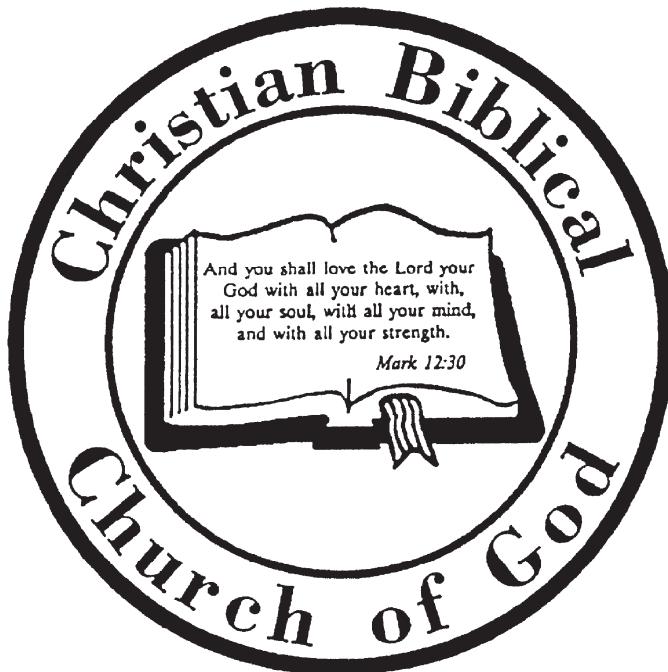


The Cycles of Seven



Transcript Book

By Mike Heiss

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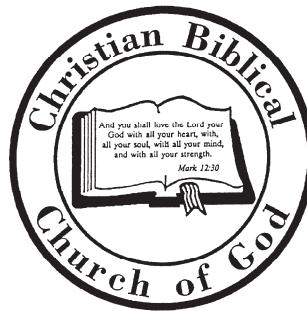
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The Cycles of Seven

Series of 4 sermons by Mike Heiss



Signature

Date

- The Cycles of Seven I
- The Cycles of Seven II
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Compact Disc

[When included]

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Track 3 The Cycles of Seven III

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The Cycles of Seven

Foreword

This booklet is composed of four sermon transcripts that deal with Bible teaching regarding the seventh-day Sabbath, the Shemitah, the land Sabbath, and the Jubilee year. Mike Heiss, using the Bible, will inform the reader about the importance of these in God's sight. They were instituted as a blessing for God's nation on earth, Israel, when Israel was under the Old Covenant. They will again be instituted across the entire world when Jesus Christ returns to rule the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The first transcript, "The Cycle of Seven I," shows that the Sabbath is in a cycle of seven days, the land Sabbath is a cycle of seven years, and the Jubilee year is a cycle of seven years times seven years. Additional details given in this transcript are:

1. God has an answer to poverty in a society – it is the Shemitah.
2. Abraham Lincoln had a working faith in the Creator God. He spoke clearly of it, and it is covered in this study.
3. If God wants the Gospel to be preached in the world the United States will not collapse.
4. The seventh-day Sabbath worship, among the nations of the world, is unique to Israel. It arose out of Israel through the Old Covenant.

The second transcript, "The Cycle of Seven II," reviews what was given in the first transcript. Additional details are covered such as:

1. How Sunday came about as the day to worship God.
2. Noah and Abraham both knew of God's commands regarding His statues and laws. Subsequently, through Moses, they were imparted to Israel.
3. People want national freedom.
4. People chose to be ruled over by tyrants, by dictators and by kings because they think that they will then not have to have the burden of providing for themselves. They wrongly think that the government will fulfill their needs.

The third transcript, "The Cycle of Seven III," is a continuation of the study of the Sabbath. Additional points addressed in this transcript are:

1. God has a concern about the innocent being put in prison. The American judicial system reflects this concern about the rights of the innocent.
2. In order to make sure that an innocent man is not convicted and executed God stated that there must be more than one witness to the crime.
3. Many people the world over does not care about their personal freedom. They want the government to feed their belly, to keep them warm, and to provide a bed to sleep on. Examples are given of this in history.

