

There are some great words in our language that we just don't use enough. Near the top of my list is the word: Jubilee. It just connotes the idea of celebration! In truth, I've only heard the term twice in my life. Once in regard to "Cherry Jubilee Pie" which involves flaming alcohol, so not on the Emerson's menu. The other is the Queen of England Diamond Jubilee last year. It typically means a 50<sup>th</sup> year celebration, a golden jubilee, but actually made it to a 75 year of rule celebration.

Did you know that God set one up for His Jewish people? He called it "The Year of Jubilee" and it is found in Leviticus 25. Would you head that direction in your Scripture this morning? This was a great year for Israel, occurring every 50 years. Whatever calendar system they used, it would always give them the ability to know when this Year of Jubilee was approaching.

Before we read about it, give me a moment to show you some other days and years God established: **Leviticus 23:27-32** - The Annual Day of Atonement - The whole nation stopped working, humbled themselves before God, made offerings at the tabernacle, and celebrated having their sins covered! **Leviticus 25:1-7** - The Sabbatical 7<sup>th</sup> Year - Every seven years they would not sow the field or prune the vineyard. They would let the land have rest, enjoy the blessings of God, and be focused on Him!

Then would come... the Year of Jubilee!

**Leviticus 25:8-12** - This was the year of years! No matter your age, you would have been anticipating the blessings and greatness of this 50<sup>th</sup> year! It began on the Day of Atonement. Don't miss this. It started on the day when blood was shed and the people were redeemed and forgiven!

### **1) It was a year to Fully Trust in God**

- a. Sure, they always trusted in God, but this was the greatest showing of faith!
- b. **V11** - No planting or sowing of the land. So how would they eat and live?
- c. **V18-22** - God would provide abundantly. God would cover the next 3 years!
- d. Whether Jubilee is 49<sup>th</sup> or 50<sup>th</sup> year - Trust and Obey Him! He will feed you!

### **2) It was a year of Renewed Blessings**

- a. Yes, they were blessed by God every day, every year, but this to the greatest degree!
- b. **V13** - Every man who had lost his land, gets it back! Debt forgiveness!
- c. **V28** - Even if he can't afford to buy it back, it is returned to him!
- d. This is a fresh start kind of year. Can you see that? Clean slate!

### **3) It was a year of Mercy among Brethren**

- a. As God's people, there was to always be mercy, but this was something special!
- b. **V39-43** - To live, some became slaves. But in Jubilee, they and theirs go free!
- c. **V54-55** - He could be redeemed early, but in Jubilee, he goes free no matter what!
- d. Can you see the love and sacrifice Jews made to one another in God's name?

What must the Year of Jubilee mean to a Jew who had fallen on tough times? Maybe he had made mistakes and lost his land. Maybe poor circumstances had lowered him to servant hood.

And then, the Day of Atonement comes, blood is sacrificed, and he knows he is right with God. Then the Year of Jubilee commences! His master forgives all his debts and releases him. To where? Oh yeah, to his family's land, now restored! He has his life back, past forgiven, and a future full of God's blessings!

Yes, the Year of Jubilee would have been great, but we, in Christ, can do better, can have better!

**Luke 4:16-21** - Jesus initiated "the favorable year of the Lord" - our AGE of Jubilee!

When would it begin for us? On the day when we are atoned by His blood! (**Acts 2:38, 43, 46-47**)

What would it mean for us?

**1) An Age of Fully Trusting in God**

- a. Sure, we have always in some ways trusted in God. But this age is different.
- b. It is no longer about what we can do for ourselves. It is not about our work, our worthiness, what we have gained by our actions or even what we have lost.
- c. **Romans 5:8-11** – We give our complete trust to Him. His Love. And we Rejoice!

**2) An Age of Renewed Blessings**

- a. God has given us all blessings in many ways through our lives. But now much more.
- b. Jews were given back that which they had lost through life's mistakes and troubles.
- c. **Ephesians 2:1-7** – But in this age: we are given back our innocence and relationship with God and then provided with blessings never before attained: Great Grace!

**3) An Age of Mercy among God's People**

- a. God's plan for Israel worked because the people were forgiving to one another!
- b. When we are atoned, give our lives to God and receive the blessings of His grace, we should also now live in an age of SUPPORT, LOVE, SACRIFICE and FORGIVENESS among the people of God!
- c. **Galatians 5:1,13, 25-26; 6:1-2** – Sometimes we fail to extend the same kind of love to one another that God has given to us all! This is an age of fellowship and family!

And so now, what the Jews longed for and then finally enjoyed in the flesh in the 50<sup>th</sup> year...

We enjoy in the spirit, for a lifetime, beginning when we come up out of that water...

- enjoyed by complete trust in the power of God!
- with jubilation at the unending blessings of God in His Son!
- celebrated among His people, with hearts of humility and love!

Sometimes we forget. Sometimes we forget we are redeemed. Sometimes we forget that we live in the palm of God's hand, are nourished by His other hand, and surrounded with like souls. So, there are some days that remind us. Not calendar dates like Israel had, but days of jubilee none the less:

- When we watch someone be baptized into Christ
  - We say that the angels in heaven rejoice. But we realize they do that daily for us all!
- When we confess our sins before our Christian family
  - We see love and compassion in that moment. But we realize we have it every day!
- When we enjoy an awesome week of nightly study
  - We aren't seeking God's blessings – we live in them. We work and build in them
    - New me, new week, renewed relationship and focus, because of what IS
    - It's not – "we will do this and one day God will give us Jubilee"
    - Now, we are in the age of celebration and these are actions growing from it!

Who is ready for Jubilee?

- Who is ready to have all of their sins and mistakes and burdens washed away?
- Who is ready to give over control and direction of your life to the God over us all?
- Who is ready for renewed and daily and nourishing blessings to keep you going?
- Who is ready to be supported and loved by people who want to be there for you?

The Age of Jubilee is today, if you want it. Come now.