

Part 9 Leviticus 25 .1-26.2 "IN THE MOUNT" BeHAR JUBILEE MUSIC -FAITH & FREEDOM

THE SPECIAL REVELATION AT SINAI

When the LORD drew the tribes under Moses to Mount Sinai we all know it was to give them His law. What is often forgotten is that the LORD gave at Sinai the clearest revelation of Himself since Eden. The LORD reveals himself(a) in wrath against sin and(b) in fellowship with sinners who seek Him who are atoned for by blood Scripture tells us that the leaders of Israel and seventy elders saw the LORD and He did not move a finger of judgment (despite the fact that "no man can see God and live"(Exodus 33.20)-the latter statement being issued on the back of Israel's idolatry and a measure not applied retrospectively. They saw the firmament under him-as if he was Master beyond the sky. They feasted in His presence in the mount as a preliminary to a long fast which was probably broken by shouts of idolaters and the licentious from the camp. Nothing is starker than the contrast between enjoyment of the LORD and enjoyment of pleasure and sin(Exodus 24.9-10)

*The bondage of sin which Sinai comes to represent can only be broken by the shed blood of Christ. Fellowship with God is lastingly impacted by sin until the Jubilee of Christ which is **TORAH**. In the light of two N.T. statements about the "mount"(Galatians 4.24-25 & Hebrews 12.18)we tend to dismiss the "mount" as "bondage"-but Jerusalem (by parallel associated with bondage [Galatians 2.25] also show-cased the visitation of Christ in grace and shares with the Sinai as the setting for revelation and fellowship with the LORD when 12 elders and Israel's leaders under Moses 'ate and drank there and saw God' For such reasons both Elijah and Paul himself subsequent to conversion spent time at the Sinai, by the mount of the LORD (Genesis 24.14 ,Exodus 18.50,1Kings 19.8& Acts 7.30)*

READINGNo.1 REDEMPTION AND FAITH

(SPEECH No.102)CHAPTER 25 1-7 THE SABBATICAL YEAR

And the LORD spoke to Moses in Mount Sinai saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them when they come into the land which I am giving to them that the land is to Sabbath a Sabbath rest to the LORD. For six years sow your fields and prune your vineyards and collect what comes in but on the seventh year is the Sabbath to be kept as a rest to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not harvest self-sown seed; [Hebrew SAPHAH 'spreading'] do not harvest your unpruned [Hebrew NAZIR 'nazarite grapes'] It is the year of the Sabbath of the LORD for the land. In the Sabbath(year) of the land there shall be food for you, for your men who serve, your maids who work for you, your hired men and strangers who settle with you. There will even be food for your animals and the wild creatures-al that is produced in the year is for eating. *The LORD promised food sufficient for every family and stranger. He also cares for the wild-life. The only reserve he has is that there is no hoarding or storing up. The high purpose of this Sabbath year of the LORD of the land is to teach the people to live **by faith**.* Josephus in his Antiquities 12.9 tells us that AD 70 was a Jubilee year and reading backwards the previous Jubilee was AD 20-nine years before Jesus began His public ministry. Yet in Luke 4 we have a **greater captive release and wider redemption** through the favour or grace of Christ.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE AND LIBERTY 8-13

Count seven Sabbaths -seven years times seven years and the days of seven Sabbaths make forty nine years. You shall cause the trumpet to pass [Hebrew ABAR 'as a flowing river'] and be blown everywhere in the tenth day of the seventh month. **On the day of Atonement** you shall cause the trumpet to pass through all your land. Make the fiftieth year holy and call for liberty [Hebrew DARAR 'a free flow' 'a flying like swallows' 'a circling round joyfully like horse in a field', 'an exuberant spreading and growth' 'a radiance like a star or gem']among all that inhabit the land. It is a Jubilee rest for you. Each man shall return to his holding and to his family roots. *The word "Jubilee" is*

onomatopoeic and is "musical" in pronunciation. The year was intended not just to be a celebration of "liberty" but a celebration of the LORD who gave the land and to be filled with praise. When Jesus stood up in Nazareth it was a "liberty year" and He ceased work and moved all round the country with the trumpet of the good news. The fiftieth year is a Jubilee year for you. Do not sow or reap that which is self-seeding harvest your untrimmed vines. It is a holy Jubilee for you from the land (i.e. working the land) and you shall eat its natural produce. In this Jubilee year every man is to settle back in his (earliest) holding.

READING No.2 14-18

REDEMPTION AND FRUITFULNESS

If you make a (land) sale to your fellow Jew or buy from his hand do not oppress your brother. You are to sell to your fellow Jew (governed by the price) according to the count of years after the Jubilee and you shall buy from him according to the income left (by the count of Jubilee years) *Fair set prices were arrived at on the basis of earnings possible over the given fraction of 50 years that had passed in the case of sales and that was to come in the case of purchase. Prices dropped as Jubilee neared.* With the outlook of a large number of years you increase the price and with a short term of years it is decreased. This is because he is in effect selling you the crop potential. Do not oppress your neighbour but fear your God. ***I am Yahweh.*** Do my decrees and keep my righteous laws to work them and you will Sabbath or rest with confidence or security or "full assurance" [*Hebrew BATAH 'throwing yourself on your back as carefree as when sleeping' or casting yourself on me'-so with faith*]

