

Leviticus 25

Vv. 1-7

In this section, the Lord gives the sabbath of the land they are to keep when they come into Canaan. If interest here, is the many references to the sabbath which they are commanded to keep when they come into the land: The sabbath was very important to the Lord. In fact, the land represented the rest-sabbath-we find in Christ. Rest from our own work, and rest in Christ to work through us.

All labour was to cease in the seventh year, as much as daily labour on the seventh day. These statues tell us to beware of covetousness, for a man's life consists not in the abundance of his possessions. We are to exercise willing dependence on God's providence for our support; to consider ourselves the Lord's tenants or stewards, and to use our possessions accordingly. This year of rest typified the spiritual rest which all believers enter into through Christ. Through Him we are eased of the burden of worldly care and labour, both being sanctified and sweetened to us; and we are enabled and encouraged to live by faith.
(MH, Online Bible)

Bonar opens this chapter with,

Heb 4:9 *There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God.*

Vv. 1-7

The command here is that the land rest. But being an agricultural nation, the land's rest meant also the people's rest.

There was no civil authority given to enforce this law, just as there was no civil authority given to enforce tithing. Rather, God enforced this law, and He did it by giving them over to the pagans. This rest was so important to the Lord that one reason He sent His people into Babylonian captivity was their violation of this law, **2 Chron 36:21**.

Jer 25:9 through Jer 29:10 (at least) clearly states that Israel would remain in captivity for 70 years to make up for the sabbaths of the land she missed.

The pagan king of Babylon was called God's servant as he executed God's justice against God's people for not keeping this sabbath of the land.

We should also point out that man, beast and the land were all to rest. In other words, every area effected by the fall was to rest: even the beasts were affected. Rom 8:17-23 speaks of all creation looking forward to the rest which was accomplished in Christ.

Application:

1) God exalted a pagan nation over God's own people because they turned their backs on His rest. The principle is established that the Lord will and does exalt pagans over His people throughout history who refuse to honor His law-word.

2) no human authority to enforce God's law-word leads man to believe God's laws will not be enforced. Lev 25:1-7 follows Lev 24:17-22, *lex talionis*-- RESTITUTION TO MAN.

The comparison is obvious: It is much better to have human authority over us and civil laws and penalties to enforce God's laws than it is to have no human authority to enforce God's laws.

With human authority to enforce God's laws, the very worse that could happen is death of the individual, but more often, simply restitution.

With no human authority to enforce God's laws (such as the sabbaths), God used pagan nations to enforce His law. Then, not only were individuals put to death, but the entire nation was taken into captivity to the pagans. In other words, with civil authority each person payed individually for his or her own sin against God and man. On the other hand, with no civil authority, God sent pagans to enforce His laws, and many generation paid the price.

3) it is much safer and easier for man to enforce God's laws with civil punishments because restitution is made, and it is over. When man fails to enforce God's laws, God will extract the price of indifference for many generations.

WE CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE PRICE WILL BE PAID.

This section, as we mentioned, follows the preceding one that dealt with restitution by man to man. This one will also result in restitution, only restitution will be made to God by the nation, and the restitution payment will be extracted in very unpleasant ways.

The people were told that they would remain in captivity until every last minute of the forgotten sabbaths was repaid to God; then they were sent home. Restitution was made.

4) the other law that has no civil authority is the tithe. Man cannot demand restitution when God is stolen from, but we can be assured that it will be extracted from man. The means for extracting restitution from His people over the sabbath were not nice. The means of extracting restitution from His people over the tithe are not nice.

Thus it is not only a sin against God to forsake the sabbaths, but it is a sin against the land, God's creation.

5) this law prevents covetousness, a true rest.

6) servants had to be released, Deut 15:12-15 (Jer 34:14). A Hebrew servant could only be retained for seven years. The seven year count started when the servant went into bondage, so the seventh year might or might not be on the sabbath year.

7) forgiveness of debt had to be accomplished, Deut 25:1-11. V. 6 promises that if the people will honor the sabbath release from debt, the Lord will make that people a lending nation and not a borrowing nation.

The required sabbath rests and release from debt was only toward other

Hebrews. The point being that the pagans are already in bondage, and release from debt will not solve their problems.

Clearly, the required rest of Lev 25:1-7 and the required rest of vv. 8-22 all spoke of the rest to come in Christ, Heb 4:9:

Ver. 9 *There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.*] Not all mankind; nor the people of the Jews only; rather the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles, under the New Testament; the people whom God has loved with a special love, has chose in Christ, and given to him, with whom he has made a covenant in him, and whom Christ saves from their sins, and calls by his grace; and the rest which remains for them is not a new sabbath day, but a sabbatism: and this does not so much design eternal rest in heaven; though the Jews often call that a sabbath; the 92nd psalm they say is a psalm for the time to come, <Hebrew word>, "which is all sabbath", and the rest of eternal life {k}: but rather this intends the spiritual rest believers have in Christ under the Gospel dispensation, which they now enter into, and of which the apostle had been treating; and as for the word "remaineth", this does not denote the futurity of it, but the apostle's inference or consequence from what he had said; and the sense is, it remains therefore, and is a certain fact, a clear consequence from what has been observed, that there is another rest distinct from God's rest on the seventh day, and from the rest in the land of Canaan; which were both typical ones of the present rest the saints now enjoy: so the Jews call the world to come the times of the Messiah, <Hebrew word>, "the great sabbath" {l}. (Gill, Online Bible, CD-ROM.)

The sabbath is kept today in Christ; however, God's people are not removed from the ideal of physical rest on the sabbath. The Christian sabbath is the first day of the week, the day when,

Christ appeared to Mary, Mr 16:9; Christ appeared to the two going to Emmaus, Lu 24:14ff.; Christ appeared to the Disciples, John 20:19, and Paul preached at Troas, Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2.

Finally, Keil makes this point:

In the sabbatical year the land, which the Lord had given to His people, was to observe a period of holy rest and refreshment to its Lord and God, just as the congregation did on the Sabbath-day; and the hand of man was to be withheld from the fields and fruit-gardens from working on them, that they might yield their produce for his use. The earth was to be saved from the hand of man exhausting its power for earthly purposes as his own property, and to enjoy the holy rest with which God had blessed the earth and all its productions after the creation. From this, Israel, as the nation of God, was to learn, on the one hand, that although the earth was created for man, it was not merely created for him to draw out its powers for his own use, but also to be holy to the Lord, and participate in His blessed rest; and on the other hand, that the great purpose for which the congregation of the Lord existed, did not consist in the uninterrupted tilling of the earth, connected with bitter labour in the sweat of his brow (Gen. iii. 17, 19), but in the peaceful enjoyment of the fruits of the earth, which the Lord their God had given them, and would give them still without the labour of their hands, if they strove to keep His covenant and satisfy themselves with His grace. (Keil, I.457.)

Though the earth was made for man, it was not made for man's unrestricted use. The earth was made to be holy unto the Lord, and honoring the sabbatical year was one way of doing that honor. Furthermore, the sabbatical showed that the Lord could and would supply His people's needs if they would be faithful to His covenant.

place in order

Vv. 8-13, the Jubilee.

The year of the jubilee is presented here: Every fiftieth year, every parcel of land was to return to the family to whom it was given by the Lord after they moved into Canaan.

Not only did the land return to its original owner, but those who were in servitude, other than voluntary with the hole in the ear, were also freed to return to their families.

After seven sabbaths of rest and on the day of atonement, the trumpet sounded, announcing the jubilee to start that evening. This gave two years of rest back to back every 49 years. On this fiftieth year,

1) the priests sounded a *silver trumpet* from the sanctuary, announcing the coming year of the Jubilee. (Num 10:8ff.) This year was a fiftieth year: 7 sabbath years had passed, and now after the forty ninth year, the jubilee started. Thus the land lay idle for two years in a row every 49 years.

SOUNDING TRUMPET

The trumpet sounding here would have been reminiscent of the yearly feast of trumpets which took place just ten days previous to the annual day of atonement. See ch 23. (See the mailing on the feast of trumpets, May 96.)

Another point not to be overlooked is the sounding of the trumpet: It was with the terribly loud sounding of a trumpet that the Lord God announced His presence among His people at the giving of His law at Mt Sinai, Exo 19:13, 16, 19, 20:18.

Hence, the sounding of the trumpet tied the jubilee to the giving of the law. However, the sounding did not take place until after the atoning sacrifice. Thus, the jubilee rest and freedom is a result of, first of all, the atonement of Christ, and, second, in terms of obedience to the law.

The trumpet of the jubilee sounded in the day of atonement. The jubilee was a year of redemption from all burdens for God's people who obeyed His word. The silver trumpet proclaimed release and restoration throughout all Israel. (Bonar)

Isa 61:1 *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called*

trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

The Lord Jesus was the High Priest Who sounded the trumpet for His people, proclaiming, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" The atonement had not yet taken place, but He brought jubilee message of freedom and rest. His proclamation offered the jubilee message only to those who belong to the true Israel of God, Gal 6:16.

His atoning sacrifice set the jubilee of Isa 61:1-3 into action; however, it is not fully operative yet.

Bonar:

Does *the Jubilee* represent the *preaching of the gospel*? Some argue that it does, because Isa. lxi. 1, 2, as used by Jesus at Nazareth, seems to be clothed in the language of the Jubilee. The true answer to this is, that Jesus was the High Priest who blew the jubilee trumpet throughout all the land of Israel, when He proclaimed, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" That kingdom which He preached brought in its train "the opening of the prison door to the bound, deliverance to the captive," as well as "glad tidings to the poor." But then Jesus seems to have intended to proclaim, at that time, only that *the rights and privileges of the jubilee year should belong to all His true Israel.*

The day of Atonement saw the atoning sacrifice made by the priest, but the Jubilee did not start till that evening. Accordingly, we are shown that the true Jubilee is based in the atonement of Christ, and is available only to *all His true Israel.*

The atoning sacrifice has been made by our Great High Priest and freedom has been declared in Him. But the full effects of the **Jubilee Freedom** has not yet been institute for *all His true Israel.* Certainly, there is a freedom and rest in Christ, but it has not been fully placed into action. See Heb 2:8, *Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.*

V. 10, *liberty...* included liberty for the land. The land was set free from covetous men.

The jubilee speaks so strongly of the liberty found in Christ, I do not see how anyone can miss it: It spoke of liberty throughout the dwelling place of God's people, that is, in Christ. The liberty in Christ is freedom from the power of sin, so His people can live a life pleasing to God and thus inherit God's blessings (both spiritual and temporal). Christ proclaims liberty, freedom from *covetousness, which is idolatry.*

V. 13, the jubilee, based upon the atoning sacrifice, returned every Israelite to his possession. Our jubilee, based upon the atoning sacrifice of Christ, returns every true Israelite to his possession. The work of the first Adam that sold us into poverty is undone by the Second Adam, Christ. Christ restores what Adam lose, and we are joint heirs with Him by faith. However, *we see not yet all things put under him* as will be done one day. Daniel seven describes the day thusly:

18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. 19 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; 20 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. 21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. 23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. 24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. 26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

2) farm labour was suspended. They could not prepare the ground nor the vine for producing a harvest; they could not sow nor could they reap what grew of itself. However, anything that grew of itself was "public property," as it was during the sabbath year of rest.

On the other hand, all labour was not forbidden: buying and selling, building and industry was not forbidden. In other words, the farmer could have stored his grain during the promised good years and now sell that grain. Also, his building and manufacturing skills could be used during this time.

Also, could gather enough from the land that grew of itself to eat; they could not gather to sell during this time.

The jubilee was the second of a two year rest. Those who kept it had to be very effective in managing their estates.

3) liberty was proclaimed *throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof*. Families were reunited. Every person in bondage was permitted to return to his family. The bondage might have been from poor management of what was passed down to him from his parents; it could have been that the man just did not like the idea of responsibility; the bondage and family separation could have been for any number of reasons. The exception, of course, to the release was if a man was in bondage to make restitution: then he had to stay until the debt was paid.

4) all property returned to its assigned owner, except what was in walled cities. All homes except in the walled cities were assigned to the land, and the land could not be bought nor sold.

Every man returned to his possession that had been passed down to him from the start of the Israelite nation in Canaan. Bonar closes this section with a reference to:

Isa 49:7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, [and] his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, [and] the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.

In other words, Christ restores what Adam lost in the fall.

It seems that no matter where I open Scripture, there are more things worth perusing and developing than time will permit. I am currently trying to write a commentary on Leviticus for teaching some day, as I have with Exodus, Deuteronomy and several other books, including New Testament books. The problem is, however, that there are so many things to peruse as one goes through a book that it is difficult to get through the book. I currently find myself stuck in Leviticus 25.

I intended to break up the following thoughts from Leviticus 25:18 into several independent, small articles, but as one follows the context of the Word of God, each point builds upon the preceding point. Therefore, I find the best way to present the following articles is to follow the context.

The Inheritance

Lev 25:14-55.

Though this section develops the Old Testament laws concerning the Jubilee, there are several implications found in these laws that apply to all generations, especially the modern age. Because the implications of the Jubilee are ignored, we have today a horrendous "national debt" that will never be paid off unless there is a tremendous revival that changes our social order.

This section establishes the ownership of the land and God's requirements upon it, summed up in the Jubilee. The land could not be sold: It belonged to the Lord. The whole *earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof* (1 Cor 10:26), not just the small portion called Canaan. Therefore, the implications of the Jubilee apply to the whole earth. The Lord permits man to use the earth, and He establishes the conditions upon that use. When man violates those conditions, the land itself (and the "natural elements") declare war against man.

At the end of Lev 18, a passage dealing with very practical moral laws concerning sex (including sodomy), we find this statement, vv. 24-30:

*Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;) That the land **spue** not you*

out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

The above is important enough that the Lord said it again, adding witchcraft (occultic practices) and Molech (state) worship to the list of evils that will cause a people to be spued out of the land the Lord permitted them to use, Lev 20. (Or cause them to be servants of oppressive powers in their own land, Neh 9:3ff.)

Two parentheses: First, we might consider Rev 3:16, where God promises to **spue** out those who try to serve both Him and heathen gods around them. And second, Asa threw *the seer* into prison because the seer told him something from God's Word he did not want to hear, 2 Chron 16:10 - Many today, in the name of grace, cast the parts of God's Word from them they do not want to hear, parts that might hold them responsible and accountable.

V. 14, gives the reason for the Jubilee: *ye shall not oppress one another.* In other words, the Jubilee prevented any small group of people from dominating all the wealth of the society. The same point is made in v. 17, *ye shall not therefore oppress one another. **Fear of the Lord*** caused one to honour the sabbath year and the Jubilee year, v. 17. (Clearly, those who do **not** fear the Lord will **not** fear what man can do to them: They will have no conscience.)

Jesus Loves the Little Children

The point that stands out about this passage concerning the Jubilee is that **even if the parents were unconcerned about the following generations, the Lord was not.**

The purpose of the Jubilee was to keep God's people from *oppressing one another*, include the children. God's law prevented the parents from oppressing the children by selling them into the bondage of debt (national debt!). The fathers' sinful nature - unconcern for the following generations (*i.e.*, covetousness - desire to consume what they had upon their own lusts) - was restrained by His law (they were not "saved" by the law, but sin was restrained): He forbade selling the land. The ones to whom the land returned were simply caretakers of the land for the Lord, Who owned the land.

Oppress, v. 14, speaks against using the Jubilee to defraud others of what was lawfully theirs. However, in Ezk 46:18 it is translated to thrust them out of their inheritance. (TWOT, #873.)

Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance by oppression, to thrust them out of their possession; but he shall give his sons inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession. (Ez 46:18.)

Thus the one in authority could not use his authority to *do wrong* with the inheritance: God's law prohibited those in authority from using that authority to ill treat others, that is, to defraud them concerning the

inheritance. The law against fraud is not limited to actions by unbelievers, though Paul tells us it should be: He spoke these words to the *shame* of the believers at Corinth:

Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. (1 Cor 6:8.)

How is **fraud** (to keep back what is owed to someone, and the debt is determine by God's Word - just because someone claims something, does not mean it is owed to them) defined? God's law alone defines *fraud*, 1 John 3:4 ("The rule of this purity can from no where else be taken but from the law of God, the transgression of which is called sin." Geneva. 1 John 3:4, the Mosiac law, #460. We might mention that sin is not the transgression of men's, even religious, traditions and church rules. See Gill, *Online Bible*. See also, Rom 7.)

Parenthesis: Those who "sold" the land, for whatever reason, only sold the use of the land, vv. 14, 15. Furthermore, by the Jubilee being the second of a two year rest for the land, the returned land could well have required maintenance from those who had been using it for the past several years.

A logical result of the current Antinomian spirit among Christians is the lack of desire to pass anything down to the children and grandchildren; however, they have no compulsion against passing down debt. Of course, because of the pagan climate in our society, what might be passed down in the way of material wealth would be probably be consumed upon the receivers' own lusts.

