

7th Day Rest E8 Final

Jubilee: The Radical Year of Release

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Jon: There's a part of Israel's ancient law code that spells out a radical economic practice. It's so radical it's actually hard to imagine how it would actually take place. And there's no evidence that was ever done in Israel.

Tim: Leviticus 25:10, on that fiftieth year, it says, "Proclaim a release." That should be a yovel (a Jubilee) for you. This is where it gets the name jubilee. It's a Hebrew word "yovel." Each of you shall return to his own property, each of you to his own family. You shall have the 50th year as the Year of Jubilee; no selling, no repaying, no gathering. It's the Jubilee; it's holy; eat what the land produces. It's that people going back to their own property. In an ancient context, this would keep any one group from having too much land, It's a super Sabbath.

Jon: This practice is the Year of Jubilee. Imagine you're an ancient Israelite, and something happened, things have taken a turn for the worse, maybe you made a bad investment, maybe your family became ill, and you're unable to work, you had to sell your possessions. And you may have to sell your portion of land that was allotted to you and become servants to another family. How would you ever get yourself out of this situation and not pass it on from generation to generation? That's what the Year of Jubilee was designed to do.

Tim: Since it recurred usually only once a lifetime, an impoverished Israel would spend most of his life anticipating this event.

Jon: This idea of a radical practice that creates such equality for the long run, captures your imagination. No matter what life throws at you, there's hope to reclaim rest.

Tim: When we get to Jesus and the vision of the Jesus movement, it was a Jubilee movement. Jesus started his mission in Nazareth by reading from Isaiah 61 and announcing the Jubilee. He says it's the favorable year of the Lord (the year of release) today these things are fulfilled in your hearing. That's where this is all going.

Jon: Today, we learned about one of the most revolutionary ideas in the Bible, the Year of Jubilee and why Jesus saw his life, death, and resurrection as fulfilling it. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

Hey, this is Episode 7 of our conversations about sevens.

Tim: You know, that would be fitting for any of these conversations about the Sabbath, but it seems extra meaningful.

Jon: Extra meaningful, the seven episodes about the seventh day. We're still in Leviticus and we're going to zero in on...

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Tim: Three chapters of Leviticus we're going to look at. They are fascinating. Really cool, I think. Bigger context, Genesis 1 and 2 sets up the seventh day as the Eden ideal.

Jon: God creates in six days, seventh day He rests. He settles in His creation.

Tim: He fills the creation with His presence. Humans are there as his royal priest; there's abundance man, woman with the animals. The sun never sets on that first seventh day.

Jon: You're not working the land; the lands not working for you.

Tim: You're working with...

Jon: You're working with the land.

Tim: ...each other and all creation eating avocado toast. The food of the gods.

Jon: It is.

Tim: That's the ideal that the whole first page of the Bible is working towards and then that ideal is forfeited and humans find themselves exiled. And instead of finding rest in God's good world, they find harsh labor that grinds them back into the dust. God chooses a family that He's going to restore this seventh day Eden blessing to all humans through. And that family gets rescued from Egypt from slavery and set free in a Passover to begin a seven-day feast on Passover and Unleavened Bread to commemorate the ideal that God's leading them towards.

Jon: And now these two ideas of creation being liberated from darkness to disorder to create this beautiful world is now put next to this idea of humanity being liberated from slavery and death. Same kind of idea into a Sabbath rest.

Tim: That's right. The seventh day comes to have a couple layers. Yeah, symbolism. One, the Sabbath day rest or the seventh-day rest is a way of talking about the ideal state of the world as God intends it and wants it for all His creatures. It's complete. It's the meaning of the number seven is completeness. But then also our journey towards the seventh day through days one, two, three, four, five and six is a journey out of death, darkness, and chaos liberated into the seventh day. And those become our images.

The Israelites were then called to weave these rhythms of seven into their calendar to anticipate...both foretaste, get little tastes of the rest of Eden, and every Sabbath day we imitate God. But then also, as we looked at in our last conversation, in their monthly and yearly calendars.

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- Jon: In order to rest you have to stop. And so Sabbath means stop.
- Tim: Shabbat means to stop.
- Jon: To stop. to stop so that you can nuakh.
- Tim: Then nuakh is to settle in and enjoy. Our last conversation we looked at the annual calendar of seven appointed times in Leviticus 20.
- Jon: It's really helpful. Good overview.
- Tim: Seven feasts. They're all called feasts. And not all of them involve eating necessari...I'm sure they do. But Rosh Hashanah as it's described in Leviticus, you blow some trumpets.
- Jon: In Hebrew, they're called appointed time.
- Tim: Appointed times. The moadim.
- Jon: The moadim. How do you know when the appointed times are? You look up at the sky.
- Tim: Correct, correct. You walk out Leviticus 23 and you walk into three more chapters that are going to keep working this theme...
- Jon: The theme of the seventh day.
- Tim: ...and Israel organizing their life around their hope in the seventh day, and their belief that with the presence and glory of Yahweh in their midst in the symbolic Eden in the tabernacle, that actually a little bit of Eden rest is really among them and they can participate in it through these rituals and symbols.
- [00:07:55]
- Tim: Leviticus 24 "Yahweh spoke to Moses saying, 'command the sons of Israel and let them take for you olive oil that is pure from beaten olives. Let them take it for a light or for a lamp.'"
- Jon: What's interesting is I just learned recently that—I think it was at the Bible museum—that it was the third pressing of olive oil that was used for lamp oil.
- Tim: Yeah, sure.
- Jon: Because it's kind of the most bitter and you wouldn't want to eat it. So that's what they used to light oil.

