

His intention was to tell his father that since he was no longer worthy of being a son, he would like to labor as a hired one. But according to the type in [Leviticus 25](#), during the year of jubilee there was to be no sowing, reaping, or harvesting. During that year there was not to be any labor on the land. Hence, the prodigal son should not have come back to the father to be a laborer. He should be returned to the father as one being returned to enjoy his possession.

When the prodigal son was returned, he began to say, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son” ([v. 21](#)). The father, not having an ear to hear such nonsensical talk, interrupted him and said to his slaves, “Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry” ([vv. 22-23](#)). Do you know what the fattened calf signifies? The fattened calf signifies the rich Christ as our inheritance. In the words of [Colossians 1:12](#), this is Christ as the portion of the saints. After the prodigal son was returned, he, the father, and those in the household began to enjoy the inheritance. Here in the case of the prodigal son we have a clear picture of the New

Testament jubilee. A genuine conversion should be like that of the prodigal son portrayed in this parable.

We have pointed out that the first blessing of the jubilee is the return to our lost possession. In the jubilee those who have lost their inheritance were returned to their possession. This is typified in [Leviticus 25:9-13](#).

The first main blessing of the New Testament jubilee is to return to the possession which we had left. This possession was not anything material—our possession was God Himself.

GOD'S INTENTION TO BE MAN'S POSSESSION

Man's true possession is God, and man was created as a vessel to contain God. [Genesis 1:26](#) says that man was made in the image of God, and [Romans 9](#) reveals that man was created to be a vessel. Man was created a vessel to contain God so that God might fill man and express Himself through man.

In the realm of material things, if we have the needed possessions, we shall have land for the producing of food, and we shall have a house for our lodging. Daily we need food to eat and a house in which to dwell. In brief, we need land

and a house. These are the basic necessities in man's living.

The New Testament indicates that God is our real land. To His chosen people, the children of Israel, God gave a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey. For what purpose did He give them the land? God gave the land to His people so that they would have food for eating. This good land is a type of God in Christ to be the supply for our eating. Eating is a spiritual necessity, and Christ is the supply to meet this need.

In [Psalm 90:1](#) we see that God is also our dwelling place: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Have you ever realized that God is your dwelling place? Even in the Old Testament we are told that God was the dwelling place of His chosen people. Therefore, God is our land and also our house, our dwelling place.

[Psalm 16:5](#) says, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup." Here we see that the Lord is our portion for our inheritance and for our cup. He is our portion in two ways—as food for our eating and as a house for our dwelling. According to [Psalm 90:1](#) and [Psalm 16:5](#), God intends to be man's possession, to be man's land and lodging.

MAN LOSING GOD BECAUSE OF MAN'S FALL

In the New Testament we are told clearly that fallen man is without God. [Ephesians 2:12](#), a verse that describes the actual condition of fallen mankind, says that man is now “without God in the world.” Today all of fallen mankind is without God because man has left God.

GOD'S JUBILEE BRINGING MAN BACK TO GOD AS MAN'S INHERITANCE

God's jubilee brings man back to God as man's inheritance. In the New Testament jubilee we all have been returned to God as our possession.

[Colossians 1:12](#) says that the Father has qualified us for a share of the portion of the saints in the light, and [Ephesians 1:14](#) speaks of the pledge of our inheritance. Now that we have been returned to God as our portion, we have God in Christ as our inheritance. In [Acts 26:18](#) Paul speaks of fallen people being brought back to God as their inheritance: “To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.”

The divine inheritance here is the Triune God Himself with all that He has, all He has done, and all He will do for His redeemed people. This Triune God is embodied in the all-inclusive Christ ([Col. 2:9](#)), who is the portion allotted to the saints as their inheritance. The Holy Spirit, who has been given to the saints, is the foretaste, the pledge, and the guarantee of this divine inheritance ([Rom. 8:23](#); [Eph. 1:14](#)), which we are sharing and enjoying today in God's New Testament jubilee as a foretaste and will share and enjoy in full in the coming age and for eternity. In the type of the jubilee in [Leviticus 25:8-13](#) one of the main blessings was the return of every man to his own inheritance. In the fulfillment of the jubilee here in [Acts 26:18](#), receiving the divine inheritance is also the primary blessing.

FREED FROM SLAVERY

The second blessing of the jubilee is that those who have sold themselves as slaves are freed from their slavery ([Lev. 25:39-41, 54](#)). According to the type in [Leviticus 25](#), an Israelite may become so poor that he must sell his possession. Then he may go deeper into poverty and even sell himself. Having lost himself, he becomes a slave.