The last transcript, "The Cycle of Seven IV," gives a summary of the land Sabbath, the Shemitah, the seventh year of release, and the Jubilee year. Also noted are:

1. The question, or rather the cause, is addressed as to why Christ said to his disciples that the poor will always be around.
2. Secular minded people will never acknowledge the hand of God. Real life examples of people refusing to recognize Gods hand in blessings are studied.
3. The Old Covenant blessings are still in effect for the people of Israel in the land of Israel.

A special thanks goes to Bonnie and Prentice Orswell, Laila Patterson and Nancy Spaller for producing the transcripts.

The Cycles of Seven I

The Shemitah & The Sabbath

Michael Heiss—September 28, 2015

Good morning, everyone. I hope to start a series on what I call *The Cycles of Seven*. By that, I mean:

- one unit—out of a set of seven units
- one day, Sabbath—out of seven days, a week
- Sabbatical year, land Sabbath, year of release—one year out of seven
- the Jubilee year—which is seven times seven

Before I actually get into *The Cycles of Seven*, I don't know if we're actually going to get into the Bible on that this morning, maybe yes, maybe not until tomorrow. The first thing is to bring out some preparatory remarks as to what prompted this cycles of seven idea.

It was prompted, primarily, by my having read and gone through in some detail, two books written by a man that some know; some of you may not know of him. His name is Jonathan Cahn. Jonathan Cahn has a congregation in New Jersey and it's made up of professing Christians as well as Jewish Christians. He has a thorough command of the Hebrew language and he has an interesting insight to the 'sevens.' He wrote two major, blockbuster books that have had quite an impact, but my fear is that they can have the wrong impact. That's what I want to try to correct this morning before we get into the series of sevens.

Those two books that he wrote, I have them here. I'll just draw your attention to them. I'm not suggesting that you go right out and buy them to read them. If you'd like to, you'll find them fascinating. If you don't, that's okay, too. The first one was *The Harbinger*, and the second one was *The Mystery of the Shemitah*. Both of these books are easy to read. They're less than 300 pages. It just won't take you that long.

The Harbinger, of course, is written in a novel type format in which he shows that the messages, the warnings and the conditions that preceded the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel; that is Samaria. We're not talking about Judah or Jerusalem, we're talking about Samaria, the northern kingdom. Those conditions that were there are now extant here in the United States today.

Interestingly enough, when I first came to Ambassador College back in 1960—that must have been a lifetime or two ago, I'm not sure—those conditions did not exist. They weren't there, but they

are now. He talks about Scriptures that were used back then and some of those same Scriptures were read by leaders of Congress following 9/11. It's amazing, a people in defiance of God. They won't listen to Him. Our country is slowly but surely, maybe not so slowly anymore, turning its back on God. It is a fascinating book—*The Harbinger*—I just draw your attention to it.

The other one is *The Mystery of the Shemitah*. We're going to discuss the Shemitah. The Shemitah is the seventh year. It is the year of release. It's the cycle of seven years where all debts are released, the slate is wiped clean, you can't really have any big boom-bust cycles and it prevents poverty, it really does. In connection with the Jubilee year, it's **God's answer to poverty**, it really is.

Along with these books, Cahn points out some of the events that occurred during the Shemitah year. I'm not going to bother to give you a litany of them it's not that important. For example: Since I was in the tax business, and the financial securities business, I'm well aware of some of these dates. For example:

- 1987: a terrific crash in the stock market when it fell to over 500 points in one day, that was a *Shemitah year!*
- 2001: 9/11 occurred and the crash in the stock market, *another Shemitah year!*
- 2008: a tremendous crash in the market, *another Shemitah year occurrence*

He goes through history and shows what can happen and has happened in the year of the Shemitah.

That doesn't mean that every Shemitah year that comes around is going to have a cataclysmic event. You can go back for hundreds of years and find certain Shemitah years where nothing happened. Other times, you can find heavy events that took place not in a Shemitah year. He does lay it out in a unique way; I just draw your attention to that.

On top of these warning, and on top of the Shemitah year, we now have the *blood moons* that you've heard about. In fact, I don't know if you saw it this year, it started 6:20-6:30 and the moon was completely covered between eight and ten minutes after seven. The moon had moved completely behind the sun and you see that bloody red color. Then it moves out from behind it.