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Tim: That's right. Different pressings create different qualities of oil. Isn't this what we call virgin, extra virgin?

Jon: Probably.

Tim: I think it is.

Jon: So virgin would be the first pressing?

Tim: I think.

Jon: Or would that be extra virgin?

Tim: I don't know. I love olive oil.

Jon: Put on some avocado toast.

Tim: I don't remember at what point somebody introduced me to the little dish of olive oil with balsamic and you just like deep...

Jon: That's not something I grew up with.

Tim: Me neither. I was in my 20s.

Jon: You put some bread, dip it in.

Tim: And then I was like, "What happening to me?"

Jon: You don't need anything else.

Tim: And then like gluten bomb, you just want to go to sleep afterwards. But that's okay.

Jon: Now, I want to know. Olive oil is graded virgin, extra virgin. If you look at it, you see the extra virgin is noticeably darker.

Tim: I thought it'd be about what pressing gives you what kind.

Jon: It's about quality.

Tim: Yes. In this context, the point is, take clear olive oil, which I'm guessing would be like you said, what you learned, a later pressing.

Jon: Well, no. Actually, what I'm getting at here is it seems like that would be one of the first pressings.

Tim: Okay, I don't know. I'd never pressed olives. I picked olives in Jerusalem, but I've never crushed them.

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Jon: I think you're going to probably...I don't know.

Tim: I don't know.

Jon: You're not going to use your best oil for lighting lamps. That's the point?

Tim: The oil best for consumption...

Jon: ...is going to be the clear oil.

Jon: I see. Here you are burning it in a lamp.

Tim: Oh, that's what you're saying?

Jon: That's what I'm saying. It seems like there's something here. I'm totally getting this off track. It's like taken like an unblemished...you know, it's just like the best of the best.

Tim: There's one place to go and you have questions about Leviticus. You go to Jacob Milgram. He produced three volumes of some 1,600 pages. Every single word. No word unturned. It was a lifetime accomplishment. And the anchor Bible.

Jon: Let's see what he has to say.

Tim: Okay. He's quoting from the Mishnah and he says, "There are three kinds of oil. The first, when the olives are pounded in mortar and you put into a basket and the oil oozes out and filters." Rabbi Judah says, "Around the basket, around its sides, so the oil doesn't mix with any other solid matter, but it runs down the sides, this gives the first oil.

Jon: First oil. Is that the clear oil?

Tim: They would pound the olives and press them with the beam. Rabbi Judah says, "...or with stones and this gives you the second oil. They are then ground and pressed again. This gives the third oil. The first oil is fit for lampstands."

Jon: Oh, the first oil is for the lampstands.

Tim: Others are for cereal offerings. "The requirement," Milgram says, "of pure oil within the tabernacle has a practical reason. The walls and curtains are less likely to become darkened with soot as the first press oil." What's interesting is the word "for pure" is a synonym with the verb for "spotless" or "blameless." Like for the lambs. So just like you all land without blemish, in the same way you bring the most pure form of olive oil.

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Jon: Right.

Tim: That's cool. That's related but also unrelated. Notice what we're talking about is this is going to be a law about the olive oil on the lamps. What lamp is inside the tabernacle?

Jon: The menorah.

Tim: The menorah that's shaped on the main single stand and then the seven offshoots all with these almond blossom flowers made out of gold. It's supposed to look like a garden tree, like the tree of life. This is about the oil. "Tell the sons of Israel to bring you their best oil from beaten olives for the light to make the lamp burn perpetually. 24/7 that thing's going in there. And of course, it's in the tent.

Jon: Yeah, there's no sunlight there.

Tim: No. The word for "light" is the same word that describes the sun and the moon in Genesis 1. In a way, you could translate Genesis 1 that God made the big lamp and God made the small lamp.

Jon: Oh, right. You mentioned that.

Tim: The sun and the moon are described with language from the menorah in Genesis 1. So when you come here. Outside of the veil of testimony in the Tent of Meeting...do you remember the tabernacle has two spaces inside?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: The holy space, which is two-thirds of it and then the one third is the Holy of holies. The menorah stands right outside the veil that stands in front of the Ark of the Covenant. What's in there? What's in holy space outside the veil?

Jon: The two thirds.

Tim: The two thirds. There's the menorah, there's the incense stand that's right in front of the veil—menorahs to the side—and then the table of bread.

Jon: Just like the showbread.

Tim: Outside the veil, Aaron will keep it in order from evening to morning. That's Genesis 1.