The "owners," or the fathers, refuse to pass the inheritance down according to God's law, for God's law cuts off finances to the ungodly heirs. Antinomianism permeates all levels of society: There is no hope till there is a revival and the desire to return to God's rules of living. And God's rules must override the natural inclinations, inclinations requiring godly parents support ungodly children.

Illustration:

I knew a godly man who was extremely well known for his "spiritual" walk with the Lord over the years. The man had several children, and only one, as a grown adult, desired to walk with the Lord. The rest of the children, as adults, would only tolerate talk of the Lord. The father spent many sleepless nights and waking hours in deep concern over the ungodliness of the children. Yet the father supported the ungodly children with many thousands of dollars of cash gifts, knowing that the children would only use the cash to pursue their own lustful desires. He clearly took the funds the Lord gave to him for the advancement of the Kingdom of God and he squandered them on the lust of the flesh through his ungodly children.

Concerning the inheritance, Rushdoony said:

Jesus as the eldest son and main heir made John, although only a cousin and not a brother, the eldest son and main heir in His stead and gave him the responsibility for Mary's support. This illustrates clearly a central aspect of Biblical family law and of Biblical inheritance: the main heir supported and cared for the parents, as need required it. Abraham lived with Isaac and Jacob, not with Ishmael, or with his sons by Keturah. Isaac lived with Jacob, not Esau,

and Jacob lived under the care and supervision of Joseph and therefore gave to Joseph a double portion by adopting Joseph's two sons as his heirs on equal terms with all his other sons (Gen. 48:5, 6). The converse holds equally true: the child which supports and cares for the aged parents is the main or true heir. For parents or the civil law to rule otherwise is to work against godly order. Inheritance is not a question of pity or feeling but of godly order, and to set aside this principle is sinful.

The question of inheritance and wills can best be understood if we examine the Biblical word for a will or testament: blessing. An inheritance is precisely that, a blessing, and for a parent to confer a blessing or the central blessing on an unbelieving child, or a rebellious and contemptuous child, is to bless evil. Although some portions of Biblical wills have the element of divine prophecy as well as testamentary disposition, it is important to note that they combine both blessings and curses, as witness Jacob's words to Reuben, Simeon, and Levi (Gen. 48:2-7). To cut off a child is a total curse. The general rule of inheritance was limited primogeniture, i.e., the oldest son, who had the duty of providing for the entire family in case of need, or of governing the clan, receiving a double portion. If there were two sons, the estate was divided into three portions, the younger son receiving one third. The parents had a duty to provide an inheritance, as far as their means afforded (II Cor. 12: 14). The father could not alienate a godly first-born son because of personal feelings, such as a dislike for the son's mother and a preference for a second wife (Deut. 21:15-17). Neither could he favor an ungodly son, an incorrigible delinquent, who deserved to die (Deut. 21:18-21). Where there was no son, the inheritance went to the daughter or daughters (Num. 27:1-11). If by reason of disobedience or unbelief, a man in effect had no son, then the daughter became the heir and son as it were. If there were neither sons nor daughters, the next of kin inherited (Num. 27:9-11). The son of a concubine could inherit, unless sent away or given a settlement (Gen. 21:10; 25:1-6). A maid could be her mistress' heir (Prov. 30:23), and a slave could also inherit (Gen. 15:1-4), since he was in a real sense a family member. Foreign bondmen could also be inherited (Lev. 25 :46) . The inheritance of one tribe could not be transferred to another, i.e., the land of one area could not be alienated (Num. 36: 1-12). A prince could give property to his sons as their inheritance, but not to a servant, lest this become a means of rewarding them to the detriment of his family (Ezek. 46:16, 17). If some land were given by a prince to a servant, it reverted at the year of liberty to the prince's sons. The prince could not confiscate the people's inheritance or land, i.e., the state could not seize property or confiscate it (Ezek. 46:18). (RJ Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, V. I, 180-181.)

We should mention, moreover, that children of illicit affairs could not be legal heirs, Lev 20:20, 21.

Isaiah laid his finger on the problem concerning those who refuse to follow the Word of God over their natural desires, even toward their children:

Mark 7:6-13, *He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots*

and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

Rather than the ungodly, stubborn and rebellious son receiving the material blessings from his father, he was to receive death, Deut 21:18-21. However, though the parents were to *lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city*, the parents did not take part in the stoning.

The civil authority of the day lay in the hands of the elders of each city, and the elders were the ones who put the wicked person to death; that was not the parents' responsibility. The power of the sword was placed in the hands of civil authority, not in the hands of the family, except in the case of the "blood avenger." (The parents' responsibility was to teach the child the Law-Word of God, and to do what was right in God's sight.)

Our point is that if God held the parents accountable for cutting off their son's life (responsible to see that it was done) for rebellion, drunkenness and stubbornness, then how much does the same God hold modern parents' responsible for cutting off finances to their children who are drunkards, stubborn and/or are in rebellion against God?

Wherever we open God's Word, we are confronted with the fact that the only hope for society is in the home: Until Christian parents will abide by the Word of God in their families over emotional attachments of all kinds, God cannot heal this land. The healing must start in the homes.

Isa 33:14-17, The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.

We would certainly love to see the King in His beauty at work in our society, but He only works according to His Law-Word.

(See also, Isa 3:14, 15; 5:7; 58:6; Jer 22:17; Eze 22:12; Am 5:11, 12; 8:4ff.; **Mic 2:2ff.**; Ja 5.)

Vv. 15ff., the value of the servant who sold himself and of the land that had to be sold was determine by the time left before the jubilee: Was there 45 years left or only a year?

The Lord's laws are just and perfect: They were meant to control man's sinful nature. This particular law controlled covetousness. Salvation,

obviously, did not result from obedience to this law, but the law did prevent one class of people from oppressing another class of people.

All men are created equal in the sense that all are given equal protection and responsibility before God according to His Law-Word.

V. 18, the result of following these laws of the sabbath rest for man, animal and land, and the laws of liberty for man and land every 50 years, was promised safety in the land. A reason Israel was taken captive into Babylon was for not allowing the land to enjoy her sabbaths.

Faith and good Stewardship

Vv. 19ff., the Lord answers the concern before it is really faced: He will bless abundantly the sixth year so the people can obey the sabbath year. Actually, food from the sixth year had to last two years: one year with no planting, and then another year waiting for the crop from that year's planting. Then there was the 50th year when the land rested two years: V. 21, the Lord promised His faithful, obedient people enough increase in the 6th year of the Sabbath to last three years over the Jubilee. That would be a good crop, to say the least. Storage must also be accounted for, which the Lord does in Mal 3.

It certainly required faith and good stewardship to honor the Sabbath and the Jubilee.

Today, the Sabbath and Jubilee law would still work, but only if Christians would be controlled by God's inward law against covetousness.

Moreover, it would force people to discipline themselves to save and plan ahead, for there was no income 1 year out of seven and then 2 years in a row every fifty years.

Sovereign Grace

We regularly encounter the term, "Sovereign Grace." From several encounters I have had with the term, it is sometimes used to mean that during the "age of grace," the child of God is free from law, *i.e.*, he is not bound by God's commandments and their implications as delivered from the Mount to Moses, Exo 20. So what is meant Scripturally by "Sovereign Grace?"

"Sovereign Grace" simply means that God works sovereignly (that is, with no advice from anyone) in whomsoever He will, in any manner pleasing to Himself, and for His own praise, honor and glory. See 1 Ch 29:12ff.; Job 37:7; 22:2; 41:11; Rom 9:15ff.; 11:35, and 1 Co 4:1. It has nothing, Scripturally, to do with being free of the *bands* and *corde*s of God's Word.

Sovereign Grace Corrupted

Those who militate against being bound by God's law (Ps 2 describes them) under the guise of "grace" deny the fact that God continually offers man a choice, and "grace" does not free one from the results of his or her choice. The choice is between God's promised blessings and God's promised curses (life and death), *e.g.*, Lev 25:18. It is offered under the new covenant of grace by the very one the antinomians use to justify an anti-law attitude, Paul:

Ro 2:6, *Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God. **Ro 6:20**, For when ye were the servants of sin (defined as violation of the Mosaic Law, 1 Jn 3:4, ed.), ye were free from righteousness (i.e., right living compared to the Mosaic Law, ed.). 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things (the sinful actions of the servant of sin, ed.) [is] death. (See also Ro 7:5.) **Ro 8:13**, For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. **Ga 6:7**, Be not **deceived**; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. 9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

A word worth developing is,

Deceived: to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way; **a.** prop., in pass., Sept. chiefly for ...to go astray, wander, roam about, (first so in Hom. II. 23, 321): Mt. xviii. 12sq. ; I Pet. ii. 25 (fr. Is. liii. 6, cf. Ex. xxiii. 4; Ps. cxviii.(cxix.) I 76); Heb. xi. 38. **b.** metaph. to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to deceive: ... Mt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24; Mk. xiii. 5, 6; Jn. vii. 12; I Jn. ii. 26, iii. 7; 2 Tim. iii. 13a; Rev. ii. 20 GLTTr WH; xii. 9; xiii. 14; xix. 20; xx. 3, 8, 10; ... 1 Jn. I. 8; pass. to be led into error, [R.V. be led astray]: Lk. xxi. 8; Jn. vii. 47, Rev. ii. 20 Rec.; to err, Mt. xxii. 29; Mk. xii. 24, 27, ... 1 Co. vi. 9; xv. 33; Gal. vi. 7; Jas. I. 16; esp. through ignorance to be led aside from the path of virtue, to go astray, sin: Tit. iii. 3; Heb. v. 2; ..., Heb. iii. 10; ... Jas. v.19; to wander or fall away from the true faith, of heretics, 2 Tim. iii.13b; 2 Pet. ii. 15; to be led away into error and sin, Rev. xviii. 23. (#4105, THAYER, p 514, emp added.)

Paul warns that those who follow teachers who justify **disobedience**, follow them into the **wrath of God**:

Eph 5:6 *Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Col 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.*

Paul's twice warns against those who attempt to free men and society from the *bands and cords* of God's Word, Ps 2:3. The anti-law groups justify **disobedience** under the guise of "grace," Jude 1:4. They lead both men and their society into death.

Disobedience, "obstinate opposition to the divine will." The word is translated in the KJV **unbelief**, four times, and **disobedient**, three times. (By the way, if you do not use a KJV, you should seriously consider using it. Anyone who will compare the wording of the KJV with the "off brands," will easily see that the meanings have been changes, for you **cannot** change words without changing meanings. Compare the modern versions closely with the Geneva or the KJV. You will be surprised at how God's Word to man has been diluted more often than not.) In other words, **unbelief** and **disobedience** have the same meaning:

Heb 4:6 *Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of **unbelief**:*
Heb 4:11 *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of **unbelief**.*

I find it interesting that folks will freely use Heb 4:12 (*For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*) with no consideration of the verse before it. V. 12 tells us the Word of God (*i.e.*, the Old Testament) is the *twoedged sword* that defines **disobedience** and **unbelief**. The Old Testament people of God refused to believe God (have faith that God could do what He promised in His law, *e.g.*, Deut 28-31), so they **disobeyed** Him when He told them to take the land.

I know some will say, "But Moses could not bring God's people into the promised land; only Joshua could do that (Heb 4)." Obviously, the commandments cannot do what grace does -- The law only works to convict of sin; the law does not give the desire nor the power to overcome sin, that is, the grace and power to **obey** God's will as revealed in His commandments. Accordingly, grace is not freedom from responsibility to follow God's commandments; rather, grace is power of God's Spirit working in fallen man, giving him both the desire and the power to do God's will as revealed in God's Command-Word, Php 2:12, 13.

Sovereign Grace

So what is "Sovereign Grace" in terms of God's Word?

Php 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of [his] good pleasure.*

Thus "Sovereign Grace" is God's Spirit sovereignly, with no advice from anyone, working in individuals both to give them the desire and the power to do His will as revealed in the totality of God's Word. Clearly, the Lord knows what evil lurks in the heart of man, so He gives laws accordingly.

Sovereign Grace at Work

Leviticus 25:14-17, provides insight into the true meaning of Sovereign Grace. This section gives instructions to both the seller and buyer: Both are prohibited from defrauding the other. Maybe the buyer or seller forgets, or ignores, that the jubilee is soon to arrive, so either takes advantage of the other.

Notice the basis for this law is that the Lord owns the land, so only the production of the land can be bought or sold. (We should add that the basis for the Lord's law is that He is the Creator of all things.) The only land that could be permanently sold was land within walled cities, for that property was separated from the farm land. However, city dwellings belonging to the Levites could not be sold.

Grace Misused for Worldly Gain

Commenting on Leviticus 25:14-17, Andrew Bonar (1810-1892) gives some good points worth repeating. He points out that a worldly Jew might consider selling a profitable piece of property, e.g., a garden, so he sets the price high, hoping the buyer forgets the date of the next jubilee. Or the buyer, hoping the seller forgets the date of the next jubilee, bids too low on the piece of profitable property: In this way, the worldly Israelite turned grace into licentiousness. Supposing that gain was godliness. Bonar refers to 1 Tim 6:

1 Ti 6:3, If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Such men think that *godliness* (that is, the Word of God, ed.) is just a system to be upheld for the sake of *worldly ends*. (Leviticus, Bonar, 453.)

The land had to be sold or bought based upon its productive years before the jubilee, and not to the years to the Sabbath. Fallen men are tempted to miss the doctrine of grace, saying that it frees them from God's commandments. They miss grace to pursue their own desires:

It is thus that men abuse the doctrines of grace, deceiving their fellow-creatures and injuring their own souls. One man uses the Lord's table as a means of establishing his character in the sight of the world. Another asks baptism for his children from the same motive. Some adopt the doctrines of free grace as their tenets, in order to be able to sin on without abandoning the hope of running to the Ark whenever the first drops of the deluge fall. It is the doctrines connected with Christ's First coming that men so abuse now; whereas it was, in the case before us, the doctrine or type of His Second, that Israel abused to propose of gain, forgetting the spiritual glory of the days of jubilee, and that every man that hath this hope in Him (i.e., in Christ) purifieth himself even as He is pure. (*ibid*, 453, 454.)

Bonar had his finger on the problem back in 1846: Evil men abuse the doctrines of grace to pursue their own goals they abuse the doctrines of grace so they can be free of God's Law; i.e., lawless.

There are those who teach that Sovereign Grace means that man is not accountable to God's Old Testament law during this age of grace. Bonar had their number:

In this way, the worldly Israelite turned grace into licentiousness. Supposing that gain was godliness. ... Such men think that *godliness*

is just a system to be upheld for the sake of *worldly ends*.

Thus they corrupt the meaning of God's grace to permit themselves to pursue their own *worldly ends*.

This pastor likes to sign his name, By His Sovereign Grace Alone, Pastor Need. By this is meant that it is God's sovereign grace that has given this pastor both the desire and the power to do God's good pleasure as revealed in the total of God's Word.

By His Sovereign Grace Alone,
Pastor Need, December 18, 1996

Le 25:18-22

God's Providence

God's promise:

Lev 25:18-22 *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. 22 And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat [yet] of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat [of] the old [store].*

The above contains such a wonderful promise that I had to quote it all. No matter where one opens God's Word, he is confronted with the **if/then** covenant. **If** you will do this, says the Lord, **Then** I will do that.

Let us open with a couple comments:

First, God can only command His blessings upon His people in terms of His Law-Word: As they do what is pleasing in His sight, He commands His blessings upon them.

Second, God commands His blessings upon His people so they can expand His kingdom (influence) on earth. However, they miss His blessings upon themselves.

Andrew Bonar makes some excellent comments upon this section:

Unbelief steps in, arising from human reason. The godly will not abuse the glorious ordinances of the *Sabbatic year* and *the jubilee*; but they may be tempted to unbelief. They may be ready to say, "what shall we eat?" Hence, our most gracious God anticipates such risings of distrust. Suspicion, an doubt, and fear, on the part of His own people are always most grievous to Him; and, therefore, he seeks to prevent them. How truly He knows our frame, our tendency to distrustful anxieties, is manifest in the words, "If ye say, What shall we eat?" It was this also which Jesus, dwelling among us in flesh, perceived too plainly when He said, "Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be

ye of doubtful mind" (Luke xii. 29). (*Leviticus*, 454, 455.)

Lev 25 follows many laws that had been given by the Lord God. Then this passage, vv. 18-22, follows the command to give the land a seventh year (Sabbath) rest unto the Lord, vv. 2ff.; it follows the command to give liberty throughout all the land every fiftieth year, the jubilee -- at which time men and property were set free; it follows the command that neither the buyer nor seller of property take advantage of the other, for everything was to be measured from and to the year of release, the jubilee.

In other words, the Law-Word of God clearly spelled out what God's people were to do, and their natural fear was that if they did what was commanded of them by their God, then they would not have enough food and clothing to survive.