That was the fourth blood moon this year. They call that a *tetrad*. A tetrad is an occurrence where you have four blood moons, four total lunar

eclipses, in one year. What's even more significant, although how significant remains to be seen, is the fact that it was the second year in a row that we've had four blood moons, two tetrads back to back. How often does that happen? According to the mathematicians, in the last 2000 years, it has happened a total of eight times. It's a rare event! The next one is scheduled to happen in about 400 years. So, you don't see that very often.

If that's not enough, you will never again see a full moon like this in your lifetime. It is a series of mathematical calculations with the elliptical orbit of the moon and the earth going around the sun, whereby the moon comes at the closest point to earth. I forget exactly how often that happens, but it's once every few hundred years. Believe me, in this lifetime, you're not going to see it again. Hopefully, as members of God's family, we'll see many of these super moons. It is as clear as can be; it is bigger than usual.

What's the significance of a super, blood moon? *Nothing, really!* It's just a super blood moon. We had two tetrads. What was the significance of those tetrads? *Nothing!* We just had two tetrads. These things have come and gone. The financial world and the world in certain religious circles are going gaga over it. They were predicting calamity, predicting mass destruction or massive floods or the stock market was going to crash.

I do have one piece of information to report, since I was active in financial services and subscribe to some of these reports. I get these with monotonous regularity. Let me give you the flavor of what this says. You'll get the feeling of what I mean.

From: "Bloody Wednesday" September 16, 2015: America's Day of Reckoning
(moneyandmarkets.com/reports/SMR/bloodywednesday/lp/4/?ccode&em=hrrajpal%40yahoo.com&sc=FINMC&ec=6514128)

On Wednesday, September 16, 2015... behind closed doors in Washington, D.C... an event could take place that will change everything in your life.

You'll know this and what you must do immediately to protect yourself.

In other words, subscribe to a newsletter, buy the investments that they suggest and you're going to be just fine. In fact, you'll be six times richer. You get the drift of this. They're all the same, but this is what they do. It's interesting.

Mark my words.

Nothing will ever be the same again for your or your family. The America we know and love will be no more.

The fallout of this historic event will be horrific for the unprepared.

It will trigger all-out panic—first in the U.S. bond market...and later in the stock market.

It will destroy millions of jobs...sentence most Americans to a "dark age" of depression and poverty...send gold and silver prices careening higher... and push the U.S. government to the brink of collapse

That's what you would expect certain individuals to believe.

The carnage could ultimately make The Great Recession of 2008 and 2009 pale by comparison.

What's he talking about? What event?

First of all, get ready for that event. I hope you're all prepared for its coming. The day is coming, April 29, 2015. I hope you're getting prepared for April 29th. What did I just read? *What you have to do by February 29th to prepare for April 29th! You slept through it all! You blew it!* Your life is a wreck! I slept through it! What's wrong? *It never happened!*

The interesting thing is, what I want to bring out is that God made sure it didn't happen because this year of the Shemitah was *a nothing* Shemitah in God's sight. I'll show you what he's referring to and what God could have done. It wouldn't have taken much to cause this terrific crash that never occurred.

What was going to take place on April 29th? *The Federal Reserve was going to meet!* They meet in their open door session meetings every April and every October and they discuss the economy. The main weapon in the hands of the Fed is interest rates. They can raise them. They can lower them. When you raise interest rates, you slow down the economy; you really do. That's one of the things that has caused crashes in the past. When they've loosened interest rates so much, then they tighten them too much, everything crashes because you contract the flow of money and you've got to have flow of money to have an economy.

The betting was that they were going to increase the interest rates. Almost everyone was betting on they were going to increase the interest rates. Guess what? *They didn't!*

If God had led them to do that, if He had seen to it that they did, indeed, raise those interest rates, this could well have happened, this could well have been true. God chose not to do that. If He had wanted to send a dramatic cataclysmic catastrophe to

demonstrate the power of the Shemitah, He could have done that easily, but He chose not to.

We've had people, church members, say, 'Horrible! This is terrible! What's going to happen?' I try to tell some of them, 'Look to God. He's not going to let catastrophe happen, yet.' As long as God has something in mind, as long as God has a work to be done, catastrophe will not happen!