Jon: And there was evening and there was morning.

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Tim: So you have the light, the lamp of Genesis 1, the light, and now the evening morning. "It's before the Lord continually a perpetual statute. He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure gold lamps down before the Lord continually." Here's the thing. He comes in every day to make sure that things burning 24/7 from evening until morning as a lamp before the Lord in His presence.

Remember our whole discussion about stars and the sun as symbols in Genesis 1, this is similar thing happening here. We're in the presence of the royal throne room and these lights become images of God's light behind the curtain, like shining through. But since you have to have a curtain to cut it off, these become little symbols of Yahweh's light perpetually burning. They're like a little symbol of glory cloud.

Jon: A symbol of the glory cloud.

Tim: The glory cloud is the Yahweh's light and glory. Presumably, that's what lit up the universe on day one.

Jon: All right. "Let there be light."

Tim: Then on day four, the sun moon and stars are symbols of God's light. They now...

Jon: ...point to God's glory.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: That's what this lamp's doing to.

Tim: This lamp is a symbol of the sun, and the moon, and the stars. That's why they're called by the same name as the sun, moon in Genesis 1. It's called light.

Jon: And it's a symbol of the tree of life.

Tim: Yes. Yeah, shining. That's right.

Jon: It's doing a lot of work.

Tim: Doing a lot of symbolic work. And of course, it's a symbolic space. Vs 5 "Then take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. With two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. Set them in two rows, six in a row on the pure gold table before Yahweh."

Jon: This is a pure gold table. Wow.

Tim: Not fancy. Pure gold table with seven loaves of bread. Put it in six rows...

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Jon: They got to lug this thing around the wilderness? Sheesh.

Tim: Yeah. You get to some Levites on that.

Jon: The labor crew.

Tim: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Maintenance and meeting facilities. Levite

Jon: I don't want to be on the table crew.

Tim: "You shall put pure frankincense in like incense on each row that it may be a memorial for the bread and offering by fire to the Lord." There's incense burning alongside the bread every Sabbath. How long does the bread sit there until you replace it? Every Sabbath He sets it in order before Yahweh.

Jon: It's a Sabbath activity.

Tim: Continually, perpetually, this is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel.

Jon: Every Sabbath, new bread; every day, new oil.

Tim: Every day there's light, evening and morning, and then every Sabbath, new bread. Think of where we've been in these patterns so far of in the wilderness God provides extra manna for the seventh day. It's called bread. Bread from heaven. It's as if every seventh day you put out the bread. The tabernacle is heaven. It's heaven and earth in one. It's the bread of heaven being put on the table. But notice how many loaves are there.

Jon: Six in each stack. How many stacks?

Tim: Two stacks. There's 12.

Jon: For the 12 tribes?

Tim: Yeah. Multiple meanings here. We think of bread as something that comes from God, and that's what it is on the manna on seventh day. We're in that thought world. But then there's 12. That's a very clear symbol for the tribes. If you then take the tribes and they're before the Lord in front of the tent, and then you have the light that is a symbol of God's light, and there before the Lord, you get this image of the daily light shining on the 12 loaves. The 12 loaves are renewed every Sabbath. They are recreated every Sabbath as fresh bread. There's a little story being told here about God's light perpetually shining on Israel and Israel being recreated every Sabbath with God's fresh bread. Isn't that

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beautiful? Huh? And then incense all the while symbolizing their sacrifices and prayers to give thanks to God.

Jon: What a multi-sensory place. Like fresh bread and incense.

Tim: Too bad hardly anyone could go in there.

Jon: Just the priests.

Tim: Just the priests. I don't know. In my experience, it wasn't till...I'd say even recently that I began to be more interested and excited about more symbolic liturgical expressions of the Christian faith. I don't know, man. I love it now. Maybe it's just the more time I spent in Leviticus. These symbols do things sensory in ways that hearing of an idea doesn't just...Hearing an idea is cool, but smelling an idea.

Jon: There's a certain pedagogy - is that the right word? - about it where it's training you and it's teaching you in a slower, very formative way. It's molding your imagination slowly. That's right.

Tim: And when you smell it, you taste it, you sing it, say it, and hear it. There's something powerful that happens there.

Jon: But just the priests,.

Tim: Yeah, but just the priests. This is a quote from the book on Leviticus. I think I recommended in the last episode.

Jon: Who's going to ascend?

Tim: "Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?" He puts it this way. He says, "The menorah lampstand contains a sevenfold structure, symbolizing the entire seven-part structure of time provided by the heavenly lights."

Jon: Seven-part structure.

Tim: "The sun and moon provide the Sabbath cycle, but perpetually every day, evening and morning. Just as the cosmos was created for humanity Sabbath communion and fellowship with God, so too the tabernacle is established for Israel's Sabbath communion and fellowship with God every day of the Sabbath. This ritual drama about the lights and the bread symbolizes the ideal Sabbath." We're back in Eden ideal. "The tribes of Israel basking in the divine light being renewed by God's presence every Sabbath and every Sabbath." That's the story here.