As a parenthesis, note the very close connection between families and the land: The same command, the Jubilee, included both men and land. Clearly, modern society has forgotten man's close connection with real property; that close connection with real property has been replaced with a close connection with paper "wealth," e.g., stocks, bonds, paper issued by the FEDS. The extremely high prices (on paper) in the stock market must lead to disaster, or God's Word is not true. (Therefore, Christians beware.) The investments in the market are not in terms of real wealth, i.e., physical property that one can take possession of. (**Use Moneychanger's cartoon here**)

Christ clearly referred to the Lev 25:18-22 law in Luke 12 (see also Mat 6) when He told His disciples that their primary concern was to advance and support God's kingdom (influence or dominion) upon earth. The natural fear of man, and thus God's people, is that if he does not lay up abundant treasures on earth, then he will not have enough. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with laying up treasures on earth as long as it is not done in unbelief that the Lord can and will take care of His own, and not done at the expense of proper support of God's kingdom. In fact, did not God's people have to set aside for the coming three years when they could not harvest a crop at the jubilee? The jubilee forced self-control and laying up (savings) for what was known to be ahead.

Bonar continues:

The Lord pledges His providence in their behalf; and surely this should be enough for every believing man; even as now also He says, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Yet how often still is a man overcome by the fear of losing employment, place, support, friends, if he adhere to the Lord's cause! Oh, we little credit the Lord's faithfulness! How abundant is the promised provision, reaching over the three years of which they were in doubt even until the new fruits came in. May we not leave in His hands all our difficulties as to the *manner* of future provision, and His mode of operation? (*Ibid*, 455.)

Divine Providence is defined as God working all things for the benefit of His people, Rom 8:28ff. The call here is for God's people to do what they are told in the Law-Word of God, and depend upon the Lord to work out all things for them. They are not to fearfully lay up store for the future, fearful either that the Lord can not or that He will work things out. (As we said, they can lay up store, but it must not be from doubt that the Lord

can and will take care of them, nor can it be at the expense of using what belongs to God, e.g., the tithe.)

Bonar continues:

The blessings of the Lord, not their industry, or skill, or foresight, was to be the source of all their safety and plenty. Nothing else is in sight, to sustain faith, but the assurance given that the Lord is able and willing--His heart is full of love to them, His holy arm full of strength for them. (*Ibid.*)

Clearly, wealth comes from the Lord, even wealth given to the ungodly, for God owns everything. Without His strength, no one gains wealth, e.g., He can stop the heart at a moment's notice regardless of one's wealth or spiritual condition:

De 8:17, *And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of [mine] hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for [it is] he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as [it is] this day. Ps 49:10*, *For he seeth [that] wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Ec 5:19*, *Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this [is] the gift of God. Ec 6:2*, *A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this [is] vanity, and it [is] an evil disease.*

"His heart is full of love to them, His holy arm full of strength for them." But His love will only feed and keep His people safely in the land as they follow v. 18. He never promised the old nation of Israel nor does He promise the new Israel, the church, to unconditionally supply their every need:

Php 4:19, *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

The above passage will not stand on its own apart from its context: It concludes the book of Philippians where precise instructions had been given to God's people how they were to live and act in every situation in which they found themselves, e.g., 1:27; 2:8, 15. In fact, it concludes a section where Paul presented the importance of contentment.

It is thus a serious error, one that leads to destruction, to even think that the Lord promises to care for His own as His own go their own way contrary to God's Word.

Lev 25:18

Safety in the Land

Why is America being turned over to foreign nations, e.g., Germany and Russia? How are these nations able to invade America with no outcry from the general population? What must be done?

Tex Marrs reproduced photos of the foreign armies now occupying the US: Both the German and Russian Air Forces are established in the US for "training pilots." Germany has a *Luftwaffe* (German Air Force) base in Alamogordo, New Mexico. (*The Plain Dealer* [Cleveland, Ohio], 8/15/96. FLASHPOINT, 1/97. 1708 Patterson Rd, Austin, Tx 78733.) The establishment of a German Air Force base in the US would have probably been impossible if the "wall" between East and West Germany were still standing. Remember several years ago? There was a lengthy TV series called, *Amerika*. In the series, the Soviet Union took over America, subdividing it into several sections. The middle section was called, "Heartland." The word then became popular in our area, with the local Farmers Co-Op changing its name to "Hartland Co-Op." At that time, we could not imagine foreign army troops having military bases and being stationed on American soil. At the time, many had no doubt that the series was clearly showing America what was in store. We are now seeing it come to pass just as "Amerika" said it would.

I have heard it suggested (albeit radio talk shows) that the "Gulf War Syndrome" was/is intentional to eliminate all "combat hardened" veterans from the American population.

As always, the Word of God clearly tells us what is going on:

Lev. 25:18, 19, *Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.*

The promise is that if a nation will keep and do God **sstatutes** and **judgments**, it will dwell safely in its own land. Conversely, departure from God s Word turns the nation that once dwelt safely over to the pagans.

Ps 33:12 *Blessed [is] the nation <goy> whose God [is] the LORD; [and] the people [whom] he hath chosen for his own inheritance. (See also, Ps 144:15 and Deut 28:15ff.)*

We should also make some points concerning Deut 28:63, and other similar passages: **First**, Purdue is only about 30 minutes north of us, where now many of the professors are Orientals (where are the Americans?) **second**, the unusual weather comes from only one Source (see Job 38:22ff., &c.); and **third**, hospitals are growing by leaps and bounds as sicknesses and diseases overrun society. (Smart people would get into the medical field, including research, or into the litigation field, for both, according to Deut 28-31 and 1 Sam 8, will prosper abundantly as America paganizes.) Deut 20 is being fulfilled right before our eyes, yet the vast majority of Christians absolutely refuse to recognize what is taking place.

Ps 33:12 makes the promise of Lev 25:18, *dwell therein in safety*, available to any nation establishing itself upon the foundation of God s Word: **do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them**. Race has nothing whatsoever to do with being established safely in a land, e.g., We are a white, Anglo-Saxon nation; therefore, we are special before God. Violation of God **sstatutes** and **judgments** causes any nation founded upon them to no longer dwell safely in a land.

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*,

The term *goy* is used especially to refer to specifically defined political, ethnic or territorial groups of people without intending to ascribe a specific religious or moral connotation. Thus, in Gen 10:5 the writer speaks of defined groups of people according to their territories...

The term (*goyim*) is used in a number of specific ways. When a number of specific nations are referred to, it is this plural form that is used and the translators have rendered it as nations (Gen 10:31; Jud 2:23; Isa 61:11) or as people (Zech 12:3, KJV)...

Once the descendants of Abraham had become a distinct, recognized, political, and ethnic group of people who were in a specific covenant relationship with Yahweh, the term *goy* and *goyim* increasingly takes the meaning of gentiles or heathen, in reference to the non-covenant, non-believing peoples considered as national groups....

It must not be concluded from the fact that the surrounding nations, the *goyim*, although referred to as gentiles and heathens, are to be considered *per se* as helplessly lost, without God and hope. Rather, they are eventually to participate in all the blessings of God promises to give to Abraham and his progeny upon conditions of faith.... (TWOT, #326e.)

Thus any nation established upon God's **statutes** and **judgments** is heir to the blessings of God promised in Ps 33:12, &c. On the other hand, when that nation turns its back upon them, it forfeits its safety in the land. In fact, God uses heathen nations to punish those who are unfaithful to their foundational covenant with Himself:

...In the mean time God will use the nations to punish his unfaithful covenant people (Jer 4:7; Hab 1:5ff.); on the other hand they will some day contribute to the glory of Israel (Isa 11:10; 42:6)... (*Ibid.* The latter day Israel of God consists of all who are in Christ by grace through faith, Gal 6:16.)

Just as sure as God moved His servant, *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon*, against His people in Palestine (Jer 25:19, &c.), God is now moving foreign national troops, e.g., German and Russian, into His place of judgment against America's anti-Biblical, Antinomian Christianity. Promise Keepers, Dobsonites and Gothardites continue to multiply, and televangelists continue to rake in the money to "convert the world and feed the hungry" while foreign troops enlarge their presence upon American soil.

Why cannot people add two and two and get a proper answer? Clearly, what is being promoted as Christianity is not Biblical Christianity, or American Christians would not be on the verge of losing their land, Lev. 25:18, 19.

One of our young ladies' parents live in California: Her father is a self-employed home repair contractor. They are seriously considering moving back here because they cannot underbid the Mexicans in California. Not only are foreign troops now well entrenched on American soil [as American troops have been for years on foreign soil], but foreign laborers are now doing the work and getting the pay that Americans once did. However, I must add that the foreign laborers are doing what Americans do now want to do, and doing it faster. From my experience in Linden, the Mexican roofing crews did the jobs faster and cheaper than Americans. Americans demand top pay and lots of rest stops, and the Mexicans don't.)

America, a Christian Nation

Only the antiChristians deny that the founders of America entered into covenant with the Lord God of the Christian Bible.

This nation was founded upon and by the Christian God, not the god exalted by Judaism, John 8:54; Christ clearly told the Jews that the god they worshiped, which did not point to Himself, was a false god and not the God of Abraham. Thus the Christian God is defined as the One Who can only be approached through the shed blood of His Son, Christ Jesus; thus He is not the Jewish god nor the god worshiped by the majority of "religious" people today, for their god does not require the blood sacrifice for sin. These United States **do not** have a Judaic/Christian heritage; they have a distinctly Biblical Christian heritage, emanating from the desire to spread the gospel of Christ to every creature. Do not let the "PC" crowd rob us of our Biblical Christian heritage.

It was the Christian God Who established America:

The story of Christianity in America is one of the most astonishing chapters in the annals of the world. The events of Providence in reserving and preparing the country of these United States to be the theater of its development and triumph, constitute one of the most remarkable passages of modern history.

This is a Christian nation, first in name, and secondly because of the many and mighty elements of a Prue Christianity which have given it character and shaped its destiny from the beginning. It is pre-eminently the land of the Bible, of the Christian Church, and of the Christian Sabbath. It is the land of great and extensive and oft-repeated revivals of a spiritual religion,--the land of a free conscience and of free speech,--the land of noble charities and of manifold and earnest efforts for the elevation and welfare of the human race. The chief security and glory of the United states of America has been, is now, and will be forever, the prevalence and domination of the Christian Faith. (*The Christian Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States*, B.F. Morris, Introduction, p II. G.W. Childs, Philadelphia, PA, 1864.)

Observe: "these United States" were to be the theater of the development and triumph of the Christian religion, the gospel of Christ, not the Jewish religion. The fathers of America entered into a covenant with the Christian God of the Bible:

We are entered into covenant with [God] for this work. We have taken out a commission. The Lord has given us leave to draw our own articles; we have promised to base our actions on these ends, and we have asked Him for favor and blessing. Now if the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then He has ratified this covenant and sealed our commission, and will expect strict performance of the articles contained in it. But if we neglect to observe these articles, which are the ends we have propounded, and--dissembling with our God--shall embrace this present world and prosecute our carnal intentions, seeking great things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us and be revenged of such perjured people, and He will make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant. (Written by John Winthrop, 1588-1649, aboard the flagship *Arabella*. This document spells out what happens to a people

when they forsake their covenant with God. Our nation needs to heed its warnings.) (*God and Government, The Restoration of the Republic*, III.xi. Gary DeMar. 1982 American Vision Press, PO Box 720515, Atlanta, Georgia 30328. John Winthrop was a founder of the Massachusetts Bay Company, and was often elected the Massachusetts colony's governor. He had the greatest influence in shaping the settlement into a Bible Commonwealth.)

The early commitment of this nation, supported by every colony, was to faithfully obey the Law-Word of God, spread the gospel of Christ and advance the kingdom of God on earth. According to F.B. Morris:

Their (the Puritans, ed.) first act was to institute a form of civil government in conformity with the revealed will of God, and under whose benign legislation they were to enjoy all the rights and privileges of civil and religious freedom. The form of government was instituted in the cabin of the Mayflower, before they landed on Plymouth Rock, and signed and ratified under the solemnity of prayer and the most sacred sanctions of the Christian religion. The charter of a godly government is as follows:--

"In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christiana faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony of the northern part of Virginia, do, by these present, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together in to a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from them to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names, at Cape Cod, the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini 1620." (*Christian Character*, 52. King James of the KJV Bible, ed.)

The fathers of these United States -- gathering in a large barn, June 4th, 1639, at Quinipiak, now New Haven -- laid a foundation for America that would today cause antinomian "Christians" to riot in the streets (we suggest that they go somewhere else and form their own country rather than steal the one already established; but, of course, they already have it):

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased the Almighty God, by wise disposition of his divine providence, so to order and dispose of things that we, the inhabitants of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield, are now cohabiting and dwelling in and upon the river of Connecticut, and the lands thereunto adjoining, and well knowing where a people are gathered together the word of God requireth that, to maintain the peace and union of such a people, there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion should require; do, therefore, associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one public STATE or COMMONWEALTH, and do enter into combination and confederation to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the gospel of our LORD JESUS, which we now profess, as also the discipline of the churches,

which, according to the truth of said gospel, is now practiced amongst us; as also in our civil affairs to be guided and governed according to such laws, rules, and orders, and decrees as shall be made.

"I. That the Scriptures hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of all men in all duties which they are to preform to God and to men, as well in families and commonwealths as in matters of the church.

"II. That as in matters which concern the gathering and ordering of a church, so likewise in all public offices which concern civil order,--as the choice of magistrates and officers, making and repealing laws, dividing allotments of inheritance, and all things of like nature,--they would all be governed by those rules which the Scripture held forth to them. ...

The General Court, established under this constitution, ordered,--

"That God's word should be the only rule for ordering the affairs of government in this commonwealth." (*Ibid*, 66-68.)

Every foundational document of every commonwealth of these United States followed the same theme as presented above. The fathers of these United States of America entered into a covenant with the Christian God of both the Old and New Testaments (it was not with the Jewish, Hindu nor Mormon [&c.] god); they promised to base the laws and actions of their new nation in Holy Scripture; they promised the Christian God that if He prospered them, they would render strict obedience to God's Word; they made it clear that if the nation they founded departed from the covenant they made with the Christian God, that **God's wrath and vengeance** would be upon that faithless people for breaching their covenant. America's founding fathers agreement with the Lord God placed the following generations of Americans within the covenant-conditions of possessing **the land** (Lev 25:18) that have stood since Abraham.

Restoration

Clearly, the original covenant was not between the civil authority and the people under that authority; the covenant was between the people and the Christian God of the Bible Who established their nation. We must all admit that the covenant has been broken, but which covenant? Those looking and hoping for a political solution requiring no repentance and obedience to God's Word (even Antinomian Christian) say the covenant that is broken is between the civil government in DC and the people, *i.e.*, the Constitution. However, those of us who believe Scripture know the covenant that is broken is the one between the people and the Christian God: The people promised to render strict obedience to God's Word, and the people agreed to God's righteous vengeance if they or their children departed from that covenant.

Thus there can be no restoration of America apart from the restoration of the original covenant between the people and the Christian God. Without that restoration, the future only holds more foreign troops, more job loss to foreigners and even more violent "acts of nature." The original men in the covenant agreed to God's righteous vengeance when they entered into the covenant with the Christian God over nature.

The War Starts

The founding compacts of this nation was basically upheld by the American people until the Civil War:

After the Civil War phase the United States are really only now entering the revolutionary phase, and the European Wiseacres, who believe in the omnipotence of [President] Johnson, will soon be disillusioned. Karl Marx. (Quoted in *The Separation Illusion*, John W. Whitehead, p 65. Mot Media. 1977.)

The so-called Civil War was in reality a second American Revolution. Charles A. Beard. (*Ibid.*)

Indeed, an important aspect of the Civil War was the Unitarian statist drive for an assault on its Calvinistic enemy, the South. (*The Nature of the American System*, RJ Rushdoony, p 49. Thornburn Press, Fairfax, Virginia, 1979.)

Unitarianism: anti-Christian in denying the deity of Christ and rejecting the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, and believing that a strong centralized government was essential to erection of the kingdom of God on earth. (*The Separation Illusion*, p 70.)

Training a New Army

The purpose of all the early educational establishments of this nation were to train every student in the Word of God and how to please the Christian God. However, that changed radically.

Though there had been a continual move against Biblical Christianity from the first landing by the Pilgrims, the Civil War started the major American Revolution against its Christian foundation -- the foundation that had entered into the covenant with God for the land. The soldiers for the Revolution against Christianity were trained and are being trained in the government schools:

The Pilgrim Fathers very early required the education of every child, the General Court in 1642 declaring that parents failing to obey would be fined, the purpose of the act being "to see first that none of them shall suffer so much barbarism in any of their families." Commented Mann (Horace Mann, [1796-1858] called the Father of the Common Schools, or government schools), Such was the idea of barbarism entertained by the colonists of Massachusetts Bay more than two centuries ago. (*The Messianic Character of American Education*, RJ Rushdoony, p 20, 21. The Craig Press, PO Box 13, Nutley, NJ 07110. 1979.)