In one sense, it's like Abraham Lincoln—he's one of the great figures in American History and I've learned a lot about him. People were worried about his life, and rightly so. He knew, by the way, that he was going to die. *He knew it!*

A lot of his friends came and said, 'Look, we've got to do something. We've got to protect you. We've got to set guards around you, and so forth.' This was his answer: He said to this person, 'As long as God has something for me to do, nothing can stop me; no one can harm me. Once I have completed that work, there is nothing you or anyone else can do to save me.' That pretty much says it all.

So, God has something He wants done. Abraham Lincoln called this country—you've heard the phrase—'*the last, best hope for the world, for democracy.*' That came from Mr. Lincoln; he's the one who said it. We have such freedom in this country that the Gospel can be preached in a way that it cannot be preached in any other country; it really can't. That's why we have freedom of religion; Congress shall make no law respecting religion. As long as we have that freedom, as long as we have an economy, the work will go out. As long as God wants a work to go out He's not going to let total collapse happen. *He's just not!*

The old Radio Church of God/Worldwide Church of God kind of fell into the same trap. I don't know how many of you are well familiar with the old Radio Church of God, but I first set foot on the Ambassador College Campus in the fall of 1960. The first minister I ever met was Dr. Herman Hoeh, almost the first day I arrived. We hit it off famously. I couldn't figure out why. To this day I'm not really sure why it happened. But Howard Clark was a jovial individual. He was a real miracle. You talk about healing. God doesn't always heal dramatically, but this man had been in the Korean War and he had been so badly damaged he couldn't stand up; he couldn't walk. He was anointed in 1959, and he got up out of the wheelchair and never went back.

When you stop to think about Acts 3 where Peter and John went up to the temple to pray and there's a man sitting there and he says, 'Alms for the poor, alms for the poor.' That type of thing! Peter looks at him and says in effect, 'Gold and silver, I don't have, but what I do have I give to you. In the

name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk.' He rose up and he walked. That's a miracle!

Howard Clark used to say that Dr. Hoeh was very favorably disposed toward odd balls and Jews. Since I was an odd ball Jew, maybe that explains it. We hit it off well. I learned a lot about 19-year time-cycles. I don't know if you've ever gone into those old 19-year time-cycles. They are real. There really are 19-year time-cycles. What do you make of them?

When the Church began, really began after the ascension of Jesus of Nazareth and the Ephesus Era began, you had two 19-year time-cycles to the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the work as we knew it at that time. Not that the Church ended, no it didn't end; it continued to go on. But a major work ended and the second 19-year time-cycle essentially began with Paul seeing a vision of a man in Macedonia saying, 'Come help us.' You read about that in the book of Acts.

The belief was that at the end-time there would be another two 19-year time-cycles before the end. At least this is the scenario. This is how it's calculated. You'd have to go on a hundred 19-year time-cycles down to the end. If you go forward the way it was calculated, one hundred 19-year time-cycles led to 1934.

What happened in 1934? Mr. Herbert Armstrong launched the *Plain Truth* magazine, the flagship of the old Radio Church of God. Wow! *This is it!* One 19-year time-cycle later was 1953. What was so great about 1953? An avenue opened, or as the work used to say, a door opened—that was the phrase that was used quite often—to be able to preach the Gospel in Britain, in Europe. Nineteen years it was in Asia and among the Jews and then the remaining 19-year cycle in mass to the Gentiles. We had 19 years in the United States now another 19 years to the world. That would take you to 1972:

- the end would come
- the Great Tribulation would begin
- 3½ years later 1975 would come
- Christ would return

Everything would be fine. A nice, neat package—right? Yes! Only one thing wrong. *It never happened! It didn't happen!* Why didn't it happen? You see, human nature doesn't change!

Jesus warned the Church. Let's go take a look at His warning. This was a warning, a piece of advice that Jesus gave the Church, because the disciples were looking for the same thing. This is the time after the resurrection when He had spent 40 days with His disciples. Now He was about to ascend up to heaven.

Acts 1:6: "So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?'" 'You know, Lord, this would be a good time to do it.' How did Jesus respond? What did He say?

Verse 7: "And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know *the times* or *the seasons*, which the Father has placed in His own authority.'" Another way of translating it is that 'it's not your business to know it.' I like that. It's not our business, but human nature doesn't change. We all have the desire, 'When is He coming? What can we see? Jesus gave guidelines in Matt. 24, Mark, and Luke about armies surrounding Jerusalem, about times coming of wars and rumors of wars. But, He said:

- *you preach the Gospel*
- *you feed the flock*
- *you love each other*
- *you grow in grace and knowledge*
- *you prepare for My coming*

Luke 12:43: "Blessed is that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing" (Luke 12:43). But you know, we just can't learn. *Human beings will not learn!* There's an old saying that we learn from history, but we never learn. Not quite! We don't learn from history that we never learned, we just never learn. That's it!