Leviticus 23 gives you the ritual calendar. Leviticus 24 gives you these lights and the bread. There's a fascinating story after this we can explore.

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What I want to do is turn to Leviticus 25. And now we're walking into the Jubilee.

[00:22:00]

Tim: The conversation we had about Sabbath as an ideal, the conversation we had about the seventh year in Exodus, Deuteronomy, take everything we've talked about, everything, from Eden, from the blessing of Abraham and the seven-line poem, the abundance of the garden, the liberation from slavery into the promised land, the filling of the tabernacle of God's presence on the seventh, and the provision, this extra provision on the seven, all this Jubilee Year takes it all and compresses it into one chapter in one practice. It's a remarkable chapter.

Jon: I don't if I understand what that means.

Tim: The Jubilee Year is activating all of the previous stories. It's a mountain peak in the Torah. Yahweh spoke to Moses in Mt. Sinai, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel, say to them, 'when you come into the land I give you...'" We're in the wilderness looking forward to the land. None of this will make any sense in the wilderness. You can't practice this in the wilderness. It only can be done once you're farming. "When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall have a Shabbat for Yahweh."

Jon: We talked about this.

Tim: Yes. Every seventh year you released the land from being your slave. But this is a new way to phrase it. The land gets a Sabbath. All right. The land needs some rest from humans. "Six years, sow the field; six years, prune your vineyard gather the crop, but the seventh year the land gets a Shabbat." That's Sabbath rest. "Sabbath for Yahweh. Don't so the field, don't prune the vineyard." Look at this. "Your harvest after growth, you shall not reap." This is what you brought up. They'll still produce things, but your grapes live them on trim.

Jon: Let it go.

Tim: Yeah, let it go. The land gets a Sabbath. "All of you shall have the Sabbath products of the land for food." In Exodus, it just mentions the poor and the wild animals go get to eat whatever the land grows. But here it's everybody. It clarifies.

Jon: But it says don't reap, but then you can eat it. How do you do without reaping it?

Tim: That's a good point. I think reaping would be the goal is to gather as much versus...

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- Jon: Just getting what you need for the day.
- Tim: ...all of you have the Sabbath products. You just go out and get what you need. Kind of like the manna. Actually, it's probably very similar to the manna principle. You just go out and get what you need for each day.
- Jon: You're going to be in there taking some, you go there, take some.
- Tim: You let the land produce whatever God supplies it to produce. You will know it's God's will for whatever you have to eat that year because it will be whatever the produces. That sounds terrifying.
- Jon: That'd be an adventure.
- Tim: That's every seven years. We had a category for that already. Here's a new idea. Vs 8 "You shall also count off seven Sabbath of years for yourself, seven times seven years, so that you have the time of the seven Sabbath's of years, namely 49 years." So the 49th year is one of the Sabbath years...
- Jon: But it's an extra special Sabbath year.
- Tim: ...but then on the Day of Atonement that year, on the 10th day of the seventh month, sound a ram's horn...
- Jon: This is right in the center of it all.
- Tim: On the Day of Atonement, you just sound a ram's horn throughout all the land and announce another year.
- Jon: Oh, yeah. Because it's kind of like a new year of sorts.
- Tim: Well, I don't know. On a Day of Atonement, you sound the ram's horn and consecrate a fifth year. In other words, seven times seven, the 49th year you're going to do your normal Sabbath year for the seven-year rotation. But then on the Day of Atonement, you sound the ram's horn and you say now it's this the culmination of the seven times seven year—the fiftieth year.
- Jon: The fiftieth year won't start until...
- Tim: It starts on the Day of Atonement.
- Jon: Wow, it starts a little early.
- Tim: Yes. This is interesting.
- Jon: Like you're going to fly away.

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Tim: The Day of Atonement you do this every year, but every 49th Day of Atonement, when that goat gets sent out, your sins are away, you've offered your lives up blameless to God through the one that you slaughter, you've just created the potential for Eden, and now you're really going to commit to this Eden thing. This whole year we are living like Eden.

Jon: So the year begins in the seventh month and then it goes to the next seventh month?

Tim: It doesn't say. But apparently. That's right.

Jon: What happens on this special year?

Tim: You shall consecrate the 50th year and proclaim a release.

Jon: Because on every seventh year you're already releasing debts and slaves. So now that just happened..

Tim: Yeah, that just happened. Basically, you're carrying it forward. You're doing it for an extra year. You're doing it for an extra year. You do it essentially two years with a little bit difference because you're doing it starting out in the seventh month. So the question is, do you do it a year and a half? The calendar nerds go to town on this. I've got a little calendar chart from a Jubilee nerd who is really smart. He's worked it out.

What makes it special is not that you do something different. It's that you carry forward the seventh year idea but into an even longer period of time.

Jon: I thought there was something unique.