READING No.3 19-23

REDEMPTION A UNIVERSAL CONCEPT

Will the earth give her fruit and will we eat on the seventh year and can we rest our reliance upon her? And when you say, "Look, **what shall we eat** in the Sabbatical year if we do not sow seed and harvest as well?" I will command such blessing in the sixth year that you will take in enough harvest for three years. When you sow the seed in the eighth year you will be eating from the old [*Hebrew YASHAN 'sleeping'*] crop and you will be eating the old crop when harvest on the ninth year is brought in. The land may not be sold permanently [*Hebrew TZAMATH 'to be cut off', 'while it stands'*] for the land is mine and you are my permanent sojourners [*Hebrew GUR used of 'a lion's whelp whilst being weaned'*] and tenants. Through all the land you hold you must give place to the "redemption" of the land. *In-built to the provisions of tenure is the fact that Israel are "permanent tenants" and that God is capable at any time of "redeeming" His land for his appointed tenants.*

READING No. 4 25-28

REDEMPTION AND JUSTICE

When a fellow Jew becomes reduced in means and sell his holding his nearest Redeemer shall come and redeem what his friend has sold. If that man does not act as Goel-Redeemer and his own hand is able to reach and find (the money) he shall redeem it himself. He shall estimate the years since he sold it and return the surplus or money that is over to the man to whom he sold his holding. And if he cannot find to hand what he sold will remain in the buyer's hand till the year of Jubilee and in that year he can go and return to his property. *The vendor in this case has two options and if both fail God's justice will enable the return of his holding. Thus inflated prices were avoided and also the endless multiplying of resources as in giant take-overs which today despoil character and reduce fairness.*

READING No.5 29-38

LEVITE HOUSES REDEEMED

A Man who sells a house in a walled city may become Redeemer of his property from the buyer until the end of the days of the year. If it is not redeemed at the completion of the full year and restored the house in the city will remain the possession of the buyer and his posterity and shall not be returnable at

Jubilee. But village houses with no walls around them are considered as fields of the land; they may be redeemed and shall be returned at Jubilee. The houses in the watchful or protected cities of the Levites - cities they possess-shall always be redeemable. They are Levite cities. And such house may be redeemed from Levites and pass from one who bought it and he (the Levite) shall hold the city in the Jubilee. *The Levite cities seem to be subject to such law as ensures them firmly and into perpetuity as a holding of the Priests.* The houses in protected towns are Levite- held in the midst of the sons of Israel. But the fields of pastureland of their protected cities is not to be sold; it is their perpetual holding. *The Levite cities are not described as "walled" but they are "watched" and lay in the heartland of the nation. In a special sense God was their keeper and protector as He is ours. David said, "Except the LORD keep the city the watchman remains awake in vain."*

CARE OF THE POOR: NO INTEREST ON LOANS OR ON FOOD 35-38

When one of your fellow Jews becomes poor and appeals to you (for work) assist him as you would a stranger or settler who is among you. Do not take from your fellow Jew multiplied interest and fear you're God and your fellow countryman will live by you. You must not give him silver with interest or add usury in selling your food. *Today where food which is the gift of God is subject to tax beyond the duty imposed for carriage this regulation is discarded by Gentiles. The large food chains have ratcheted up huge profits as a consequence and virtually become banks.* I am the LORD your God who brought you from Egypt to give you the land of Canaan; ***I am Yahweh your God*** There are four possessives in the statement. (i) *The God who belongs to you* (ii) *Who belongs to your life* (iii) *that belongs to you* (iv) *who belong to God.*

READING No.6 39-46 REDEMPTION ENDS SLAVERY

If a fellow Jew becomes poor and sells himself to you do not enslave him to work as a slave. He shall be as a paid worker or settler with you. He shall serve you till the year of Jubilee. Then **he shall go out with his family and return to his wider family** and the holding of his forefathers. Because the Israelites whom I brought out of Egypt are my servants they shall not be sold and marketed as a slave would be. Do not rule over them with rigour {*Hebrew PARAKH 'to break them'*} but fear your God. Your male and female servants are to come from surrounding Gentiles. From them you may purchase men to serve and maidservants. Also from the sons of those strangers who settle among you may purchase and from their families with them and they shall be yours to hold. You can give them as an inheritance to your sons after you for possession-to hold them for life [*The Hebrew word LEA'OLAM which can express 'age-long' is here used of a 'life-time'*] and cause their families to serve with them. *As a master the Jew was to use the family of a slave and keep the family of the slave together.* You are not to rule with rigour over a man of the sons of Israel

READING No.7 47-54 THE AVAILABILITY AND COST OF REDEMPTION

And when a stranger and settler with you extends his hand of wealth and your fellow Jew becomes poor and sells himself to the stranger settled among you or to the one who as a stranger is uprooted from his family after he sells himself the right of redemption remains for him. One of his family may redeem him. An uncle or cousin or any who remains of his family members may redeem him or if he gains wealth he may redeem himself. He and his buyer shall estimate from the year he was bought till the Jubilee and the cost of his redemption shall be proportionate to the value of the years he was with him. If there are a great number of years until redemption he shall pay more silver. If the residue of years is less till the Jubilee he shall estimate that and he shall pay according to the years he faces. It shall be for him as the years of a hired worker and he shall not be harshly dealt with before your eyes. If he is not redeemed in these ways he and his children shall go free in the year of Jubilee.

SUMMARY 25.55-26.2
REDEMPTION AND FREEDOM THROUGH YAHWEH

For the children of Israel belong to me as my servants. I brought them from the land of Egypt ***I am the LORD their God.*** Do not make idols [Hebrew *myl y| a*] and a sculptured or molten image [Hebrew *l sp*] or raise up standing images[*Hebrew NAZAB 'pillar images'*] or figures [*Hebrew SACAH 'ideas of god' 'contemplations'-also 'longings & expectations' cf ideology*]to worship them for ***I am Yahweh your God*** Keep my Sabbaths and be reverent towards my sanctuary; ***I am Yahweh***

The End of Part 9 "Jubilee & Redemption"