



Mustard Seed Children's Lesson Summary for July 26, 2009
Released on Wednesday, July 22, 2009

"Helping Our Neighbors"

Lesson Text: Leviticus 25:8-21, 23-24

Background Scripture: Leviticus 25:1-31

Memory Verse: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10).

Leviticus 25:8-21, 23-24

8 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.

9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

10 And ye shall 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.

11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

12 For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

13 In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.

14 And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not oppress one another:

15 According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

16 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.

18 Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

19 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.

20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:

21 Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.

.....
23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me.
24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Help the children realize that God wants us to find ways to help our neighbors rather than ways to hurt them.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. Some people became slaves because of their debts or sold their land for money.
2. In the Year of Jubilee, all the slaves went free and all the land went back to its owner.
3. God wants His people to think of ways to help others instead of hurting them.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

Time: about 1444 B.C.
Place: Mount Sinai

God's laws included many ways for His people to help their neighbors. One of these was by creating a system of justice that prevented families from permanently losing their land and also made perpetual slavery impossible.

Part of that law was the Sabbatical Year, to be observed every seven years and the Jubilee, to be observed every fifty years. Every seven years the land was given a time to rest. Also after seven years times seven (49 years), the land was given a time to rest during the 50th year.

During the Year of Jubilee, everyone who had entered into slavery as a result of being unable to pay his debts was freed and returned to his family. Debts were to be taken seriously; yet no one could be enslaved forever.

Purchases of land were considered to be like leases rather than permanent purchases. The duration of the lease was calculated until the next Year of Jubilee. Therefore, land given to each tribe or family group had to remain in that group in the long run. A family group could not become landless, and since wealth came from the use of the land, they would not become permanently poor.

As mentioned, the Jubilee Year was also one in which the land was to rest. The people were instructed not to sow a crop and not even to harvest anything that might come up by itself from previous years. Anything that came up voluntarily from unharvested or rotting crops (from the previous year) would be food for anyone who needed it – it could not be harvested by those who owned the land. This rest would cause the land to be more fertile, and their obedience to the Jubilee would bring His blessing.

Not planting and harvesting crops for two years would be an impossible law under a purely human government. The people had to trust that God would provide a bumper crop the 48th year to see them through the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. Only God could make such a law.

The Jubilee had two practical values - the building up of the land and the holding back of the selfish oppression of others. It was also a foreshadowing of the fact that Jesus would one day set us free from sin.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For Helping to Remember, bring two paper plates, a wooden craft stick, crayons, and decorations for each student. Staple two plates together and attach a craft stick as a handle for each child.

For Lesson Activity, make a copy of the word search (with key words from the lesson) for each student.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Ryan and Robert were playing a game. When Ryan won the game, Robert had to be his slave for an hour. He had to do everything Ryan said. For a while, Ryan thought of many mean things for Robert to do. After a while, the two boys sat down. "This is no fun," Robert said.

"Not for me, either," Ryan admitted. "I would rather think of things we enjoy doing together."

It is no wonder that the boys did not enjoy themselves. God never intended His people to think up ways to hurt others.

TELLING THE LESSON:

When God gave His rules for living to His servant Moses, He gave His people various laws and regulations for their good. These rules included an idea of a Sabbath Year for the land. Every seven years the ground was not to be plowed or planted – the land was to be allowed to rest.

God also gave His people a special year every fifty years. Every fiftieth year would be set apart as different from all the rest. Most people would experience that special year once in their adult lives. It was called the Year of Jubilee.

It was a time of liberty, or freedom. You see, sometimes a person might get into trouble if he was not able to pay what he owed. He would have to work to pay off his debt. Until it was paid, he would be that person's slave.

At the Year of Jubilee, all the slaves had to be freed. They could not be slaves forever.

Each family group of parents and grandparents and uncles and cousins got a piece of land. Using the land was the way they made money. However, if they needed money right away, they might have to sell their land. That would make them poorer, but in the Year of Jubilee, all their land would come back to them. They could not stay poor forever.

In the Year of Jubilee, the people were not to plant any crops. This would mean that they had gone for two years without planting any crops. Even if something grew by itself, they were not to harvest it for themselves - it would be left for food for the poor or anyone who needed it. The land was to get a year's rest. This was good for the land.

The Year of Jubilee helped God's people to put their trust in Him. They had to trust God to provide enough food for them for the two years that they did not plant anything. They had to believe that God would provide for their needs.

The Year of Jubilee also helped God's people remember not to be selfish. God did not want them to think of ways to hurt others - to make them slaves or to get their land. God wanted His people to think of ways to help their neighbors. He still wants us to do that.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Do you trust God to meet your needs? Do you try to think of ways to help those who live around you? You might help them with chores or send them a card. You might help make a treat for them or just give them a friendly smile. This pleases God and makes you a good neighbor.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Let the children draw a sad face on one paper plate to show how someone who had lost his land or become a slave felt. Let them draw a happy face on the other plate to

show him going free or getting his land back in the Year of Jubilee. Let the children decorate their work.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE: "*Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof*" (Leviticus 25:10).

When the Year of Jubilee began, the people were to proclaim, or announce, liberty. This meant that a time of liberty, or freedom, had come for all the slaves who lived in the land of Israel. It showed that one day the Saviour would free all of God's people from sin.

CONCLUSION:

The Jubilee time was a test for Israel. It was not a time for thinking about becoming wealthy, as the other nations around them were doing. These other nations did not trust in God and did not think of helping others.

God's people, however, had to trust Him to fulfill their needs. This was a time of faith. The people were to live simple lives in which they ate, stored food, and perhaps some volunteer growth from the ground. The people were to obey God, treat each other fairly in business deals, and realize that the land and everything belonged to God.

PRAYER:

Father in Heaven, we love You and trust You to meet our needs. Thank You for forgiving us and for loving us. Help us to also forgive and to love and help others, in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "*Complaining and Grumbling*" and tells how the people of Israel complained about the food and care that God provided for them. Study Numbers 11:1-35.

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY:

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The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ACTIVITY
"Helping Our Neighbors"
(Leviticus 25:8-21, 23-24)

Find the following keywords from the lesson:

BLESSING	SABBATH	CROPS	OBEY
NEIGHBORS	DEBTS	LAND	RETURN
SLAVES	HELP	LEVITICUS	REST
JUBILEE	LIBERTY	YEAR	ISRAELITES

I B S R O B H G I E N O I S R A E L I T E S Y
G A A I L S H T A B Y B L Y T E B I B D I T B
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE SOLUTION:
"Helping Our Neighbors"
(Leviticus 25:8-21, 23-24)

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