Tim: Oh, actually, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. What am I saying? There are some extra things we're going to talk about. Leviticus 25:10 On that 50th year, it says, "Proclaim a release." That word in vs 10 is going to be important for the prophets and for Jesus. Release. It's liberation, freedom, going out. Deror. It is the Hebrew word "Deror." So proclaim release. "That shall be yovel (a Jubilee) for you. This is where it gets the name "Jubilee." It's the Hebrew word "yovel."

Here's what's new about this year. "Each of you shall return to his own property, each of you to his own family. You shall have the 50th year as the year of jubilee; no selling no reaping, no gathering. It's the Jubilee, it's holy; eat what the land produces. It's people going back to their own property.

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Jon: It's a big reset. In the normal seven-year cycle, on the seventh year, debts are forgiven, but you might not get your land back?

Tim: You went into debt and maybe you became a debt slave as a result. So yeah, your debts are forgiven and you're no longer that person's property.

Jon: You're no longer a slave.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: But they might sell your land?

Tim: If you had to sell off your land, bummer.

Jon: But on the 50th year...

Tim: 50 years land, it's a whole economic reset where all ancestral land is reset to the tribal boundary lines and family boundary lines from when they entered land with Joshua. It's the same principle just multiplied by seven, and then intensify it because it's the land that's getting a Sabbath now. Again, in ancient context, this would keep any one group from having too much land. From one who was having too much money or owning too many slaves...

Jon: It's breaking up monopolies.

Tim: ...now it's we're breaking up the centralization of land. That's it. That's a super Sabbath.

Jon: This would be really hard to administrate. It'd be really hard to make sure everyone actually was doing. I I mean, that's a lot of work. Everyone's going to be on board.

Tim: This is remarkable. There aren't any narratives in the Hebrew Bible in Joshua through Kings about the Israelites ever doing this. Which is a puzzle. There are a couple of narratives about the release of slaves in Jeremiah, and then in the book of Ezra, and they're actually both cases where people set it up but they didn't actually do it, or they took it back. But the Jubilee and the restoration of land, there's no narrative about it. Which has made some people ask whether or not what we're looking at is a full on symbolic hope. It's created by a biblical author who's actually looking at the Hebrew or the whole of the Torah and creating the ultimate, like, a super Sabbath.

In fact, here let me read to you a quote by John Bergsma. He wrote the book on the Jubilee. It's called "The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran."

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He traces the concept and practice or discussion about the Jubilee over the course of a millennium of interpretation in history. It's really thorough. He says, "There is something inherently eschatological about the Jubilee." We don't use that word very often.

Jon: Pointing towards the fulfillment of time.

Tim: Yeah. Eschatos is the Greek word for "end" or "last." So forward pointing to the culmination of history. There's something culminating about the Jubilee long before it was seen as a symbol of the eschaton—the culmination of all things by later writers. Since the Jubilee returned only once in a lifetime usually..." Well, that's interesting to think about. Every 50 years...

Jon: You're not going to get more than one of those.

Tim: More than likely. Unless you're a little kid.

Jon: Infant on the first one?

Tim: There's was probably some number of people. You might remember one from your childhood.

Jon: You might be like six on your first one, 56 anything on your second.

Tim: That's it. But for most people, this comes once a lifetime. He says, "Since it recurred usually only once a lifetime, an impoverished Israelite would spend most of his life anticipating this event of restoration."

Jon: Oh, man, can you imagine this is always on the horizon and you're like, "Yeah, 10 more years."

Tim: Just like every week you were thinking about the seventh-day rest if you're an Israelite farmer. So if you're an Israelite farmer or an Israelite slave, you're thinking about this.

Jon: I mean, you're thinking about it in a very...it's going to disrupt the order of things so much. It's going to be very...What's the word I'm looking for? I want to say apocalyptic but it's very...

Tim: Upheaval. That's right.

Jon: It's a countdown clock to the year Jubilee. I mean, everything's going to change.

Tim: That's right. Your whole neighborhood.

Jon: What's going to stay the same?

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- Tim: Who lives where? Who owns what? This is good. Let's imagine this. Let's imagine this. I mean, it's hard. In the modern Western economy, we don't even have a category for this kind of...What time period of original owners or tenants on the land you go back to? Like for Americans, do they go back to first nations in terms of like American Indian tribe?
- Jon: Can you imagine if we all knew like, "Yeah, 10 more years. It's all going to back to be Americans."
- Tim: So there's that. Or do you go back to just 50 years? Here you're going back to your nation's founding in the land.
- Jon: Well, it's not just that but your land is everything. So we have savings accounts, and we have retirement accounts and all these other things. You have mortgages and you have car loans you have...
- Tim: Different kinds of debts.
- Jon: I don't know what that would mean for it to reset. I'm almost thinking it's like, instead of thinking about it in terms of money, if it's in terms of your vocation if it's like everyone knew that at a certain year everyone's going to have a new job, how disruptive would that be? It's like, "In 2020 we are all getting new jobs."
- Tim: "We're all going back to our first jobs."
- Jon: That would horrible.
- Tim: Totally.
- Jon: I'd be working at a bookstore. That'd be too bad.
- Tim: I had been working at spaghetti fest. Literally, we would go back to when we worked at that valet parking place together.
- Jon: That would be so bad.
- Tim: That was a fun job.
- Jon: That was fun driving nice cars.
- Tim: Other people's fancy cars. I'm sorry I made a joke of that. You were going for a real analogy there.
- Jon: No. Well, I'm just thinking why would that be disruptive.
- Tim: Yeah, that's disruptive.