The one who had sold himself into slavery

could try to redeem himself. However, if he could not redeem himself before the year of jubilee, he was to be released in that year. “If he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubilee, both he, and his children with him” ([Lev. 25:54](#)). This means that in the fiftieth year, in the year of jubilee, the one who had sold himself as a slave was freed from his slavery.

The picture in [Leviticus 25](#) is very meaningful. This picture indicates that from the time of the fall man has sold himself as a slave, in particular as a slave of sin. Although man tried to redeem himself, he was not able to do so. In the dispensations of conscience, human government, promise, and law, man was not able to redeem himself. But then the dispensation of grace came, a dispensation typified by the fiftieth year. In this dispensation fallen man can be released from bondage.

The New Testament reveals that fallen man has been sold to sin as its slave. In [Romans 7:14](#) Paul declares, “I am fleshly, sold under sin.” In [John 8:34](#) the Lord Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.” God’s jubilee frees fallen man from sin. For this reason, the Lord says, “If then the Son shall set you free, you shall be really free” ([John 8:36](#)).

Furthermore, in [Romans 6:6](#) and [7](#) Paul tells us, “Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him that the body of sin might be made of none effect, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves; for he who has died is justified from sin.” Then in [Romans 8:2](#) Paul goes on to say, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed me from the law of sin and of death.” Furthermore, according to [Galatians 5:1](#), God’s jubilee also frees us from the bondage of law.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE YEAR OF JUBILEE BEING THE FIFTIETH YEAR

[Leviticus 25:8](#) says, “And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.” According to [verse 10](#), the people were to “hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.” We may say that the seven sabbaths of years in [verse 8](#), the seven times seven years, are also seven “weeks” of years (see [Dan. 9:24-26](#)). In the Bible a week, a period

of seven days, signifies a complete course. For example, in a course of seven days God created the universe and everything in it and then rested. Therefore, the seven days of a week indicate a complete course.

The jubilee did not come at the end of a single week of years, but after a course of seven weeks of seven years. The year after seven weeks of seven years was, of course, the fiftieth year, the first year of the eighth week of seven years.

In the Bible the number eight signifies resurrection. The Lord Jesus was resurrected on the eighth day, on the first day of the week. In keeping with this principle, the first year of each new week, or period, of seven years was an eighth year, and this eighth year may be considered a year of resurrection. The year of jubilee was the seventh “eighth year.” This means that this eighth year, which is the fiftieth year, indicates seven times resurrection.

The year of jubilee, the fiftieth year, can only come after seven weeks of years. It can only come after the completion of the courses of human life. This means that the jubilee has a blessing which no one can reach by his own effort. Someone may try in course after course to return to his possession and to redeem himself from slavery. But of

himself he cannot return or be redeemed. The jubilee comes only from God. God returns us to our possession, and God releases us from bondage.

TWO GREAT BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL

We have seen that the two main blessings of the jubilee are being returned to our possession and being released from slavery. In the New Testament these are two great blessings of the gospel. The gospel declares that God has returned us to Himself as our possession and that He has set us free from bondage, from slavery, especially from the slavery of sin. The bondage of sin is the worst kind of bondage. Those who live in sin are bound in many ways. But when a person is set free from sin, he is also set free from many things. When we were set free from sin, we were also set free from the slavery of the law.

By the Lord's mercy I can testify that I enjoy God as my possession, as my food, house, clothing, and transportation. I can also testify that I have been released from bondage. I am free from the slavery of sin and from the bondage of law and religion. Praise the Lord for the blessings of the jubilee!

We all need to learn how to enjoy the jubilee. When we enjoy the jubilee, we shall be able to go out to proclaim the jubilee. We shall sound the trumpet of the gospel and tell others that now is the time for God to accept them, that now is the time for them to be returned to God as their possession and to be freed from every kind of slavery, bondage, and entanglement. Those who have been returned to God and who have been released from bondage are free to enjoy God. To proclaim this is to sound the trumpet of the jubilee, to announce the jubilee of God's New Testament economy. May we all enjoy the blessings of the jubilee and then sound forth the jubilee as the gospel.

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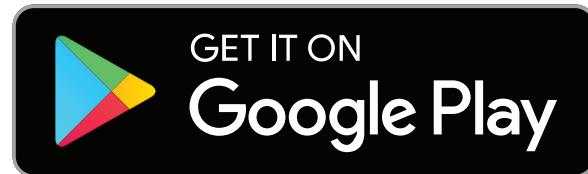
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