I wanted to bring that out to show how *not* to view cycles. The point is, God is not obligated to operate according to any human understanding of the significance of cycles of certain numerical sequences. He's just not obligated to do that. Jesus said, 'In an hour you think not, the Son of man is coming.' That's the whole point.

I can only leave you with this in terms of this overall view. ***God will do what He will do when He is ready to do it!*** All your cycles, all the understanding of blood moons, all the Shemitahs, all the 19-year time-cycles don't mean a thing necessarily. They're there. Yes, God has them built in to His system, but it doesn't necessarily mean anything for us today. One day they will, but they don't fit in right at this moment. So, let's not worry about them.

That was my introductory remarks. Let us understand a few basic principles here: The Sabbath itself really represents the Kingdom of God. It represents the totality of the rule of God. The Holy Days hang on the 'hook' of the Sabbath. Put another way, the Sabbath can exist without the Holy Days. The Holy Days cannot exist without the Sabbath.

You look at those Holy Days. They will show you how you get to God's total rule, the Kingdom of God. You've got:

- Passover—the sacrifice for sin
- Days of Unleavened Bread—come out of sin, put sin away, because you can't have sin in God's kingdom
- Pentecost—the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai, the giving of the Holy Spirit and Jesus coming back gathering us up to the clouds with Him

That has to happen before the Kingdom of God can come.

- Feast of Trumpets—technically it's not the Feast of Trumpets, we call it the Feast of Trumpets

That's not a bad name for it. It's *the day of blowing*. What would you blow except trumpets? The *day of blowing* when Jesus will set foot on this planet with us with Him and will start to reign. Then comes the:

- Feast of Tabernacles—really, truly the Millennial reign of God
- the Last Great Day—when all the people who've never had an opportunity will be given a chance

After that, the Father, Himself, comes down and you really do have the totality of the Kingdom of God.

The Sabbath represents it all and the Holy Days hang on the 'hook' of the Sabbath. I want to make sure we understand that. Then the interesting part comes. I'll just have enough time for this one concept.

Seven is a remarkable number. There is no seven anywhere in the astronomical measurement of time. It's totally antithesis; it doesn't exist. Astronomers have scratched their heads, historians have scratched their heads, where did seven come from? No civilization has ever had a worshiping on the seventh day. Scholars, whether they're devout Christian scholars who believe the Bible, or those who are simply secular scholars looking into it, they scratch their heads; they don't know where it came from. All they can conclude is, it is unique to Israel; it arose out of Israel. Yes, but that begs the question: Where did Israel get the Sabbath?

Remember the 1993 Presidential campaign where the Clintons had a sign above the doorpost of their war room, 'It's the economy, stupid!'? We can say to the scholars, 'It's God, stupid!' He's the One Who did it! Physiologists have determined—I don't know how they did this, but they say they have and I'll take their word for it—that the human being operates most efficiently and effectively in a cycle of seven with one day for what we would call R & R, rest and repose.

They can figure out how the cells work. By the way, did you know that your cells renew

themselves every seven years? Again, seven is in there. Amazing number, seven. Maybe we can cover more of a significance of it in part two. It's a fascinating number. The #7 occurred.

Look at a day. I don't remember if it was Ella Fitzgerald, or whomever, who sang the song, What a Difference a Day Makes, 'twenty-four little hours.' Twenty-four hours to a day. Where's seven there? Nothing's divisible by seven. How about a moon, the month—29, 30 days? Where's seven there? It doesn't exist. Nothing's divisible by seven. How about a year? *That's it!* It's got to be a year, 365½ days with every 4th year a leap year. In the Hebrew calendar, because it's about ten to eleven days short, then every third year, you have an additional month to make up the difference.

The point is, nothing's divisible by seven. So, where did it come from? *It came from God!* Seven is the number of *complete perfection*. When you read through the Bible, you find that. Not only is it complete perfection, but the #3 is finality.

