

JUBILEE AND THE SABBATH YEAR

I. The Land Sabbath is a Living Law Similiar to the Weekly Sabbath.

Ex. 23: 10-12 the purpose of 7th year is so that the poor and the beasts shall eat. This applies also to the vineyard and olive trees. Note: the law stated here has no limit to a specific time or a specific land. It is not limited to Palestine. It would be in force along with the weekly Sabbath.

II. Fruit Trees Have Slightly Different Statutes.

Lev. 19:23-25.

III. The Land Must Keep a Sabbath.

Lev. 25:1-7 Sowing is not permitted in the seventh year, neither is pruning of vineyard. You cannot reap nor gather that which grows of itself. Yet the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you, your servants, the stranger and the beasts and cattle.

If we observe the 7th year, God promises we will dwell in the land safely, Lev. 25:18-19.

God promises a blessing in the 6th year, Lev. 25:20-22.

IV. The Seventh Year is Also Called a "Year of Release."

Deut. 15:1-18 It is the LORD's release, debts to be forgiven. Reason for this law: to relieve the poor.

Ex. 21:1-6 Hebrew servants to be released.

Deut. 31:9-13 Law to be read at end of the 7th year, at the Feast of Tabernacles.

V. The Fiftieth Year is the Jubilee.

Lev. 25:8-55 "Jubilee" means "liberty." God owns the land. Return of every man to his possession. Land must be redeemed. Men must be returned to their land, their family. A "holy" year, verse 11.

Lev. 27:14-34 Redemption of gifts and tithes.

Num. 36:1-9 Purpose of Jubilee is to keep the inheritance separate, preventing dispossession.

Ezek. 46:16-18.

VI. Why Did Israel Have to Go Into Captivity?

Lev. 26:23-24, 32-35, 43 Because of not letting the land rest
Jer. 34:8-17 Because we have not proclaimed liberty, God
will proclaim a liberty to us to the sword, pestilence, famine and
captivity.

II Chron. 36:14-21 God meant what He said about the 7th
year!

VII. The Ministry of Jesus Christ Has to Do With the Fulfilling of
This Statute in Bringing True Liberty, or Jubilee.

Isa. 61:1-11, 58:6, Luke 4:16-21.

INFORMATION ON THE JUBILEE AND SABBATICAL YEAR

I. A Sign of Modern Israel.

Cast in the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia is a part of the
Jubilee call: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the
inhabitants thereof." On July 8th, 1776 this bell rang out summoning
the people to hear the reading of the Declaration of Independence.
Our nation did not obey the Law of Jubilee, and 50 years after the
War of Independence, it cracked and has not been rung since! Periodic
depressions have occurred every 50 years. --From the Digest of
Divine Law, p. 109-110.

II. Josephus Mentioned the Keeping of the Sabbatical Year and Jubilee.

See Antiquities of the Jews, 3:12:3, 15:9:1, 15:1:2,
12:9:5, 13:8:1, 14:10:6 (taxes not paid in 7th year). (see attached)

III. When Is the Jubilee Year?

According to William Whiston's note in Josephus, above,
24 BC was a Sabbatical year, and 23 BC was a Jubilee year. This
* would mean that 27 AD was a Sabbatical year, and 28 AD a Jubilee
year. Therefore 1977 was a Sabbatical year and 1978 a Jubilee year.
Next Sabbatical year would be 1985.

The Jews today are in confusion as to Sabbatical years
and Jubilee years. True 50 year Jubilee years were only counted
during Temple times. Every 15th and 65th years of the world era ?
are Jubilee years. Thus, 1955 and 2005 would be Jubilee years.
And 1976 and 1983 Sabbatical years. 1979 equals 5739 A.M. or 3,760

years difference. However, sabbatical years are counted from 3829 on, the year of the destruction of the Second Temple which was a Sabbatical year (69 AD). Whiston's schedule would have 70AD as a Sabbatical year. This means that the Jewish shemittah is every seventh year, without a 50th year. 1980 would be a 7th year. (5740 divides evenly by 7)

Why are the Jews confused? Because they did not obey God. They admit that when the First Temple stood, 50 year cycles were used. The next year was the first year of the next seven year cycle. Because the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh were exiled, tradition says, the Jubilee was no longer in effect, because it was for "all the inhabitants thereof," Lev. 25:10. They were not calculated and a 49 year cycle was instituted where the "jubilee" year was also the beginning year of the next 7 year cycle. Jubilee is counted exactly as one counts Pentecost. Hence, Jews observed Sivan 6 rather than Sivan 7 as Pentecost. (Encyclopedia Judaica, article "Sabbatical Year and Jubilee", pp. 579-580.)

About 200 years BC, an apocryphal book, the Book of Jubilees, was written. It divides the history of the world into "jubilees" of 49 year periods, seven weeks of years. "The biblical idea of the jubilee year, the 50th year following the seven weeks of years (Lev. 25:8-12) is ignored." Thus, the Jews accepted this erroneous idea and are confused as to true Jubilee.

Jews felt that the Law of Jubilee did not apply to them, because the land of Israel was not fully occupied by them. Rabbis have relaxed the Sabbatical year because of "economic hardship." Land is "sold" to Moslems, and leased back. It is observed only ceremonially, not in reality, "to perpetuate the memory of the Sabbatical year."

Yet Jews believe the Son of David will come on the last Jubilee. "The precept of the Jubilee is often regarded as one of the basic precepts of the Torah! There are seven basic precepts: offerings, tithes, shemittot, Jubilees, circumcision, honor of father and mother, and study of the Torah (Judaica, p. 582).

An article written by an unknown Radio Church of God author about 1950 agrees with the Jewish concept, that Jubilee years cannot be kept, because upon the Jews' return from captivity,

there was no divinely appointed inheritance. Jews were living on land of other tribes which never returned from captivity. It is stated that Jer. 34:1, 8-16 shows that Oct. 586 to Oct. 585 was a Sabbatical year. This would mean that 1952 and 2002 are Jubilee years, with 1973 and 1980 being sabbatical years.

The author states that the seven year cycles were observed after the return, with no intervening 50th Jubilee year. 69AD was a seventh year. And 1980 will be a sabbatical year. However, with the next 50th year, the two cycles will be out of phase.

In 1973, the Worldwide Church of God issued a policy on land sabbath, stating that it is only a principle, not a binding law for which the transgression is sin. Thus, they acceded to the Jewish idea [REDACTED]. For the Jews, the Rabbis have abrogated this law. For the Worldwide Church, the church has loosed its members from obeying this law.

When is the Jubilee and seventh year? The question is of major importance. Israel went into captivity for not obeying this law. The third tithe year depends upon the seven year cycle, Deut. 14:28-29. The church's interpretation, or more properly, adaptation, of the law is not Biblical. This is the major area Herbert W. Armstrong never understood. Neither do we understand yet. If God will send Modern Israel into captivity for the same reason as the old, knowledge must be increased. Israel must be warned. Amos 3:7, Dan. 12:4, Jn. 7:17.