The problem is, however, barbarism's definition and what causes it: Is the Calvinistic Christian view right that barbarism is a result of man's fallen nature that can only be overcome by converting faith in Christ, and instructing him in all things according to the total of God's Word, or is the humanist view right, as espoused by statist educators, that barbarism is the result of basically good men's lack of education? In other words, Biblical Christians see barbarism as a result of sin, but Mann, and thus the foundational principle of the statist school system, sees barbarism as a result of a lack of education:

It was upon these principles that the professional training of public school teachers was established, and modern educational theory is the direct outcome of these ideas. As against the Calvinist conception of man as sinner, man is good; as against the doctrine of man's responsibility and accountability to God, of life as a stewardship, the non-biblical conception of natural rights is introduced into education. *The pupil is therefore a person with rights rather than*

responsibilities. Instead of being accountable to God, parents, teachers, and society, the pupil can assert that God, parents, teachers and society are responsible to him. In this conception, nurtured by normal school principles and germinating in the 19th century, lie the essentials of Dewey's educational philosophy and progressive education. The doctrine of the natural rights of man involved a democratization of rights which destroys all other standards save the will of man, thus ultimately destroying man's freedom in subservience to the common will. (The Messianic Character of American Education, p 23.)

The public schools function as the church for the religion of humanity, promoting the statist faith. Their philosophy is that man is good, and as he evolves into eternity he will perfect himself. This teaching is directly opposed to the Christian belief that man is a sinner and the only way he can become perfect, or mature, is to accept the atoning sacrifice made by Jesus Christ. (Note Ez 20:26 and 31: God's people refused to give their children to the Lord, yet they gave them to the state with no objection, ed. See, "Sinful Enquiry," Eze 20, in another mailing.)

The priests of this culture are the educators and teachers who themselves profess godly revelation and wisdom. They teach the faith handed down by their god. To them it is truth, and whatever conflicts with this truth is invalid. Prayer to the Christian God is taboo, for these priests see no need for prayer. (*The Separation Illusion*, p 96, 97.)

The priests of this culture are at war against God and His Word. They are training an army to go forth and conquer the world for the ungodly; they are training an army to effectively continue the war against God's **statutes** and **judgments**. The results are clearly spelled out: The nation established in covenant with God no longer dwells safely in the land, Lev. 25:18, 19. Be honest, and look around!

Judgments:

mishpat. Justice, ordinance, custom, manner. Represents what is doubtless the most important idea for correct understanding of government whether of man by man or of the whole creation by God. Though rendered judgment in most of the four hundred or so appearances (421, Online Bible) of *mishpat* in the Hebrew Bible, this rendering is often defective for us moderns by reason of our novel way of distinctly separating legislative, executive, and judicial functions and functionaries in government. Hence *shapat*, the common verb (from which our word *mishpat* is derived) means to rule, govern, referring to all functions of government is erroneously restricted to judicial processes only, whereas both the verb and the noun include all these functions. (*TWOT*, 2443c.)

The word **judgments** clearly refers to civil litigation, judgments and decisions. In other words, if the people of a nation that entered into covenant with God want to remain safely in the land, God's Law-Word must be the basis for their civil laws and judgments. (See *TWOT*, pp 948, 949.) The original founders of America well understood this as they covenanted with God that the laws of their new nation would be based only in God's Law-Word. And they agreed to God's conditions for remaining safely in the land He brought them to and established them in.

Statutes

"But the above is an Old Testament promise to God's Old Testament people, Israel." The answer to such an objection is to examine **statutes**:

Ge 26:5 *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my **statutes**, and my laws.*

Abraham, the father of those who have placed their faith in Christ (Ro 4; Ga 3:9, 29, &c.), walked in the **statutes** of the Lord long before the Ten Commandments were given. He is held up as the example for all God's people of all time till the end of time.

TWOT points out (728b) that the masculine noun for **statutes** is from the root which means to scratch or to engrave, hence to write:

It was a common practice among the ancients to engrave laws upon slabs of stone or metal and to set them up in a public place (e.g. the code of Hammurabi, engraved on diorite stone). But this root is not limited to the writing of laws on stone. (TWOT, p 317.)

The most casual reader will readily recognize a couple New Testament passages that tie the "gospel age" with the **statutes** as mentioned in the Old Testament.

First:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Ro 1:20, 21.)

God **statutes** were/are engraved within every person's being from Adam to the present enough so that they are all **without excuse**. Man's problem is not that he does not know God's statutes, but that he does not like to retain God in his knowledge, and thus ignores the judgment of God against his sin, Rom 1:28, 32; 2:14, 15. (It goes without saying that man without the Word of God does not know God truly, and thus will die in his iniquity, for sinners will be judged according to the gospel of Christ and not according to how they obeyed what was written in their beings, Rom 3:10ff., 2:16.)

Second:

Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some [others], epistles of commendation to you, or [letters] of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: [Forasmuch as ye are] manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency [is] of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth,

but the spirit giveth life. (2 Co 3:1-6.)

Thus the unconverted hearts are hearts of stone. It is God's Spirit Who makes hearts soft and tender, desiring to please God according to His revealed will through His word by keeping His **statutes**. Accordingly, God's **statutes** were in effect long before the law; in fact, Abraham is exalted by God as an example of faith as he walked in God's **statutes**:

Ro 4:3 *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. (Gal 3:6, Jam 2:23.)*

Admittedly, the word, **statutes** (#2708), is sometimes used to denote rituals pertaining to the priestly office and duties (special ritual laws, *BDB*), e.g., Exo 29:9; Lev 16:34, &c. Those **statutes** pointing to the coming work of Christ were done away with by the work of Christ, Col 3:14. However, **statutes** also includes regulations, i.e., prescribed limits, concerning man's moral conduct:

1) Lev 18:1-5, 26 & 30; Lev 19:19ff.; 20:8ff., and 26:3ff.

2) Num 27:11, this **statute of judgment**, has to do with passing the family's wealth on to the next godly kin, thus keeping the wealth God has given within His kingdom's service; violation of this **statute of judgment** by allowing ungodly family members to inherit the family's wealth robs God of the wealth He has provided to advance His kingdom: It finances the devil's crowd in its war against godliness. (Lev 25:18 said, **do my statutes** <02708> **and keep my judgments** <04941>, while Num 27:11 says, **a statute** <02708> **of judgment** <04941>: Note the slight difference in wording Lev 25:18 unites the words, **statute of judgment**)

3) Numbers 35:29, **a statute of judgment** (note again the wording unites the two words) has to do with the highest form of justice and restitution, the murderer and the cities of refuge.

4) Deut 28:15, 45, establish the negative side of not keeping God's **statutes**, and Deut 30:10, 16, establish the positive side of keeping God's **statutes**; it also uses the two words together.

(The following point is written to Me/FD97.WPD file. Will need to change that one as I change this, December 18, 1996.)

5) 1 Kgs 2:3, David charged his son Solomon to show himself a man by keeping the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his **statutes**, and his commandments, and his **judgments**, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself. One should note that Lev 25:18, *statutes* and *judgments* are the same words used in 1 Kings 2:3; 6:12; 11:33 *statutes* and *judgments*.

Manliness is defined, accordingly, as keeping God's testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses. The spirit that says that Christians, being in the age of grace are now under grace not law are the ones who are producing the male wimps of our day both within and without the Christian community; they are producing preachers fearful of offending anyone, for they have no firm foundation from which to speak. How can a preacher come out strongly against statism (i.e., Molech worship) if he has no law to stand on? Notice also in David's instruction to Solomon that manliness WILL

instruct the children of the household in the ways of the Lord, the law of Moses

Manliness

6) 2 Kings 17, gives a quick overview of Israel's history, and records a very sad event: The people openly professed their love for God and His Word (no doubt they flooded places of worship to Lord God), yet they **secretly** (v. 7) continued in their worship of other gods, the gods of mammon, covetousness, pride, stubbornness, immorality, &c., e.g., Who cares what God's Word says as long as I get my fair share and keep my present lifestyle. Besides, God's Old Testament commandments and statutes are not binding, for we are God's special people. (The founders of this nation would have branded such notions as the work of the Antichrist.)

When not in their public worship services, they continued to serve their idols in their private lives (homes, work places, recreations), and to do the things the Lord had told them not to do. They rejected God's *commandments and His statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers* (v. 15 - notice 1 Cor 10:1, tells the New Testament saints at Corinth that their *fathers* were the Old Testament saints who came through the Red Sea and to whom the commandments were given).

Though warned many times, God's people refused to believe God's Word, and they would not give up their other gods. They turned to the Molech state to supply their needs; they made their own laws with no regard to God's law, and they turned to *divination and enchantments* to lead their daily lives (horoscopes, &c.). Not only did the ten northern tribes of Israel profess one thing and do another, following pragmatic law, but so did the two southern tribes, v. 19.

God Sends Foreign Troops

The result was that the Lord God turned His people over to the foreign spoilers who plundered all the prosperity the Lord had provided them when they had served the Lord in the past:

2 Ki 17:20 *And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. (2 Chron 7:19ff., sure sounds like the United States.)*

2 Ki 17:20 contains an interesting thought:

2 Ki 17:24 *And the king of Assyria brought [men] from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed [them] in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.*

The Lord used the pagan king of Assyria to send pagan men in from many countries to possess the land and cities that He had given to His people when they obeyed Him; the Lord sent foreigners to do the work that His people had been doing when walked in His ways. Though they with their mouths professed to love the Lord, they turned from Him by **rejecting his statutes, and his covenant**, and the results came to pass, v. 15.

Reject: Examination of some seventy-three uses of this verb reveals that

men despise the Lord who is among them (Num 11:20) and thus merit God's rejecting them (Hos 4:6). When Israel requested Samuel to appoint a king over them, they rejected the Lord (1 Sam 8:7; 10:19). (TWOT, 1139. BDB gives the same basic breakdown for **reject** as does TWOT, BDB, <3988> p 549.)

Rejection of the Lord God of the Bible is evidenced by rejecting God as King and His Law-Word as the law of the land, 1 Sam 8. The results are quite serious:

Ho 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. 9:17 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

Rejecting God's Law-Word as the binding authority over individuals, churches and nations results in God rejecting His people.

Churches and God's Law

Dr Laura is becoming a very popular radio talk show host. She is a licenced psychiatrist who no longer has a private practice. The other evening (1/14/97), a mother of a boy and girl called in for advice. It seems that her family is friends with a gay couple, two men. The two Sodomites are having a committal service at her church, presided over by church's leader (I hate to use the word pastor for that person). The mother wanted to know what to do about her son, who she was afraid would create a disturbance at the service. Dr Laura told her to threaten her son with pinching off his head if he acted unseemly. Dr. Laura's acceptance of Sodomy and insistence that others accept Sodomy also should readily identify her for who she is: a minister of the enemy. (2 Cor 11:13ff.)

Our point is that the average church seems to have no concern for God's Law-Word as long as it keeps up its attendance and offerings, and its political correctness. With this kind of total disregard for God's **statutes** and **judgments** in churches (judge not lest ye be judged!), what can we expect from civil government? This nation is begging for God to send in foreign troops and to give America's jobs to foreigners according to the covenant entered into by the fathers.

TWOT continues:

Wicked men do not despise evil (Ps 36:4 [H 5]); they just reject the knowledge of God (Hos 4:6), the law of the Lord (Amos 2:4 [**despised the law of the LORD**, ed.]; Isa 5:24 [**cast away the law of the LORD**, ed.]; Jer 6:19 [**have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law**, ed.], the word of the Lord (1 Sam 15:23, 26 [**the word of the LORD**, ed.]; Isa 30:12 [**despise, or refuse, reject, this word**, ed.]; Jer 8:9 [**they have rejected the word of the LORD**, ed.]), the covenant made with Abraham (II Kgs 17:15), the statutes of God (Lev 26:15; Ezk 20:24 [I deal with Ez 20 elsewhere, ed.]), and the disciplinary chastening of the Lord (Prov 3:11). In fact, they have totally rejected the Stone which has now become the capstone of the building (Ps 118:22)

First, rejecting God's **statutes and judgments**, i.e., God's law as revealed

through Moses, rejects God's wisdom; in fact, Deut 4:6, says that God's people's wisdom *in the sight of the nations* is **hearing and doing** the statutes of God; moreover, Deut 32:6, tells us that when God's people do not act and look like God's people, according to the law of God, they are **unwise**.

Second, note the clear reference to Rom 1:21, 22, *when they knew him as God, they glorified him not as God...* TWOT makes a very clear connection between the Old Testament **statutes** and **judgments** and the New Testament Law-Word of Christ.

Third, Lev 26:15 uses the same words for **statutes** and **judgments** as used in 16:15; also of interest is that Lev 26:16 tells us that when God's people turn from God's judgments and commandments, they break His covenant, and their enemies will eat their food -- America has been feeding her enemies for many years, and, accordingly, keeping them alive so they can now move against America, v. 17.

Fourth, "Wicked men do not despise evil... they just reject... the covenant made with Abraham, II Kgs 17:15..." That covenant is first found in Gen 12:1-3, and is easily traced into the New Testament:

Ge 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Ga 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Thus the covenant is made with and in Christ Jesus, and all who are in Him are heirs to that covenant. "Wicked men... reject that covenant..." They ignore it or deny they are part of it.

Fifth, Ps 118:22 is one of the more oft quoted passages from the Old Testament: Mat 21:42; Acts 4:11; Eph 2:20ff.; 1 Pet 2:4ff, so thus the clear reference to the church, or to the gospel age. Also note the spelling of the word LORD is the Old Testament spelling which means the Lord Jesus Christ in the KJV; thus, the rejection was rejecting the words of Christ as revealed in the Old Testament.

TWOT continues:

Especially reprehensible in God's eyes is Israel's externalized religious practice. God hates and despises their feast days and offerings since they come to him without any genuine affection (Amos

5:21).

Outward religious practices without commitment to the Lord from the heart is especially reprehensible in God's eyes *TWOT* continues:

God rejects men who do not listen to him (Hos 9:17). However, he will never reject them totally, for that would break his covenant (Lev 26:44). God has chosen the seed of Abraham, his servant, and he will never cast them away (Isa 41:9). In fact, as long as God keeps his covenant with day and night (Jer 33:25) so long will he refrain from rejecting his covenant made with David and Levi (Jer 33:24). He will not despise the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David (Jer 31:37; 33:26). True, Ps 89:38 [H 39] does seem to contradict this strong affirmation by saying God has indeed rejected his anointed (cf. II Kgs 17:20; Jer 6:30; Ps 78:59, 67). This statement, however, refers only to individual participation and not to the abiding promise which remains open to all who will believe.

1) men reject God and then God rejects them.

2) God has chosen the seed of Abraham, ... and will never cast them away. What about the everlasting covenant that will never be broken? Though *TWOT* avoids the point, Christ is the covenant-promise given to Abraham and to Abraham's posterity, Isa 11:10, 42:6, 49:7, Gal ch 3, vv. 16, 29.

Sixth, the same word **<statutes, 02708>** is also used for **customs** of the people that are **vain**, as the custom of cutting a tree, carving it into an image, and then seeking after it to do for one what only the Lord can do, Jer 10:3. (See 1/97 Examiner mailing.)

Seventh, terrible evil came upon God's Old Testament people for ignoring this **statutes**, Jer 44:10ff., Ez 5:6ff. Nehemiah spoke as though he could see our day:

Neh 9:33-38, Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.

Eighth, the promise is that as a people walk in His **statutes** and **judgments**, they will be God's people and He will be their God, Ez 11:19ff. obviously, this passage refers to the New Testament Church, that is, all who are in Christ Jesus, John 17:21ff., 2 Cor 3:3/Ez 36:26, 2 Cor 5:17.

Things do not look good for America, for, clearly, God's hand is moving against her evils that are found both inside and outside her churches. God

is sending His armies --from the skies (weather), from the ground (Germany and Russia) and from across her borders (Mexican laborers) -- against a nation that broke the covenant with Him made by its founders.

But we are **not** of all men most miserable (1 Cor 15), for our Redeemer liveth; God's faithful people have not been left hopeless in the midst of the turmoil:

Ge 15:1 *After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I [am] thy **shield**, [and] thy exceeding great reward.*

Ps 115:11, *Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their **shield**.* Ps 119:114, *Thou art my hiding place and my **shield**: I hope in thy word.* Ps 144:2, *My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my **shield**, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me.* Pr 2:7 *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: [he is] a **buckler** to them that walk uprightly.* Pr 30:5, *Every word of God is pure: he is a **shield** unto them that put their trust in him.*

Shield:

In view of the fact that God is always the one who protects (*ganan*) his people, it is no surprise that he is so often called the shield (*magen*) of Israel. He is the shield about his servants (Gen 15:1), the house of Aaron (Ps 115:10), the nation of Israel (Deut 33:29) and all those who walk uprightly and put their trust in him (Prov 2:7; 30:5). (*TWOT*, 367c.)

He is the **shield** to His servants who are faithful to His Law-Word to the best of the ability that God has provided by His grace. God's faithful people in the Old Testament learned their lesson. Nehemiah tells us in chapter ten that,

28 [T]he rest of the people (not listed previously, ed.), the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding; 29 They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes; 30 And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: 31 And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.

They renewed their love for the house of God and for *book of Moses* (13:1).

Our prayer is that American Christians can return to the place where they can pray for America the closing words of Nemiah:

REMEMBER ME, O MY GOD, FOR GOOD.