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Jon: You couldn't plan anything without going, "Well, but then remember year Jubilee." It will be always looming in the back of your mind that this disruptive year of like crazy...

[00:36:32]

Tim: That's helpful. It's good to imagine ourselves back in that space. Back to Bergsma. He says, "An Israelite would spend most of his or her life anticipating this event of restoration. Also from the perspective of the Pentateuch, the literary text, the conquest and the settlement of Canaan, what's going to happen in Joshua, that was kind of realized eschatology—Israel realizing in the present was coming at the end. Because the fulfillment of the promise of the land of Canaan was originally made to Abraham."

Jon: Yeah. And it was all about the Sabbath rest back into Eden.

Tim: You got it. As we go on into the rest of the Bible, we're going to see that the Promised Land becomes an image of Eden. "Leviticus 29," Bergsma goes on, "in its present position in the Pentateuch looks forward to the time when the eschatological, the ultimate condition of Israel dwelling within her land will be realized, and enact measures to ensure that periodically this utopian final state of Israel will be renewed and restored. It's a way of living in the present, of reenacting in the present what you believe the whole story is moving towards in the future." He calls it a realized eschatology.

Jon: And that seems like that's what all this has been about.

Tim: Yeah, that's right. That's why it's helpful. Every Sabbath is about that.

Jon: That's every Sabbath is to realized eschatology. I remember you first explaining this to me and that sinking in. It was really powerful because it's easy to start thinking about these as like, "Okay, I'm not supposed to work. Maybe it teach me something about rest. And that's true. But if you think of it as this practice to prepare yourself for something so important and creating the muscle memory for what it's like to be a certain kind of human living in this really backwards way, yeah, it's full of so much more meaning.

Tim: I agree. I agree. This has been a significant learning and discovery. I had heard this idea before, but in sitting down to think about a video about it, I realized it's the core of it. It's a foretaste of the new creation.

Jon: I keep trying to think of some sort of metaphor to that degree of like, what does that mean to play-act, but in a way that actually makes something a reality?

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- Tim: This is where it overlaps. This concept of Jubilee has energized a lot of different organizations, mostly Christian movements organizations to take this principle and go work it out in practice, communal practice. There are different organizations. This is actually somewhat controversial in their own different contexts. But here's just, you know, for example, an organization called the Jubilee Debt Campaign. They a website .org.uk. For them, they're looking at national debt crises - the way nation states.
- Jon: I've heard about this.
- Tim: Modern nation states.
- Jon: I've heard about this.
- Tim: What they do is they are advocating for governments...
- Jon: For certain countries that are being crushed by correct their own debt. Just like just released some from it.
- Tim: That's right. I googled "Jubilee debt campaign." But you Google it, there are lots of different organizations. And people apply it in different ways. But it's an interesting experiment to say, "What would it look like to try and create analogies and equivalents?" We're not ancient Israelite farmers. Nobody is. There are modern Israeli farmers living in the nation state of Israel, but it's a different situation there than it was. So what are analogies or ways? But then but the nature of the Jubilee is that it's public and communal and it's about family and land and property and economics, which makes people nervous and creates debate because religion isn't supposed to address those things. Religion is supposed to be personal and between you and God.
- Jon: I'm getting into my politics.
- Tim: So what I found is that these different Jubilee movements tend to generate lots of conflicting points of view. Inevitably.
- Jon: Have you ever thought about America's debt?
- Tim: I've been hearing about it.
- Jon: It's at 20 trillion right now. Just about to hit 20 trillion.
- Tim: Again, there was a movement happening about 10 years ago that was especially about developing countries that have relatively small national budgets.
- Jon: Our debt is not crushing us the way that some countries are just...

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- Tim: Their whole budget is not even as big as the debt that's owed to maybe China or Russia or the US or something. I don't know, man. I don't know anything about this stuff. When we get to Jesus and the vision of the Jesus movement, it was a Jubilee movement. Jesus started his mission in Nazareth by reading from Isaiah 61 and announcing the Jubilee. He says, "It's the favorable year of the Lord, the year of release. Today, these things are fulfilled in your hearing." That's where this is all going. I haven't let the cat out of the bag yet but...
- Jon: It's all leading to Jesus.
- Tim: Jesus launched his movement as a kingdom of God Jubilee movement. And then all of a sudden, all the Sabbath controversies come into new focus...
- Jon: I'm excited to talk about that.
- Tim: ...all of his teachings about forgiveness, and not going into debt or releasing people from the debts they owe you. Forgiveness in Jesus' teachings is the same word as the word "release." For this release here. This is not a tangential issue for being a follower of Jesus. The meaning of Sabbath and the Jubilee is actually pretty core.
- Jon: By that, you don't mean having debt or not having debt or owning debt. You're talking about this theme developing to Jesus.
- Tim: Yeah. The cosmic Jubilee.
- Jon: The Cosmic Jubilee.
- Tim: Jesus launches a cosmic Jubilee.
- Jon: I'm excited to dig into that.
- Tim: Me too. The reason he's doing that is because Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Jeremiah all looked at these themes in the Torah, and made it made them cosmic.
- Jon: You said this is a mountaintop moment. So I think by that you're meaning out of all of these rituals that are just saturated sevens, this one pops the most. It has the biggest bang. It's the loudest. I mean, it's intense. And so to think about new creation and the intensity of that and how cataclysmic and how much things will change, this gets out that in a way that...
- Tim: In terms of its disruptive nature, it's restorative restorative nature, it equalizes. Just like every Sabbath, you and your animals, and if you're an