(By His Sovereign Grace Alone, Pastor Need.)

Sinful Enquiry

A Choice, Life or Death

God leaves man with a choice.

Rom 6:12-14, *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom 8:13, 14, For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (See also, Jos 24:15; 2 Pet 2:12ff.; Jude 10.)*

The willing choice made by America's founding fathers to enter into a covenant with the Lord God of the Bible makes the choice all the more serious for the following generations, down to our present day. The choice then and is now:

Peace and Safety, or Decadence, Degeneracy, Turmoil, Oppression

Lev 25:18 *Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.*

Throughout Scripture, God gives man a choice: obedience to God's **statutes** and **judgments**, leading to life and peace, and disobedience to God's **statutes** and **judgments**, leading to oppression, turmoil and death. (See Safety in the Land.) The choice is offered throughout Scripture: Lev 25:18 uses **statutes** and **judgments** together. Ezekiel chapter twenty uses the two words together more than any other passage, a total of **SIX** times, vv. 11, 13, 16, 19, 21 & 24.

Ezekiel chapter is an interesting chapter. In it, Israel's elders come to enquire of the Lord through Ezekiel. However, rather than enquiring as to why Israel is in trouble with its God, they desire to know what the future holds. Look at what we are told by God through Ezekiel:

First, vv. 1-4, *certain of the elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to enquire of the Lord, and sat before Ezekiel. Evidently, they wanted a revelation from God concerning their future state:*

... Instead of giving a revelation concerning the future, especially with regard to the speedy termination of the penal sufferings, which the elders had, no doubt, come to solicit, the prophet is to judge them, *i.e.* as the following clause explains, not only in the passage before us, but also in ch. xxii. 3 and xxiii. 36, to hold up before them the sins and admonitions of Israel. It is in anticipation of the following picture of the apostasy of the nation from the time immemorial that the sins of the fathers are mentioned here. (Keil, *Ezekiel*, 265.)

The people want to know of the future, so they inquire of God's Word

(through Ezekiel). Rather than the Lord telling them of the future, He soundly and clearly rebuked them for their past sins. The only thing the future held for them was trouble, sorrow and misery because of the sins of the fathers, from which the children stoutly refused to turn. Fairbairn points out that though we are not told precisely what these men inquired about,

There can be little doubt, however, that it had respect in some shape to the then depressed and suffering condition of the covenant-people, and implied, at least, if it did not openly express, a desire to ascertain something more definite about God's purpose respecting them. But here, again, a preliminary objection arose from the moral state of the persons inquiring, which was such as precluded them from any right to expect a friendly response from God to their desire for any further information. Regarding, as they did, iniquity in their heart, the Lord could not hear them. (Ps 66:18, ed.) He therefore, at the outset, denounced the presumption of such persons in coming to inquire at his servant, and called upon the prophet to do toward them the part of a judge, by charging upon them the rebellious spirit of their fathers, and showing how little either they or their fathers had received in chastisement from God compared with what they deserved. (Fairbairn, *Ezekiel*, 209, 210.)

The problem clearly spelled out by the Lord to these inquirers was that their fathers had set in motion sinful practices which had passed on to the children; thus to inquire of the Lord and seek His aid without dealing with those sinful practices was presumption.

The parents should have been passing on to the children the ways, words (Law-Word) and works of the Lord (2 Thes 1:5). Because they did not pass down the proper faith, the result was that instead of the children hoping in the Lord, they established their hope in themselves and in the surrounding pagan gods. They became a *stubborn and rebellious generation, whose spirit was not steadfast with God*, Ps 78:4ff. Moreover, the children had an overabundance of leaders, who, in the name of the Lord, supported them in their stubbornness and rebellion against God's Law-Word, Isa 8:19, &c.

Now the children wanted to hear from God without facing up to and correcting the sinful practices established by their fathers. Consequently, they SHOULD HAVE BEEN INQUIRING from God's Word what they needed to do to correct the past sins, so they could again have God's blessings.

The Sins of the Fathers

In our article, "Safety in the Land," we saw that America's founding fathers entered into a covenant with the Everlasting Christian God of the Bible (not the Jewish, Mormon nor Hindu gods, for the Christian God is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ). However, those who enter into covenant with the Christian God must do so on His terms, which are clearly given in His Word. Many times, Moses reviews the never changing terms of the covenant that man must keep if he will have the Lord's promised (covenanted) blessings upon him. One of his reviews is recorded in Leviticus 26, which gives both the positive side, vv. 1-14, and the negative side, vv. 15ff. No one can deny that the blessings of the Christian God have been upon this great nation, including good weather, v. 4.

Nor can any deny that things have changed, as foreigners now rule over Americans. (I find it interesting that both judges in the O.J. Simpson trials were Asian-Americans. Moreover, many of the big corporations operating in American are now foreign owned.)

Glancing through Leviticus 26, we come to the following passage:

If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. (Vv. 40-42. See also, Dan chp 9.)

How easy it is to say, "Great. All we have to do is confess iniquities of the past generations, and everything will be restored in God's blessings." However, to regain the blessings promised by God, we must define confession from God's Word:

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief. (Pr 28:13, 14, which defines 1 Jn 1:9 - confession means admitting sin and taking steps to forsake that sin.)

If they will confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers means that the present generation desiring to regain the former blessings of the Christian God must examine the past and present in terms of God's total Word; they must ferret out past and present sinful activity; they must admit, *i.e.*, confess, to the sin regardless of what the former generations thought of the activity; they must then take serious steps to correct the sinful activity set in motion by their fathers. It is impossible to expect any kind of Godly restoration of individuals or of a social order without such action. Confession of sin ALWAYS means taking action to correct that sin in terms of God's Law-Word.

The Lord's oath could not be stronger: He will not be revealed to the hardened children unless they correct the evil things their fathers set in motion: **As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you.** The only thing the Lord will reveal to the "inquirers" is their sin and what they must do to correct it. (Eze 20:4.)

Illustration

A modern application is clearly that God will not be enquired of by this present generation until it sets about to correct the sins of its fathers, *e.g.*, the government, pagan, Antichrist (Molech) schools. The stated purpose of the government schools was to destroy the Christian character of this nation, and they have done a wonderful job. (See R.J. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education*, Ross House Books.) The state schools were motivated by the desire to overthrow God (Ps 2), and those who support them are partakers in the wickedness (Ps 50:18; Eph 5:11), even supporting their own destruction.

We should mention also that entitlement programs programs set into motion by past generations have worked to destroy America's self-sufficiency under God's spirit. And we cannot overlook the Masons, but we assume that the Christians who read this material are not involved in that organization.

Problem Stated

Bork Decries American's Fall

Decadence is overwhelming American society, and a permissive court system is culpable, former federal judge Robert Bork claims in his new book, *Slouching Toward Gomorrah*. "The rot is spreading," states Bork, who sees decadence in America's popular entertainment, art, religion, education, scholarship...and morality. Bork lays much of the blame at the feet of liberal activist judges who have frustrated efforts to stem the tide of decadence. "It is the courts that threaten our liberty the liberty to govern ourselves more profoundly than does any legislature," he writes. Bork suggests that the U.S. Constitution be amended to permit Congress to overturn Supreme Court rulings by a majority vote. Bork, who is now a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, said outright censorship is needed to curb "the obscene prose and pictures available on the Internet, motion pictures that are mere rhapsodies to violence and the more degenerate lyrics of rap music." He added, "Without censorship, it has proved impossible to maintain any standards of decency." (*THE BAPTIST BULLETIN*, Dec., 1996. Quoted in *The Sword of the Lord*, Jan 10, 1997.)

However, rather than God's people gathering to enquire of the Lord why America is overwhelmed by "the tide of decadence" and degeneracy, and what must be done about it according to God's Word, many gather to study the secret things of the Lord. In the same issue of *The Sword of the Lord* in which the above statement appears, we find this advertisement:

BIBLE CONFERENCE on Prophecy and the Jews, February 2-5, 1997.

This special conference hosted by Franklin Road Baptist Church and International Board of Jewish Missions, will focus on prophecy, the Jews and the second coming of Christ. (½ back page add in *The Sword of the Lord*, Jan 10, 1996. Note who the prophecy conference is sponsored by. There is good money in prophecy conferences, e.g., "Give your money to us rather than leave it for the antichrist to spend.")

Ez 20:1-4, people should be holding inquiring meetings to enquire of the Lord about the sins of the past generations, that is, the wicked organizations and practices founded (set in motion) by the fathers; the inquiring meetings must enquire of the Word of God for ways to change the many areas of life and thought for God and godliness that have been yielded to secular humanism (human reason, psychology, &c.). Quoting from *The Death of Victory*,

Concluding his study on Rev 8, he (JN Darby, ed.) said,

It is absolutely necessary that we should renounce everything. We shall have to do so sooner or later, either with joy by the Spirit of Christ, or with shame when the judgments of God shall break every tie

that is still keeping us back. We must then leave everything, or else be burnt up with Sodom. **Prophecy has a special power to separate us from this present evil world**, which the patience of God can bear, because He is taking His own out of it, but which is judged already nevertheless. (*Writings*, II.44. Emp added.)

Prophetic study separates one from reality! All the early major figures in the (modern dispensational, ed.) movement had Darby's philosophy. They were all men of great abilities, which they used to reform Christianity from victory go and claim every area of life and thought for Christ to pietism/mysticism become more *spiritual* and wait. The movement produced a great many Bible conferences for the sole purpose of learning how to become more mystical/spiritual, dealing with the inner-self and the study of prophecy. The founding men purposely avoided any social application of the gospel. (Ovid Need, Jr., *Death of Victory*, 203, 204. Ross House Books.)

And we must say that those founding men of the middle 1800s set the climate for the next 150 years of "Christianity." Rather than face the social issues of our day to find where we have departed from God's Word and what to do about it, they gather to escape into "prophecy."

Question

If people enquire of the Lord without genuine repentance over sin (cf. Pro 28:13, 14) and they are spoken to, who is doing the speaking? (See 2 Cor 2:11; 11:3, 13; Gal 1:8, & 2 Ti 2:26.) We should define the bad sense of "inquire" inquiring concerning the future, e.g., prophecy conferences or even conferences enquiring into the secret counsels of wicked men, Eph 5:12. Significant, or serious, in-depth enquiry into the *mysteries* of God without the motive of correcting sin leads to the wrong person answering the enquiry with answers leading to death:

De 29:29, *The secret [things belong] unto the LORD our God: but those [things which are] revealed [belong] unto us and to our children for ever, that [we] may do all the words of this law.*

Geneva

Moses by this proves their curiosity, who seek those things that are only known to God: and their negligence who do not regard that which God has revealed to them, as the law. (*Online Bible*, CDROM.)

Gill

but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever; the things of nature and Providence, which are plain and manifest, are for our use and instruction; and especially the word and ordinances of God, which are the revelation of his will, the doctrines and promises contained in the Scriptures, each of the duties of religion, and the commandments of God, such as are of eternal obligation, which may be chiefly designed, because it follows: (Ibid.) that we may do all the words of this law: for the end of this revelation is practice; hearing and reading the word will be of no avail, unless what is heard and read is practiced. (Ibid.)

Joseph Parker

The simple law is that some things belong unto the Lord our God; we have nothing to do with them; we are not concerned in their investigation or adjustment; other things belong to us and to our children, and our definite duty and relation to these is to see that they are realised in all their meaning and purpose. ... There is a limit to ask, seek, knock of all investigation....

The practical point to be kept in view is that although God encourages man to ask, seek, and knock; though he has made man an inquisitive and progressive being; though he has endowed man with faculties, instincts, capacities that yearn to transcend the limits which humiliate him, yet human ambition is to be regulated by divine law, and man is to keep within prescribed boundaries and avoid the iniquity of trespass. This is so in nature, and it is so in what we have come to understand by the term Providence. No man can find out the work that God doeth from the beginning to the end. ... As out of so common a thing as the dust of the earth God fashioned man, so out of the ordinary trifles of life he builds the greatest realities of the future. That we cannot understand these things is no argument against the certainty of their existence and action. We have to understand God as much as God intended us to understand, and leave the rest....

Fool is he who in running from a town in flames will not cross the river until he speculates concerning the architect of the bridge and makes inquiry into the origin and date of its building....

Men like to penetrate into the hidden. They flatter it, they exalt it, they say it is given for good, and pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; and having wrought themselves up into this delusive appreciation of its value, they put forth the thievish hand, and the fancied blessing turns to a scorpion's sting....

The sense in which things revealed belong unto us is distinctly specified in the text that we may do all the words of the law.... We are not called upon to consider the words of a speculation, or a theory, or a new suggestion regarding the constitution and destiny of things. God puts himself before us distinctly as Lawgiver.... (Joseph Parker, *Preaching Through the Bible*, IV.325-332. Baker Book House, 1960. Emp added.)

Sadly, fallen man sure seems more interested in the things of God that are above and beyond his understanding -- things he is to have nothing to do with -- than the things that are his. We are told clearly the purpose of *wisdom*: IT IS THAT WE MIGHT KNOW THE WORD OF GOD, SO WE CAN **DO it!** (See my message on James 1:5, 6.) The purpose of Godly wisdom is **not** so we can know the secret things of God; rather, the purpose is that we might know and do *the things that are freely given to us*, 1 Co 2:12.

Parker continues:

A word is to become a deed: a thought is to be embodied in expressive action... We received the law that we might do it; if we have failed in the doing our admiration (of God's Word, ed.) is hypocrisy and our loudest applause is but our loudest lie.

We are not only called to obedience, we are called to hope. We shall make some conquest yet even in spheres which at present are absolutely mysterious. ... If we are waiting for the solutions of the mystery before we begin obedience to the law, the mystery will never be revealed

to us other than in clouds and storms of judgment. We walk by faith, not by sight. Jesus said unto one of his disciples, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. This is the Christian's law of action. He acknowledges the mystery; he has no reply whatever to many an enigma; but he is sure that in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, he is preparing himself for those great revelations which are promised by faith, obedience, and love. (*Ibid.*)

First, words of love for God and His law are hypocrisy if they are not backed up with doing His law as revealed through Moses. All the following passages have action clearly connected with profession of love for God's Law-Word:

Jos 22:5 *But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul. 1*
Sam 18:22 *And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold, the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king's son in law. Ps 119:97*
MEM. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. 113* SAMECH.
I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love. 119:163 *I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love. 119:165* *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. Rom 13:8* *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Rom 13:10* *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Gal 5:14* *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Ja 2:8* *If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:*

Second, the call to obedience is also a call to hope. Obedience leads to "some conquest" for King Jesus. Despite the conviction of many that the Old Testament promises are now strictly spiritual in the "age of grace," passages such as Deut 28:1ff. and 15ff., are very evidently still in effect: Just look around! (Rom 6:16; 8:13, 37; 2 Pe 2:12, &c.)

Third, how many times have we heard, "When I understand, then I will do...", or "When I understand, I will believe?" However, God's way is doing what we know to do, and then He gives us more understanding, Heb 3:18-4:3.

Parker rightly calls our attention to Christ's words to Thomas, which "is the Christian's law of action," John 20:29. We act because we are required by God's Word, and then the Spirit gives further understanding.

Though the Christian "acknowledges the mystery," said Parker, "he has no reply whatever to many an enigma." Pity the poor pastor/teacher and/or layman who will not admit he does not have all the answers. At times, folks try to question me concerning the details of Divine Sovereignty, Election, Predestination and the "Free Will" of man: My answer to them is that I just do understand. I only know that both God's sovereign control of history is clearly taught throughout Scripture, and at the same time, man's "Free Will" is taught and he is held accountable for every action. My problem is not that I do not understand the details of these, and similar, great mysteries of God; my problem is that I am unable to do all I know to do.

Parenthesis - Dispersing Knowledge

There is currently a very popular author and speaker raising vast sums of money to promote the "knowledge of God." Josh McDowell is convinced that if sinners are presented with enough facts, they will change their ways:

For example, a brilliant but confused psychiatrist who came to Arrowhead Springs for counsel frankly confessed to me that he had never been willing to honestly consider the claims of Christ in his own life for fear that he would be convinced and, as a result, would have to change his way of life. Other well-known professing atheists, including Aldous Huxley and Bertrand Russell, have refused to come to intellectual grips with the basic historical facts concerning the birth, life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Those who have, such as C.S. Lewis and C.E.M. Joad, have found the evidence so convincing that they have accepted the verdict that Jesus Christ is truly who He claimed to be—and who others have believed Him to be—the Son of God and their own Savior and Lord. (Josh McDowell, *Evidence that demands a Verdict*, I, ii. Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc. 1972.)

Notice that the above is totally contrary to Romans 8:23, 24, which tells us that if a person cannot receive the gospel by faith, that person cannot be saved. In addition, the above clearly violates God's definition of faith, Heb 11:1. Implied above is that the purpose of going into all the world is simply to spread the facts about Christianity, and, knowing and acknowledging the facts as true, fallen men will change their actions. The 1800s saw the foundation laid for McDowell's theory, as well as the foundation for modern "Christian" psychology; Matthew 28:19, 20, was reduced to simply spreading knowledge about God:

Another tremendous influence for Moody's brand of Irvingism/Darbyism was his *Student Volunteer Movement*, started within the YMCA in 1886. The SVM was the start of the greatest demonstration of missionary interest ever known in the United States. The SVM was not dominated by the millenarians (Darbyites, ed.), but they played a crucial role in the world-wide propagation of Irvingism/Darbyism. (E.R. Sandeen, *Roots of Fundamentalism*, 183.) It was, however, fully committed to Keswick opinions.

The SVM millenarian (Irvingite/Darbyite) missionary challenge was conceived in terms of 'dispersing' information rather than Christianizing the whole world, and it was in that sense that they understood the word 'evangelization.' They did not expect that their preaching would produce mass conversions & Their hopeless outlook is not surprising, since the SVM originated in conferences completely dominated by millenarian speakers & There is no way of knowing how many missionary volunteers left America as millenarians or became millenarian converts in the field, but there seems little doubt that millenarians were better represented in mission fields than within the American churches. *Roots*, 185, 186. Footnote: Remember, Muller's motive for starting his mission work was that other missions had as their goal the conversion of the world, a motive Muller could not justify from Scripture. We need some missions now with the goal of converting the world to Christ.) The SVM clearly reflected Lacunza's (the Brethren's) view of missionary endeavor that it is sinful to expect the conversion of the world. The missionary effort, accordingly, devolves to simply spreading knowledge of the truth. Thus they were *faithless* missionaries, spreading a message of hopelessness. (Ovid Need, Jr., *The Death of*

Victory, 284. Ross House Books.)

With the loss of hope of converting the world to Christ, all that is left is to dispense knowledge about God and His Christ (and "patriotic action," we will add); however, that dispensing of knowledge is done faithlessly, for it contains no faith that the Spirit will use the Word of God to Christianize the nations.

Enquiry, Continued

It appears that modern Christianity equates Christian conversion and maturity with knowledge about God, but apart from applying that knowledge into surrounding society. God's law clearly states that the Christian's law of action is simply to do what is obvious to him from the Word of God, and he is to do it in whatever situation God has him in. His responsibility is not to ignore surrounding social turmoil, nor is it to delve into the mysteries of God; his responsibility is to do what God tells him to do: Love the Lord God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. In addition, he is to go forth with the intent of Christianizing the nations with the gospel.

The Word of God profits nothing if it is not mixed with doing what it says in every social situation, from the level of the personal to the level of the White House, if God would so ordain, Heb 4:2. Heb 4:11, **unbelief** is defined as **disobedience** in the margin. Moreover, Christian maturity comes from doing God's Law-Word, not from knowing more of God's Word (just for knowledge's sake) and enquiring more into *the secret things that belong unto the LORD our God*,

Heb 5:14 *But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* (Solomon illustrates this passage when he asked for God's wisdom so he could apply God's Law-Word in hard cases, 1 Ki 3. See also Heb 11:2.)

Matthew Henry

(Deut 29:29) [3] He concludes his prophecy of the Jews' rejection just as St. Paul concludes his discourse on the same subject, when it began to be fulfilled (Rom. xi. 33). *How unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out!* So here (v. 29), *Secret things belong to the Lord our God. ... First, We are forbidden curiously to enquire into the secret counsels of God and to determine concerning them.* A full answer is given to that question, *Wherefore has the Lord done thus to this land?* sufficient to justify God and admonish us. But if any ask further why God would be at such a vast expense of miracles to form such a people, whose apostasy and ruin he plainly foresaw, why did not by his almighty grace prevent it, or what he intends yet to do with them, let such know that these are questions which cannot be answered, and therefore are not fit to be asked. It is presumption in us to pry into the *Arcana imperii* *the mysteries of government*, and to enquire into the reasons of state which *it is not for us to know*. See Acts I. 7; John xxi. 22; Col. ii. 18. *Secondly, We are directed and encouraged diligently to enquire into that which God has made known: things revealed belong to us and to our children.* Note, 1. Though God has kept much of his counsel secret, yet there is enough revealed to satisfy and

save us. He has *kept back nothing that is profitable for us*, but that only which is good for us to be ignorant of. 2. We ought to acquaint ourselves, and our children too, with the things of God that are revealed. We are not only allowed to search into them, but are concerned to do so. They are things which we and ours are nearly interested in. They are the rules we are to live by, the grants we are to live upon; and therefore we are to learn them diligently ourselves, and to teach them diligently to our children. 3. All our knowledge must be in order to practice, for this is the end of all divine revelation, not to furnish us with curious subjects of speculation and discourse, with which to entertain ourselves and our friends, *but that we may do all the words of this law*, and be blessed in our deed. (*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, I.850, 851. Macdonald Publishing Company. Bold added.)

I would almost concede to the "Identity" theory that "White America" is the heir to Old Testament Israel. However, we know from Scripture that any nation founded upon the Word of God becomes heir to both the blessings and curses of the people of God, whether before or after Christ.

We can ask the same questions pointed out by MH: "Why would God go to the vast expense of miracles to form the US -- as are so obvious in the honest history of this country -- when He so clearly saw the apostasy and ruin that would come in a few hundred years?" "Why did not His grace prevent the apostasy of our day?" "What does the sovereign God of Scripture intend to do with apostate America and American Christianity?" (America seems to be suffering greatly at the hands of "Mother Nature," that is, the sovereign God of the Bible, since about the time of hurricane Andrew.)

With the above questions in mind, we must not yield to presumption, that is, prying into **the mysteries of God's government on earth**, for they are not for us to know. However, we are to diligently enquire into what God has made known, for those things belong to us and to our children. Though much of God's workings in the affairs of men are secret, there is more than enough clearly made known to satisfy and save us, for He has kept back nothing profitable for us, Acts 20:20. He has clearly spelled out "the rules to live by, the grants we are to live upon; and therefore we are to learn them diligently ourselves, and to teach them diligently to our children." We are to learn the Word of God "in order to practice" it.

Enquiry into the fate of the Jewish nation, or any nation for that matter, is presumption; enquiry must be so *that we may do all the words of this law*.

Evidently, the elder's enquiry of Ezekiel was along this line: Why did God do the great miracles bringing us out of Egypt just to turn us over to ruin? Or, Why did God establish us as a nation just to deliver us to pagan Babylon? Or What does God intend to do with us? Or How can we deliver ourselves from this pagan army? However, the elders of Israel clearly should have been enquiring into the reasons why they were oppressed by the ungodly, one-world system, Babylon; they should have been enquiring into why they were now under the authority of a foreign, pagan power; they should have been enquiring into the reasons why foreign troops and workers were on Israel's soil; they should have been enquiring what, according to the Word of God, could be done to regain their freedom under God. Man's enquiry into God's workings must be so man can better do God's good pleasure, Philippians 2:13.

Matthew Henry well stated the matter: Searching God's Word to furnish us with curious subjects of speculation and discourse, with which to entertain ourselves and our friends is presumption. Would this not include God's secret counsels concerning things like Election, Divine Providence, Predestination and maybe even creation (Heb 11:3)? These are things that must be accepted simply because God said it. What happens when we try to apply human reasoning and understanding to God's *secret things*? Are not His ways far past man's ability to find out, Isa 55:8, 9?

This pastor has found that the Lord has given more than enough clearly understood things to keep him busy for many lifetimes:

Job 28:28, And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that [is] wisdom; and to depart from evil [is] understanding. Ps 25:14, The secret of the LORD [is] with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

The secret of the Lord is with them who depart from evil! If we want God to reveal secret things to us, depart from the sins in our lives. (I saw a little statement on the bottom of a scratch pad, with which many of us can identify: **God put me on this earth to do many things. Right now, I m so far behind I ll never die.**) When we come so far short of what we know God would have us do, why are we so determined to understand the mysteries of God? Did not the Lord Jesus rebuke the disciples for their attempted inquiry into the future, saying that their concern was to be the proclaiming the total of God's Word *unto the uttermost part of the earth*, Acts 1:6-8? The believer's responsibility is to make God's Word *known to all nations* for the purpose that those nations will be obedient to the *faith*, Rom 16:26. (See also John 20:31.)

Where are the "enquiry meetings" with God's Word? Where is the spirit of enquiry concerning sin and how to correct the sins that the past generations have set in place?

We should dread to even think that God's words spoken through Ezekiel to the elders might apply to us and our generation: **As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not be enquired of by you** because you refuse to confront and deal with the sins of the past generations to which you have fallen heir. (The vast majority of professed Christians absolutely refuse to confront the government school situation, and the result is that a great many Christian young people cannot even read their diplomas, let alone read God's Word. I suppose some of the new versions - perversions - of God's Word is because people cannot read the KJV.)

An interesting thought is Ez 39:8-10: God's people should be prayerfully going throughout the land to discover the weapons of the enemy, for he has infiltrated every area of life and thought. God's people should then, based upon God's Word, set about to "burn" those weapons with the refiner's fire (1 Pe 1:7), reclaiming those areas according to the Word of God. (See Patric Fairbairn, *Ezekiel*.)

Example

The news media has become a very effective weapon of warfare against God and His covenant people. The victory has been won in Christ, so God's people should set about claiming that area back for God; they should set

about to burn that weapon that has been effectively used by the enemy. Christians should unite to purchase - reclaim - some of the sources of the mass media.

Illustration

Back in the late '60s or early '70s, an small Indianapolis TV station went on the market. There was a conservative Christian businessman who had a vision of purchasing the station. He personally spoke to all the conservative churches in the Indianapolis (there were over 90 independent, *Bible believing* Baptist churches alone) who would listen, trying to raise money to purchase the station. He was unable to gain the financial support to purchase the station; however, a group was able to raise the funds. Now the station promotes tongues, women preachers, faith healing and great, emotional experiences. One of the most prominent messages over the station is, Are you financially distressed? Send me your seed money, and God will multiply it many times over. And those televangelists have excellent incomes. But who back then realized what cable would do? Cable now gives the station state-wide influence.

The point is this: A Christian man had a vision of what could be done with a conservative media outlet, but those who should have had that vision refused to invest in something that would not yield immediate spiritual results. Now the same people who refused to invest in the future back then no doubt complain that there is no Christian conservative TV outlet in the Indiana market, other than a few spots on the Charismatic Channel. But it will offer very little that is not "Politically Correct." Did not Ted Turner turn a small TV station into a major media source, CNN?

Why is it that if Christians cannot start at the top, they are unwilling to start at all? It appears that if they cannot control ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN or FOX, they are not interested in doing anything toward controlling the media for the Lord.

The great Bible conferences going on today should be conferences on how to reach into areas such as the media for the Lord, e.g., the "God Save America Rallies" for which I continually receive advertisements: There were eight listed on the last advertisement -- four in the month of October alone. I fellowshiped with that group for many years, so I can safely assume they are not getting together to examine where the Church and Christianity have departed from God's Law-Word and how to return to God.

Continuing our look at what we are told by God through Ezekiel:

Second, vv. 5-26, *and say to them...* Rather than a revelation of the future, they got a review of the past, and it was not nice. The Lord reminds them of the evil of their fathers, who never gave up their false gods and idols.

They built the *calf* right out of Egypt, and they complained against God and wanted to return to Egypt all the way to Canaan. The only thing that kept the Lord from destroying them was *his name's sake*, v. 9.

We should point out that the generation that went into Canaan under Joshua was not much better than their fathers who came out of Egypt: It was with that generation the situation with Korah - the murmuring over water at Kadesh where Moses and Aaron sinned - and the evil with Moab took place. It

was the generation that went into Canaan who was threatened with dispersion among the heathens, Deut. 29:4, Ez 20:23.

God continues through Ezekiel to remind them of the past, telling them the nation that He had redeemed unto Himself behaved like pagans in the desert. Only God's mercy spared the old nation of Israel, v. 17. However, God's mercy finally expired in 70 AD.

The **sabbaths**, v. 12, is best described by Isa 58:13, 14. Thus it was/is not simply a day of rest, but it was/is doing the will of God from the heart, Ez 20:13, 14.

Vv. 18-24, the Lord continually warned the nation of Israel, yet it ignored His warning. V. 18, though Moses does not tell us about it, evidently Israel became idol worshipers in Egypt, serving the same gods as did the Egyptians. See Josh 24:2, 3, 14, 15. Several times, the Lord determined to destroy the nation, but Moses interceded.

V. 22, judgment against sin in God's people is required to prevent His name from being *polluted among the heathen*.

V. 23, their hearts, v. 16, and then their eyes went after the idols around them, Col 3:5, *covetousness, which is idolatry*.

Vv. 25, 26, their pollution,

[C]an only, indeed, be the polluted customs and observances of heathenism that the prophet here characterizes as statutes not good, and judgments in which life was not to be found. By a strong expression (and yet not so strong as that in Isa. lxiii. 17: "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways and hardened our heart from thy fear?"), God is said to have given death-bringing ordinances to the Israelites, when he saw their wayward and perverse behaviour in regard to the commandments and duties of his service; since, to punish their unfaithfulness, he subjected them to influences which carried them still farther astray, and brought on, first spiritual, then also, in due time, outward desolation and ruin. We have precisely the same process described, and in still stronger language, in 2 Thess. ii., where, of those who "received not the love of the truth," it is said, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and that they might be damned, "--first, the corrupting influences that bring spiritual blighting and disaster let loose upon them, and then, when these have wrought their full effect, the doom executed upon them of final perdition. (Fairbairn, *Ezekiel*, 221, 222.)

God's people are warned several times of the deceit they are open to when they depart from God's Law-Word: Antinomianism, which says that man has no clear written rule or law from God to live by, naturally leads to "the polluted customs and observances of heathenism" being mixed with what little word from God Dispensationalism is left with. The result is that God closes His people's eyes and minds so they will submit to heathen influences and customs. Old Israel's worship of God became a very corrupt mixture of error and truth; Christ came calling Israel to the true worship of the Father, and the Jews hated Him, John chps 6, 10. (But then, true Dispensationalism holds that the book of John is not for the "Church Age.")

God clearly spells it out: When men rejects God's Word, God rejects them, *because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee*, Hos 4:6. In His rejection, He sends a spirit of blindness. The result is that those who do not love the Divine Truth of God's Law-Word are prepared to receive a lie; the result of the lie is destruction; the destruction is the final end - just retribution - of rejecting the Truth.

Jas 1:21 *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (See also 1 Tim 3:13.)*

Notice God's word of warning as delivered by Ezekiel:

20:23 *I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; 24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols. 25 Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; 26 And I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.*

There are several interesting points from the above passage:

First, the Lord warned and warned His people to return to Him by obeying His *statutes* and by instilling His *judgments* into society. They ignored the warning. Notice that it was an act of mercy that the Lord God gave his *statutes* and *judgments*, for they give life as opposed to death without them, v. 21.

Second, the Lord Jehovah withdrew His hand from them for rejecting His *statutes* and *judgments*, v. 24.

Third, God Himself sent things to them which were not good, and that would lead to death. They were blinded because they rejected His Law-Word, so now they accept the law-word of man through the false gods.

Fourth, note that the reason the Lord sent the deception was so they would follow after the *statutes that were not good: That I might make them desolate*. The purpose was for their chastisement: to drive out the corruption they were secretly harboring in their hearts. The purpose for their believing a lie was to make them *desolate*, or for their ruin, Deut 30:16. (Pro 8:36 *But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.* See also, Pro 15:32; 19:16; 20:2; Mark 6:36.) The end result was *that they might know that I am the Lord* and God's name would not be *polluted among the heathen*.

Fifth, look at what the people of God did, *they caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb*, a clear reference to Molech worship, e.g., Jer 32:25.

Molech

Moloch is "the king" or "kingship." The name of Moloch is also given as Milcom (I Kings 6:5, 33) and Malcam (Jer. 49:1, 3, RV; Zeph. 1:5).

Moloch was an aspect of Baal (Jer. 32:35), *baal* meaning *lord*. Under the name of Melcarth, king of Tyre, Baal was worshiped with human sacrifices at Tyre.

While relatively little is known of Moloch, much more is known of the concept of divine kingship, the king as god, and the god as king, as the divine-human link between heaven and earth. ... Moloch worship was thus a political religion.

... Moloch worship was thus state worship. the state was the true and ultimate order, and religion was a department of state. The state claimed *total jurisdiction* over man; it was therefore entitled to *total sacrifice*. ...

... For a state to claim total jurisdiction, as the modern state does, is to claim to be as god, to be the total governor of man and the world.

...
The Moloch state is a product of apostasy. When a people reject God as their King, and make a man or the state their king (I Sam. 8:7-9), God declares the consequences... (I Sam 8:11-18, ed.)

The Moloch state simply represents the supreme effort of man to command the future, to predestine the world, and to be as God. ... (Many "Christians" will fight tooth and nail against any idea that God predestinates the world, but they have no problem letting the state predestinate the world, ed.)

... The law is the specified way of holiness.

Moloch worship seeks a non-theistic, a non-Biblical way to holiness. ... (*Institutes of Biblical Law*, RJ Rushdoony, 32-36.)