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Israelite, one slave, and your slaves, nobody belongs to each other on that day because everybody belongs to Yahweh. It's this but ramped up to a whole year of it.

Jon: Sheesh.

Tim: And it's all an image of what the restored Eden ideal is at the end of the culmination of the story. As a social vision, I think that's what Jesus was intending to launch, which was a group of people who would live as if every day was this.

Jon: That's interesting. That's why they shared everything in common.

Tim: Yeah. That's why you forgive. That's why you radical forgiveness.

Jon: But that's like inner personal forgiveness. That's not like, you owe me 10 bucks forgiveness.

Tim: Sure it is. I mean, I can forgive you because you said something mean about me. I can forgive you because you stole 10 bucks from me. I can forgive you because we started business together and things went south and we had to part ways. I mean, all forgiveness is a communal event because it's interpersonal. Jesus launches Jubilee...

Jon: Man, it's so easy to separate those two types of forgiveness in our mind, right?

Tim: Yeah. Isn't that interesting?

Jon: Forgive someone for hurting my feelings.

Tim: Do we use the word forgive in a more economic or substantive sense? I think we do.

Jon: We do. Or cancel. Yeah, forgive. Forgive a loan. It's the same word. It's just it registers in a different category in my brain.

Tim: Interesting.

Jon: But you're saying it's the same idea.

Tim: I think. Again, this is all telescoping forwarding to why Jesus is going to have these disputes about the Sabbath. Because for Jesus, every day is the Sabbath. Because the Sabbath is an ideal. It's the kingdom of God. It's not just bound up with a day now. It's every day until the new creation comes, we live in the present as if the future has arrived. That's why he heals people on the Sabbath. We'll talk about it in future episodes.

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- Jon: How can I be a capitalist and a Christian at the same time?
- Tim: I don't know the answer. Those are important conversations. I'm not qualified to have that conversation. I think because the cultural context for these is so different in many modern Western countries, I think certain people get nervous because someone to like plop them right in. You have to think things through a little more thoroughly.
- Jon: People get nervous you're going to destroy the economy. A retirement account's not safe if theology is making my retirement accounts.
- Tim: Or or just say people have given a lot of thought to what kinds of economic structures can create the most benefit for the most...But also economic structures have a way of developing and falling prey to human nature too and creating really screwed up structures.
- Jon: Becoming emerging powers.
- Tim: Yeah, that enslave people. So, no, economic system is innocent in that way. Again, I know so little about economics. I probably know more about ancient Israelite economics than I do about my own.
- Jon: These conversations got really political.
- Tim: Well, sure. But I think we're forced to have that kind of conversation, don't you think?
- Jon: Yeah.
- Tim: Political, you mean in terms of just...?
- Jon: I don't know.
- Tim: Political groups often have certain visions of an ideal economy? Is that what you mean?
- Jon: I guess so.
- Tim: And then that divides people.
- Jon: Jesus imagined in the early Christians we're living in a Jubilee kind of way.
- Tim: Evidence of the New Testament all points in that direction. And in a transformed Jubilee. Because none of them were ancient Israelite farmers. Maybe a few were. So you find them innovating new patterns of life: social interaction, social value, what we would call welfare, webs of support.

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Jon: It's interesting. I think that's what maybe the generosity movement that I've been connected to...they're trying to work that out in a way too. They are trying to figure out...What's the phrase you use? They were trying to work it out in their setting. They're trying to figure out, how do you live the life of Jubilee? And yeah, this made me think like, "I should think about that more. What does that look like in my life to live a life of Jubilee?" That's really fascinating. I think that's the question those guys are asking.

Tim: I think that's probably true. You can translate it into social relationships where in the early Christian communities, Paul talks a lot about this. Like Philemon and Onesmus, you have a slave who's run away from his master in some way. He's become a follower of Jesus. Paul's trying to reunite a runaway slave with his master and what he persuades him to do is to receive him back not only as a slave but more than a slave as a brother. Treat him as a family member.