Ez 20:21ff., God's people *rebelled against* their God: *they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them*. This passage clearly repeats several times that the standard for God's people is His *judgments* and His *statutes* - they are always responsible to God's Law-Word. Because God's people would not accept God's *statutes* that were for their good, He sent to them and caused them to accept the *statutes* that were to their death, e.g., COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAWS that "forced" the children to be sacrificed to Molech, the state. Many times God's people refuse to give their children to the Lord, yet they freely give them to the Molech state with no objection, Ez 20:26, 31.

Ez 20:27-32, God is not concerned with the past sins of the fathers; what He is concerned with is that the present children serve Him with purity of heart according to His word. Example: Yes, the stated purpose of the Molech state's educational system was to destroy Christianity. We can sit around all day and discuss the sins of the fathers for allowing the system to be established, but that is not the problem. The problem is that Christians continue to sacrifice their children to Molech. We can discuss endlessly the faults of those who instituted the modern welfare state, but what are we doing about it? We can disagree over who started the idea or how it came about that God's Law-Word is not for the "age of grace," but what are we going to do about it?

God is dealing with the present children of the fathers who established the pollution, and what are the children going to do about it? Pollution...!
Let us say something here about pollution:

Environmental activism constitutes the "fastest-growing form of Christian ministry" among evangelicals, claims Fred Krueger, director of Christian Society of the Green Cross. Green Cross, begun in 1993, is guided by the motto "Serving and Keeping Creation."

The evangelical ministry with the biggest budget is the Christian Environmental Association (CEA), with an annual budget approaching \$2 million. The CEA coordinates short-term mission projects in 14 countries that focuses on such "ecofriendly" efforts as reforestation and cleaning up water. It also operates a state-of-the-art research center in the jungles of Belize, where students of Christian colleges go to study for credit.

At least two dozen schools in the Coalition for Christian Colleges and Universities now offer environmental science majors, and most of the programs are less than five years old (*Christianity Today*, 11/11/96).

(What In The World! A news service prepared by **Bob Jones University** for the local church. V 21, #2.)

Let me ask: "I wonder if these same Christian Colleges have 'enquiry meetings' to learn how the children can deal with the pollution, the corrupt mixture of error and truth in serving God, set into motion by the fathers?" It is the trespasses against God's Word set in motion by the fathers which the children refuse to deal with that moves God's mighty hand against His people.

Ez 20:33-44

V. 33 is straight-forward, leading up to the promise of v. 34. V. 33:

That power which should have been exerted for their protection shall be exerted for their destruction. Note, There is no shaking off God's dominion; rule he will, either with the golden scepter or with the iron rod; and those that will not yield to the power of his grace shall be made to sink under the power of his wrath. (*Matthew Henry*, IV.870.)

This sure sounds to me like either God's people will allow Him to reign over them as their King, or He will exalt pagan rulers over them. Cf. 1 Sam 8. One way or another, God will rule over all men.

But God's word to these "inquisitive" elders ends on a high note:

... By the new and better state of things introduced through the gospel, Mount Zion *has* risen to a nobler elevation than of old, and Canaan has burst its ancient bounds, and the elect people have spread themselves far and wide in the earth. Wherever there is a true believer in Christ, there also is a genuine member of the house of Israel, a pure worshiper coming to Mount Zion, a free-born citizen, who feeds on the heritage of Jacob his father; for thy who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. But other and more fitting opportunities will occur for considering how far the promised good to Israel is to be understood as merging in the good of the Christian Church... (*Fairbairn, Ezekiel*, 230. See also E.W. Hengstenberg (1802-1869) on Hos 2:16, *Christology of the Old Testament*, 183-189. Macdonald Publishing Company.)

The word of God is clear: He will not be enquired of by any generation that refuse to face the sins of the fathers so it can go about bringing those areas back into subjection to the Word of God.

Lev 25:23-28

The Lord now gives various laws concerning the ownership of the land and how it was to be transferred and treated. At the jubilee, every fiftieth year, the land was to revert back to the original family who had owned it. The land had been assigned by God to each individual tribe even before they came into Canaan. The land had to remain with the family it was assigned to by God.

V. 23, He opens by reminding the people that the land belongs to the Lord. God was the owner of the land, and He attached particular parcels of land to particular families. That parcel had to remain with the family it was assigned to. Therefore, a man could not sell the land; he could only sell the use of the land. We live in a day when the state claims this ownership, *i.e.*, property tax. The worse thing about property tax is that it goes to finance the destruction of Christianity, the state school system.

The Lord owns the land; therefore, mankind cannot treat land as though he owns it outright: Man only rents it from the Lord, and cannot actually sell it.

Strangers and sojourners with me. Observe:

First, they were not to be unconcerned about surrounding events as a stranger in a town might be.

Second, with me might be a key phrase: They were to have the same concern about the land as did the Lord. That is, they were to treat the land as the Lord Himself would treat it.

on the other hand, Israel's land belonged to Jehovah; and the people were His guests, or tenants, "sojourners with Him." (Bonar)

V. 24, the law was to be applied nation-wide.

We should note that the Israelite nation was not to send its army into all the world to enforce Israel's laws upon other nations, *peace keepers* to make the world safe for "democracy." Though Israel's laws were the best in the world - they were God's Laws that Israel was responsible to keep - they were not to go out with armed force and make other nations abide by their godly laws. It was thus none of their business what the other nations did, as long as those nations' actions did not effect them.

We might add here: "So what if the pagan nations killed each other, starved to death and/or were overrun with disease? We see no command from God for His people to be involved in *foreign affairs* unless Israel's security was threatened."

Vv. 25-28, if a man was forced to "sell" his land, he could only sell the use of that land, and the sale price was determine by the length of time to the next jubilee. If there was 40 years left before the land returned, the sale price was determine by

V. 25, refers to the poor who had to sell his property: a near kinsman, described in 49, may purchase it back into the family. He did not sell all of his possession, but *some of his possession*. The purchaser could not refuse to sell the land back to the individual nor to his kin if they had the proper price to redeem the land. See below, v. 48. Also, the kinsman

had to be willing to purchase the land: He did not have to do it.

The sale was of the produce of the land, not the land itself. The land belonged to the Lord, and could not be sold.

State property tax is a direct challenge against the God of all creation, for it claims prior ownership of the land. Any challenge against the state's claim of the land will reap swift and sure results.

Specific mention is made of the property of the Levites.

The Lord wished each tribe, and each family of a tribe, to retain its original possessions for the sake of-91.) preserving genealogies unmixed till Messiah came; (2.) preventing the covetous and ambitious from "adding field to field;" (3.) cherishing family associations with places, as thereby domestic feelings and the ties of kindred are strengthened. (Bonar)

The Jubilee kept strong family ties. Sadly, modern social conditions seem to war against strong family ties.

Vv. 29-34

Houses:

- 1) if in walled city, it had to be redeemed within a year, or it remained with the new owner.
- 2) if it belonged to a Levite, whether in a walled city or not, it could be redeemed at any time, and returned to the Levite at the Jubilee.
- 3) if in an unwalled city, it had to return with the land in the jubilee.

Unlike the land, a house was subject to decay. The purchase of a house allowed strangers (proselytes) to permanently settle in the land: They could buy a house and stay there.

Thus a prince in the land could not go throughout the land building small villages or buying up houses so he could control the land.

The Levites' cities was a possession given specifically to them by the Lord; they were their possession, so they were treated just like the land was treated with the other tribes.

Vv. 35-46

Here begins a statement of our duties in prospect of "That blessed hope." The glorious prospect of jubilee is not to supercede present duty. Nay, rather, like Matt. xxv. 34, 35, it enforces present duty by exhibiting to us what is the mind of God, and what His feelings would be in our situation. (Bonar)

We are **strangers and sojourners**, but we are not unconcerned about the future. On the other hand, the future holds great prospect of glory and joy, but that prospect does not permit escape from present duties and responsibilities.

Bondage vs Freedom
Responsibility vs Irresponsibility

Where does responsibility toward one's neighbor begin and end? Where does one's responsibility for one's children begin and end? Where does responsibility toward one's parents begin and end? Is responsibility toward our fellow man "unconditional?" What does God's Word say about the matter?

Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) (Eph 6:2; Mark 5:10; Ex 20:12, &c.) *Honour - "to honor [so uniformly A.V.], to have in honor, to revere, venerate;..."* (Thayer, p 642.) Notice that *honour* is not implying unreserved support of another; rather *honour* simply holds them in reverence. We find elsewhere in God's Word the responsibilities to and the limits upon those responsibilities to family members.

The fifth commandment encompasses all authority, containing God's laws concerning the responsibilities of both those under and those in authority, e.g., servant/master, child/parent. It also lays the foundation for our responsibility toward one's neighbour. Writing in 1765, Pastor James Durham commented concerning the fifth commandment:

In the precept we are, *1st*, To consider the object, *father and mother*. *2d*, The duty, *honour*. *1st*, Again, concerning the first, the duty that we owe to all relations, whether they be above us, inferior to us, or equal with us. This is clear from Christ's summing all the second table, and consequently this command with the rest, in that comprehensive general, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; and therefore our neighbour in general must be the object of this command, as well as the rest, and so it taketh in all the duties of honour that every one oweth to another, whatever be their place. There is a duty of honour and respect for from every one to every one; and so, Eph. V. 22, it is pressed upon wives towards their husbands; and, I Peter, iii. 7. Upon husbands toward their wives, which must be comprehended here. Thus father and mother are here to be largely and synecdochically ("*synecdochy, In rhetoric, a figure or tropic by which the whole of a thing is put for a part, or a part for the whole; as the genus for the species, or the species for the genus, &c.*" Webster, 1828.) Understood, one sort of relations being in a figurative manner put for all the rest. *2d*, Under them are comprehended all superiors for place, in church or commonwealth, who in scripture get the title of fathers, as magistrates, supreme and subaltern (subordinate, Webster, 1828, ed.), ministers and all church-officers, teachers, overseers, and all in the place of fathers, I Cor. iv. 15. Yea, they who are to be esteemed as such, for gifts of learning, wisdom, grace, and piety, Acts vii.2. or for their worldly means and outward estate, as Joseph was, Gen. xlv. 8. Or for their age, and the reverence due to them on that account, 2 Kings, ii. 12. ; in a word, any sort of eminency putteth one in the roll of fathers largely taken, though they be not properly such. *3rd*, We are called in the first place to look to the duties of this relation, as it is domestic, such of a master over the servant, of a husband over the wife, &c. And then cometh the carriage of one towards another in general, and though most properly the duties of parents, mediate or immediate, over their children or nephews, be here pointed at, which is most literal, yet the former also is included, all particulars of that kind being, by a figure, comprehended under one...

If it be further asked, Why all superiors, yea, all neighbours, are spoken of as fathers and mothers? Answ. These reasons are obvious from the scope. It is, I. To shew that the duties of this command are mutual amongst all relations; it giveth superiors their due, yet so as that it teacheth them also how to carry toward their inferiors, that is, to be fathers to them; and that the relation necessarily implieth a mutual tie; therefore this command doth not only direct inferiors in their duty towards superiors, but also superiors in their duty towards inferiors. 2. They get this name to make their subjection to each other, and their mutual relations and duties the more sweet and kindly, when the subjection is to be given as by a son to a father, and when it is exacted and expected as by a father from a son; which consideration should be kindly motive to all mutual duties, and also an inducement to hide infirmities, and to construct tenderly of failings. (Mr. James Durham, the late minister of the gospel at Glasgow, *THE LAW UNSEALED; OR, A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*. Printed by D. Schaw, Lawnmarket, 1802. To which are prefixed, the commendatory epistles of two famous English divines, Dr. John Owen and Mr Jenkyn, 1765. Pp 282, 283. I changed the old English spelling on many of the words.)

Thus Durham rightly points out that all forms of subordinate/superior relationships are included in the fifth commandment: servants/masters, wives/husbands, children/parents, laymen/church leaders, citizens/civil authority, pupils/teachers, &c. The fifth commandment, being the first of the six dealing with man's relationship to his fellow man, presents the very basic foundation for the relationship of one individual with another - neighbor to neighbor - on all levels of society.

Now the question arises: "Who is my neighbour," or "Who is my fellow man for whom God holds me responsible?" Desiring to justify his irresponsibility, a *certain lawyer said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?* Christ's answer clearly told the man that he was responsible before God for those in need whom Divine Providence brought him into contact. (Luke 10:25ff.) However, is the responsibility "unconditional," or unlimited?

Christian Responsibility

God establishes His will concerning proper responsibility toward the neighbour by giving His Word concerning the poor. One of the primary commands in the New Testament is to *remember the poor* (Gal 2:10), but we must return to the Old Testament for a proper understanding of one's responsibility toward those in need.

And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: (Lev 25:35-39.)

Contained above are God's laws concerning the poor. V. 35 assumes that the normal way of life is debt free; however, there are times when, through not through sloth nor negligence, one comes into poverty. At that time, the

person borrows money or sells his property. In addition, v. 35, shows that God's people must have concern for the stranger. John Gill (1696-1771) rightly commented on v. 35:

*And if thy brother be waxen poor, &c.] An Israelite, as Aben Ezra, be reduced to a low estate, through afflictions in body, or in family, or through losses in trade, or want of business, or through one providence or another:
and fallen in decay with thee; in his worldly substance: or "his hand wavers", or "fails" {p}; so that he cannot support himself and his family, has not a sufficiency, or it is not in the power of his hands to do it; and it is not owing to sloth and negligence, but to unavoidable want and necessity:
then thou shalt relieve him; not merely by sympathizing with him, but by communicating to him, and distributing to his necessities; holding him up that he may not utterly fall, and strengthening his hands, that he may have a supply for his present wants:
[yea, though he be] a stranger or a sojourner; whether a proselyte of righteousness, who is circumcised, and in all things conforms to the true religion; or a proselyte of the gate, who takes it upon him not to worship idols, and eat things that die of themselves, as Jarchi notes: that he may live with thee; continue in the land of Canaan, and not be obliged to quit it, and be laid under temptations of apostatizing from the true religion professed by him, and so far as he is come into it, which would bring a worse death than corporeal upon him; or that he may have a livelihood in some tolerable manner at least, and even live comfortably and cheerfully. (Online Bible.)*

The poor are thus defined as those reduced to a low estate through no fault of their own: They are not reduced by their own slothfulness and/or negligence. Their circumstances were unavoidable, for Divine Providence brought about the conditions in which they are found. (Eph 4:28 and James 1 and 2, along with other passages, imply that God leaves the poor among us to test our love for, i.e., obedience to, Him.)

V. 36, the poor are specifically protected from usury - usury and interest are the same word: Lending to the poor *ledeth unto the Lord*, and the Lord will repay, with interest, Proverbs 19:17. Exodus 22:25 and Leviticus 25:36, 37, prohibit usury in the context of helping the poor among God's people: The poor are not to be loaned anything in their time of need with interest attached. Since Deuteronomy 23:19, 20 (*Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.*) is given on the bases of Exodus 22 and Leviticus 25, apparently usury was only forbidden when lending to the poor among God's people.

In other words, those, even among God's people, who borrowed for "consumer goods" to make life "better" or so they could have "bigger and better" are lawfully subject to interest. They have no grounds to complain against high interest rates nor to complain against the "thieving" bankers and credit card companies with high interest rates: They borrowed money to serve their idol - covetousness, their desire for more, better and/or bigger. But the poor neighbour did not borrow because he was controlled by covetousness; rather, he borrowed because Providence placed him in his sad estate. (Cf.,

Pro 16:33.) Moreover, evidently the poor could not be required to repay, but the poor must be defined properly as those who are not in their situation through their own slothfulness and/or negligence.

Observe Bonar's 1846 comments concerning Leviticus 25:35-46:

Further: an Israelite must shew his brotherly feelings if (ver. 39-41) one of his countrymen be reduced so low in poverty as to be sold for debt, like the widow's two sons, 2 Kings iv. 1. He must treat him as only a hired servant, and even in that case detain him no longer than the jubilee. The reason is very precious (ver. 42): "for they are *my servants*." The Lord will not leave any of His purchased ones to the cruelty of others. Woe to those who use a believer harshly! They touch the "apple of His eye." Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Why persecute ye *Jesus*? "The year of His redeemed " is near. Once more: an Israelite may have slaves and bondmaids from the heathen, and these he may retain as slaves for ever. In this there lies a type. It is not that Moses, or the Lord speaking by Moses, sanctions slavery. He gives no right to one man over another's person, except where there is sin and crime to be punished, as in the case of criminals. But here the Lord wished to punish the Canaanites and other heathen nations, because of their heathenism; and of course the Lord has a right so to do. His decree, therefore, is this: that *heathens* shall be exposed to bondage, and Israel shall take them as their slaves. *Slavery* here is evidently altogether another thing from modern slavery; for 1. It proceeds on the Lord's permission and command. 2. It is the consequence of sin in the enslaved. 3. It was equivalent to perpetual imprisonment, a penalty inflicted for crime. And while it is a penalty paid by rebellious ones who cleaved to idols, it is so overruled as to exhibit in type the future exaltation of the sons of God in the time of the jubilee of earth. It shews "the liberty of the sons of God " (Rom. viii. 21), and their dominion... (Bonar, *Leviticus*, 464, 465. 1846.)