Scot McKnight has done a lot of work on this where the number one term that Paul the Apostle uses to describe a house church that he's writing letters to is as a sibling, set brothers and sisters. Not tenant and landlord, slave or master, male or female, Greek or barbarians, slave or free. Brothers and sisters in the Messiah. That's a restructuring of social-economic relationships. It seems to me that's a Jubilee principle where images of God male and female ruling together made to flourish together. It's like a reset. That's a kind of Jubilee.

Jon: To live with a Jubilee mindset, with a Jubilee value set is a radical way to live that requires so much trust. This ties back to our conversation on the generosity conversation. It's trusting that there's enough and that God will provide.

Tim: Trusting that if I don't work on the seventh day, God will provide. If I don't gather manna on the seventh day, if I don't...So the field on the seventh year...

Jon: If forgive the debt of my friends God will provide.

Tim: That's right. I don't really live like that. I think a dream that we had for The Bible Project was to create something that normally costs a lot of money.

Jon: It does cost a lot of money.

Tim: And it does cost a lot of money. But what if it could cost money in a way that makes it available for free and not prey to the media market prices. That was the dream we had. And we've, by God's grace, been able to realize that. That's cool.

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Jon: We found abundance in a way that we didn't know was possible. But I hold grudges, man. But I hold grudges. I'll be slowed up sort of...

[crosstalk 00:52:11]

Tim: Ah, sure. Because that's a Jubilee principle too. Once you get into the teachings of Jesus, you translate it into personal forgiveness.

Jon: Same word. "Forgiveness."

Tim: Forgiveness. That's right. There are two words for "forgive" in New Testament in Greek. One is "aphiemi," which means "to release." And it's all connected to this word of "to let go, or "freedom," "to liberate." Then the other one is "charizomai" which is "to give a gift." So you're either gift-giving or you're liberating when you free them.

Jon: That'd be good word study.

Tim: It'd be great word study video. I think it's on the list.

Jon: Where are we headed next?

Tim: Where we're heading next is we're going to fly over Israel in the Promised Land. We could do a lot. We're just going to do a little.

Jon: I feel like this is typically how it goes. You spend a lot of time in the Torah and then we just fly to Jesus.

Tim: You tell me, man. We could really drill down into some stories in Joshua that are so fascinating, and then some moments in the story of David and Solomon. That rabbit hole goes deep. It stalls patterns of seven stuff that will be familiar with.

The goal is Israel's time in the land becomes a big extended Genesis 2 life in Eden, and a one long test of Genesis 3 that's failed multiple times. And then ultimately, they get exiled. But the next chapter, Leviticus 26, is we'll talk about next. Because it sees Israel's exile as an anti-Jubilee or inverted Jubilee, which means that it will be an exile multiplied by seven until it's over. Then what's going on in the book of Daniel and the seven day time seven years of exile. It makes a lot more sense.

Jon: Okay, cool.

Tim: Exile is the inverted Jubilee.

Jon: Exile is the inverted Jubilee. Or Jubilee is a redeemed exile.

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Tim: Yeah, both. Which again is why when Jesus stands up on a Sabbath reads from Isaiah and announces, "The ultimate Jubilee is here," he's hitting on the main theological theme of the Hebrew Bible, which is we're waiting for the ultimate seventh day. and it's here in the person of Jesus.

Jon: Thanks for listening to this episode of The Bible Project podcast. Today's show was produced by Dan Gummel. Our theme music comes from the band Tents. I know people listen to this podcast from all over the globe. In America where we produce this, it's actually a time of Thanksgiving. It's a holiday coming up. So in the spirit of thanksgiving, we want you to know how deeply grateful we are for you. We are really fortunate to have you as listeners, as supporters, and as people along with us in this journey.

If you're listening to this podcast episode on November 25th, we are releasing a brand new word study video on our YouTube channel. It's on the word witness. It releases tonight at 5 pm pacific time. You can watch it live with us, and thousands of other people across the globe. You'll notice a new voice on the video. it's Carissa Quinn, one of our resident theologians. She did the voiceover and wrote the script for the video. And if you remember, we did a podcast episode with her a few weeks back on this very topic. Again, if it happens to be November 25th while you're listening to this, then go to youtube.com/thebibleproject and watch the video with us. It's at 5 pm Pacific Standard Time. Hope to see you there.

Linda: Hey this is Linda May Mackie, Tim's Mom. I live local really just across the river in Vancouver, here from Portland. Of course, you would know how I heard about The Bible Project—from Tim. What's pretty fun to me to think about is all those years ago, all of his little scratchy people that he used to draw, so interesting, some of those are still to be seen actually, if you have your coffee table book that you can open a page or two you can see some of that. That just takes me back.

Of course, I love The Bible Project from the beginning because I love my son, but I also love what God is doing here and how he's using the brilliance of all these amazing young people here. Just taken such an expanded heart view of the Bible all around the world. I think probably my favorite thing about The Bible Project is that it is a crowdfunded project, and that so many people believe in it and are willing to make a financial sacrifice to help support it and expand it. So we believe the Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus. Thankful that it's a crowdfunded project by people just like me, and that you can find free videos, study notes, podcasts and more at thebibleproject.com.