Those bound by anything other than God's Law-Word are *fair game* for anything that comes along. They are already bound by - slaves to - the lust of the flesh, serving the idol of covetousness; they, by their heathen practices, exempt themselves from the protection of God's law. However, the heathen slave could convert to, serve and obey Israel's God as revealed through His Word, and he would no longer be considered and treated as a heathen.

Neighbours/Children/Parents

The above brings us to the heart of the matter: What about a neighbour who comes into poverty? What about children and parents who come into poverty? Where does duty and responsibility to one's fellow man start and stop?

Concerning the release of the *poor* (Deut 15:1-6), Dr. Rushdoony says:

Short term loans are alone permitted. No godly man has the right to mortgage his future indefinitely; his life belongs to God and cannot be forfeited to men. Thus, every kind of debt by believers, whether as charity or for business reasons, must be a short term debt. The sabbath is basically and essentially rest *rather* that *worship*, and basic to the sabbath rest is debt-free living. Long-term debts are clearly a violation of the sabbath, and many churches that profess to be devout sabbath-keepers are flagrant sabbath-breakers here. The normal life of

the covenant man is to be debt free, to owe no man anything save the obligation of rendering tribute, honor, fear, and custom wherever due, and of rendering that love where is the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:7-8). If this and all other laws of God be kept, there will be "no poor" among the people of God. This is a firm and unqualified statement; it presupposes that the godly man can keep the law to that degree necessary to receive this blessing.

Fifth, the unbelieving are excluded from the charity required by this law, both the interest-free loans and the termination of the debt in the sabbatical year. The ungodly are already slaves to sin by nature; the true slave cannot be weaned from slavery, and it is foolishness to treat him as a free man. The godly are free men by nature; in times of distress, they need relief to regain their freedom. Freedom cannot be given to a man who loves slavery, and it is foolishness to attempt it by means of money. Regeneration is his only solution.

Sixth, on citing their deliverance from Egypt, God reminds His people that the purpose of His law is to deliver man into freedom, even as He delivered them from slavery to freedom. The purpose of the laws governing interest, and the purpose of the whole law, is man's freedom under God. To speak of deliverance from the law is to speak of deliverance from freedom. The law cannot be freedom to the sinner, but rather a sentence of death for his failure to keep it. The law-breaker is a man in slavery to his sin, a man unable to live in terms of freedom. The law therefore is a continual indictment and a death sentence to him, in that it underscores his importance and his inability to rule himself: "what I hate, that I do" (Rom. 7:15). To the redeemed, however, the law is the way of freedom.... (RJ Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, I.479. This book is kept in print, and is available from Ross House Books, Box 67, Vallecito, CA 95251.)

Clearly, money will not solve the problem for those captive to sin, *i.e.*, covetousness. Whether saved or unsaved, covetousness leads to debt-slavery. When a person rejects God's law of freedom (freedom from covetousness, in this case), underscoring his or her inability to rule self, he or she rejects the positive benefits of God's law. In other words, when people refuse to be self-controlled, they also reject assistance from others, charity. Can the godly finance the lack of self-control in others? Can one who through an intentional lack of self-control be kept from poverty, or will that one bring others to poverty with him or her? Can the godly finance idolatry (lack of self-control) in the lives of others? Notice the Spirit's instructions:

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. (Col 3:5-7.)

Children of disobedience are not limited to the children of the devil; the Heavenly Father has many such children. (Cf. Heb 3:12, 19; 4:11-unbelief, disobedience, marg.) Thus God's Word prohibits supporting others in their idolatry. The Christian's first responsibility is to God as revealed through His Word. Accordingly, though the situations may be sad as we watch neighbours, close friends, fellow believers and/or loved ones (child, parent, brother, sister, &c.) drown in a sea of debt, if there is no effort on the part of the one involved in the *idolatry* to bring *self* under

control, then he or she has placed him or her self beyond the help of the godly. That "captives" cannot be helped enough to prevent their own destruction.

So where does responsibility enter in our relationship to our fellow man, e.g., neighbor, friend, loved one, &c.? Again, we refer to Dr Rushdoony:

An important aspect of Biblical law is its doctrine of responsibility. In a law previously considered, Exodus 21:28-32, it was established that animals are responsible for their actions, and an ox goring a person was sentenced to death. Animals are clearly held to be accountable. But responsibility also rests with the owner of the ox: if the ox's previous behavior indicated that it was a dangerous animal, and the owner "hath not kept him in," then the owner is also responsible. *Responsibility is thus not a one-way street.* Both owner and animal have a responsibility. This being case law, the reference is to the ox, and to more than an ox, as St. Paul made clear with respect to the law concerning the muzzling of an ox treading out grain (Deut. 25:4; 1 Cor. 9:9; I Tim. 5:18). In terms of this, certain observations can be made. *First*, a parent is responsible for a child if nothing is done to curb, punish, or bring to judgment an irresponsible or delinquent child. If a man is responsible for the actions of an ox, he is certainly responsible for the actions of a delinquent son, if he "hath not kept him," if no attempt has been made to prevent the son from giving vent to his delinquency. *Second*, the responsibility of the parent does not absolve the child of his responsibility. The goring ox is always guilty; the owner is only guilty if His negligence can be proven. The prior responsibility is always that of the acting party. The owner or parent can be an accessory to the crime only if he has been delinquent in his responsibility. *Third*, transgression beyond a certain point ends responsibility. Thus, in the law of the delinquent son (Deut. 21:18-21), the parents' responsibility to provide for and protect their son ended with the son's delinquency; their duty and their moral responsibility then became denunciation of and separation from their son. As previously noted, responsibility is not a one-way street. The responsibility ends when that child refuses to submit to the godly authority and discipline of the parents. The same is true of the responsibility of children for their parents. Again, it is not a one-way street. To cite illustrations which will throw some light on this problem: A daughter assumed responsibility for her sick father when the brothers rejected their responsibility. As a devout Christian, she felt duty-bound to care for her father, who remained in her home as an invalid until death. During the more than ten years in her home, the father was a bed patient much of the time. Because he was only interested in the sons and grandsons who would carry on his name, he treated his daughter and her family as non-entities or at best as servants, with never a word of gratitude. He made out his will in favor of his sons and their sons, although his sons were both prosperous. He gave lavish gifts at holidays to his sons and their sons, and never a gift nor a thanks to his daughter and her family. Clearly, the daughter's interpretation of the law was faulty. As surely as an ungodly son must be cast out and turned over for judgment, so an ungodly father (for his conduct revealed him to be such) had no place in her home, having denied plainly any responsibility to it... Another instance: a mother felt duty-bound to use here meager funds to help her only child, and ungrateful man whose income was good and whose sense of responsibility was very bad. The mother limited herself

severely to provide him the luxuries he demanded as necessary to maintain a pretended social position. Again, the relationship was lawless on both sides and required breaking....

Thus, we may say that, not only does transgression beyond a certain point end responsibility, but *fourth*, if responsibility is maintained beyond that point it becomes a *robbery*. Where a juvenile delinquent is tolerated or protected, or a lawless parent allowed to be an affront to the family's faith and authority, the other members of the family are robbed of their due. Unconditional honor and service are due to God alone, not to man. St. Paul's admonition is "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Rom. 13:7). *No relationship between man and man can be absolutized. We have no absolute bond which ties us unconditionally to any man, either to obey or to love him.*

Marriage is dissolved by certain transgressions. The parent's duty to the child is nullified by his incorrigible conduct. The child's duty to the parent is limited by his prior obedience to God and the maintenance of God's law-order. In every human relationship, the only absolute is God's law, not man's relationship.

Fifth, not only does the absolutizing of a human relationship involve theft, in that the indulgence of a delinquent (*i.e.*, disobedient to God's Word, ed.) family or society member is the robbing of another, but it also involves theft God-ward as well as man-ward. *It is an infraction of God's order to indulge evil.* It involves robbing one person of his due in order to reward or indulge another, and this means also the violation of God's order to continue man's disorder.

To repeat again, responsibility is not a one-way street. If the ox, an animal of limited intelligence, is accountable for his acts, then every man in his station is also responsible. In every relationship, there is responsibility on every side by every person....

But a world without responsibility is a world of the dead. (*Ibid*, 481-484.)

Conditional Responsibility

If an animal must be responsible according to God's Law-Word, how much more must a neighbour, child, parent and loved? Delinquency (irresponsibility as defined in the terms of God's Word) on the part of the person forfeits others' responsibility toward that person. Thus a neighbour's "delinquency" forfeits one's responsibility to him; a child's "delinquency" forfeits other's responsibility toward that child; a parent's "delinquency" forfeit responsibility toward that parent. In fact, continued support of the delinquent person, neighbor or loved one, makes the supporting one a *theft*: he or she is robbing from other family members to support the delinquent one in his or her delinquency-the supporting person has become party to the "crime." Furthermore, one's relationship to the Lord - converted/unconverted - does not determine if that person can be robbed or not.

A neighbor's responsibility toward a neighbor ends if the poor neighbor refuses to exercise self-discipline, clearly showing he is a slave to his covetousness, *idolatry*: More money will not solve his problem. A parent's responsibility toward a child ends if the child refuses to submit to the parents' godly discipline and authority: More money will not solve the problem. A child's responsibility toward a parent ends if the parent refuses to exercise self-discipline and yield to the authority of God's Word: More money will not solve the problem.

Unconditional acceptance, honor and service are due to God alone, and to give these things to delinquents sets others up as gods.

We should note here the tremendous push to get every one to accept everyone else "unconditionally;" regardless of what that person might be involved in, e.g., Sodomy, we are being told everywhere that we must "unconditionally" accept and support that person in what that person has chosen to be or do. Such an idea is antichristian, and makes the ones accepting the rebellious partakers of *the wrath of God* which will come upon the rebellious.

Where does responsibility toward the neighbor begin and end? Where does responsibility for children begin and end? Where does responsibility for parents begin and end? Where does responsibility for loved ones begin and end? Is responsibility toward our fellow man "unconditional?"

No person is "unconditionally" responsible to another. Every person, however, is "unconditional" responsible to God alone as revealed in His total Word. Our responsibility toward others must fit within our responsibility to follow the Word of God to the best of our God given ability, grace.

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. (1 Cor 11:3.)

Vv. 39-46, see no file for most of what goes here, BONDMEN. and the following to the end of the chapter is also in the mailing.

V. 42, *they are my servants.* The helpless of His people are servants of the Lord, so the Lord warns us to be careful how we treat them. There are many words in the New Testament concerning the poor.

Also this section is given assuming that Israel is serving the Lord according to Deut 28, 19.

Vv. 47-55

(Bonar is strongly dispensational in this section.)

This section deals with an Israelite who waxed poor through, really, no fault of his own, and had to sell himself to a non-Israelite; it assumes the non-Israelite lives in the land. Obviously, the non-Israelite, in order to abide in the land, was bound by the same laws as were the Israelites, including the law of the jubilee. Moreover, the non-Israelite could not buy land outside the walled city, so his investment would have to be property within the walled city or in servants.

This section urges a near kin, who alone could do it, of the poor Israelite to purchase the one who sold himself. If he must remain in bondage to the non-Israelite, the non-Israelite still had to treat the poor Israelite with respect as a hired servant.

V. 48, whereas the non-Israelite could be held in servitude *forever*, and even passed down as an inheritance regardless of the jubilee, the Israelite had the protection of God's law: He could not be treated with rigor as

could the non-Israelite servant; he could be purchased out of his servitude at any time by a kinsman, and he could not be held past the jubilee. The same servant master relationship law applied to the non Israelite master as applied to the Israelite master. The non Israelite lived and prospered in the land; thus he was bound by the same laws of the land as were the Israelites.

V. 25, notice the same basic law applied to the land: The produce of the land could be bought and sold, but not the land itself. The purchaser could not refuse to sell the land back to the one who sold it, nor could he refuse to sell it to a near kin who wanted to redeem it. The near kin, though, had to be very near, no further away than the bond servant's father's brother or son of a father's brother, v. 49. Neh 5:8, tells of the congregation redeeming the poor Israelites.

There are some important points here in vv. 25 & 48:

First, the one who purchased the person could not refuse to let the poor servant who sold himself be redeemed though the owner was a non-Israelite. The decision to redeem that which had been sold, property or person, was in the hands of the one qualified to make the purchase, the one who was near kin and had the funds and desire to do so. However, the rich relative was not required to redeem his nephew or cousin who had sold himself into bondage. (Clearly, Christ acted in accord to this law, for He was the woman's seed, and thus kin to all of Adam's fallen race.)

This qualified near kin was called the goel.

In Hebrew the participle of the verb *gaal*, to redeem. It is rendered in the Authorized Version kinsman, Nu 5:8 Ru 3:12 4:1,6,8 redeemer, Job 19:25 avenger, Nu 35:12 De 19:6 etc. The Jewish law gave the right of redeeming and repurchasing, as well as of avenging blood, to the next relative, who was accordingly called by this name. [*Revised Easton's Bible Dictionary*, Online Bible, CD, V.6.13.]

1350 *gaal* {gaw al}, reddemer, kinsman, revenger, avenger, kinsfolks, deliver, &c. To redeem, act as kinsman redeemer, avenge, revenge, ransom, do the part of a kinsman... Including marrying brother's widow to raise up a seed for him, to redeem from slavery, to redeem land, to exact vengeance. [*Ibid.*] Boaz fulfilled the part of *goal* in the Book of Ruth.

In passages such as Numbers 35:12, Deut 19:3, 6, &c., the *goel* had the right and, yes, the responsibility, to take the life of the one who slew his near kin.

Second, the whole office of the kinsman-redeemer *goel* was fulfilled by Christ. He became man, and through the incarnation, became of the same nature, the same flesh and blood, and in all things became like unto us. Hence, He could fulfill all the requirements of the law, especially the law of the kinsman redeemer, i.e. the *goel*. Fallen man is poor, owes an impossible debt, is in bondage to Satan, to sin and to the law. No man can redeem himself, nor does he have any human kinsmen who can pay the debt for him: every natural born child of Adam is in the same poverty-stricken bondage, Ps 49:6.

The Kinsman Redeemer did not pay the price with silver nor gold, but with

His own precious blood, 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

A) Satan cannot stop the redemption of the Israelite, though that Israelite was sold into servitude to him by his first parents.

B) God established civil government to revenge the evil doer (Rom 13), yet if civil government refuses to exercise proper vengeance against the evil doer, there is no human authority given for personal vengeance. If God's ordained men refuse to take vengeance against the wicked, then God Himself will be the avenger.

Christ is the New Testament goel for His people, fulfilling all that was required of the Old Testament goel.

C) the non Israelite could be held indefinitely in bondage and servitude: he could be forced to serve with *rigor*. Redemption must take place for one to be freed from the bondage to the harsh task master. If he was not redeemed, he had no hope of being freed, for the jubilee did not apply to the non Israelite.

D) Christ has redeemed His people; therefore, there is absolutely no reason they must serve the enemy, Ps 130:8. Though redeemed, the Israelite could sell himself back into bondage. How foolish! yet many do just that.

Vv. 50-54, the Israelite forced to sell himself to a non Israelite had to both be treated as a hired servant and paid as one. His yearly wages had to be figured according to the next year of jubilee. Notice the one who sold himself was not released at the sabbatical year, but everything was figured to the jubilee when he would receive back his land that was his possession.

V. 50 speaks primarily of one being redeemed and how much is needed to redeem him. In other words, the cost to the kinsman for redeeming the Israelite servant who sold himself is not based upon what he sold himself for, but how many years left to the jubilee. He sold himself according to the years to the next jubilee, and he is redeemed by the same measure, e.g. if 40 years remained to the jubilee when he sold himself a better term is hired himself out for a set amount per year, money paid up front to pay the man's debts and he is redeemed by a kinsman after 5 years, the redemption price was the original agreed price minus 5 years worth of hired servant wages. The law of equity and justice was always maintained between the buyer and seller. If he was not redeemed by a kinsman, he went free at the year of the jubilee regardless of what he might still owe, and the purchaser knew that when he made the deal.

And his children...: the master had agreed to care for the entire family, so all the family goes free.

V. 55, the Lord repeats His claim that HE ALONE owns the body of the person. The poor man may sell his labour, but he is forbidden to sell his person, v. 42, &c.

THE JUBILEE emphasized that the person's labour alone could be sold. Moreover, it emphasized that only the produce of the land could be sold, for the land belonged to God and was given by Him to a particular family.

I should make one more point from v. 55: ***the children of Israel are***

servants; they are my servants... Men will be someone's servant, either the Lord's or man's. Debt makes one servant to a lender, not to the Lord God,

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender. (Pr 22:7. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Ro 13:8.)

It is interesting that Proverbs 22:7 follows Proverbs 22:6 in God's order of Scripture:

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

The child should be trained to see debt as bondage or servitude to men.