This is the end of creation week, Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, **it was exceedingly good**. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." All the preceding six days, it says that God saw what He did and behold, it was good. That's the Hebrew word that means *good*. This is not just *good*, it's the superlative, you *just can't get any better*. That's the A+. It's 1,001.

When God did that, it said, 'Behold it was good, or if I can colloquially say this without any disrespect, God says, 'That was a good job if I do say so Myself.' He's entitled to say that. He's *God!* That's why it says *exceedingly good!*

Then we come to Gen. 2. Remember, the Torah was never written with chapters and verses. This was man doing this. Actually, Gen. 1 should end at the end of v 3 of Gen. 2.

Genesis 2:1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And by *the beginning of* the seventh day God finished His work, which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had made. And **God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it** because on it He rested from all His work, which God had created and made" (vs 1-3).

What we have here are three clauses describing what God did. You don't get this in the English but you do in the Hebrew. It says here: "...God finished His work, which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had made and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it."

Those three clauses comprise seven Hebrew words each. Three times seven. We can understand it, God is signing off upon His creation week in total perfection. The number three is finality. We use it today. Don't we hear: 'The third time is a charm' *or* 'three strikes, you're out'? We've heard that and other circumstances, too. Three is finality! We have seven complete perfections and three primal complete perfections as far as the recreation of the earth is concerned. So, God is signing off on His Sabbath.

I'll leave you with a teaser: Do you know that technically, we don't worship on the Sabbath? Do we realize that? *No, we don't!* We call it the Sabbath, and rightly so, but scholars will say, 'The Lord's Sabbath isn't here.' They're right! Where does it say, 'Behold, the Sabbath Day?' You don't find it. It's not here. Where is the command to keep the Sabbath? Scholars look and say, 'It's not here.' *Yes, it is! It's in the Hebrew, but you have to understand that!* Rather, we don't worship on the Sabbath. We worship on the seventh day.

Remember about the scholars. Remember about the physiologists, etc. They know that we need one day in seven. That's true, but they can't tell you which day in seven? *No!* That's where God comes in with His Word; *He tells us* it's not just any day.

I remember reading the historical works about the pilgrims in other groups of strict Protestants and how they kept the Sabbath. I'm scratching my head. They didn't keep Saturday. They didn't keep the seventh-day Sabbath. *Well, no, they kept the Sabbath!* Why? A Sabbath is a day of rest. Any day can be called a Sabbath; it really can.

God is emphasizing, here, not so much 'ha Shabbat': *the Sabbath*, He's emphasizing **the seventh day** that later on would be called the Sabbath. In part two we're going to go into some detail in Gen. 2:2-3, and see what these words for *rest, sanctify* and *blessed* mean. We'll find out exactly what God did, why He did it and when we get to Ex. 20, it points back to Gen. 2, that there really is a *creation ordinance!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 1:6-7
- 2) Luke 12:43
- 3) Genesis 1:31
- 4) Genesis 2:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 3
- Matthew 24
- Exodus 20

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Harbinger* by Jonathan Cahn
- *The Mystery of the Shemitah* by Jonathan Cahn

Article: [“Bloody Wednesday” September 16, 2015:](#)

[America’s Day of Reckoning](#)

(moneyandmarkets.com/reports/SMR/bloodywednesday/lp4/?ccode&em=hrrajpal%40yahoo.com&sc=FINMC&ec=6514128)

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The Cycles of Seven II

Seventh-Day Sabbath

Michael Heiss—September 29, 2015

This morning, we're going to carry on where we left off yesterday, but we're going to rehash a bit.

If you will recall, we read in Gen. 1:31 that God saw everything that He had made, that it was *exceedingly good*. I was explaining about the Hebrew meaning *good* and of *exceedingly good*, the superlative.

To give you a further feel of that, before we get into the Sabbath itself, let's go to Psalms 104:30: "You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth." Actually, this is referring to the recreation. This is referring back to creation week. It is not referring to the original creation way back when. We have no idea when God really created the heavens and the earth. It could be millions, could be billions of years ago. That's not what this is referring to. This is referring to when He renewed the face of the earth for man.

Verse 31: "May the glory of the LORD endure forever; the LORD shall rejoice in His works." So, God rejoiced in His work of recreating the Earth.

Genesis 1:31, God says: "...it was exceedingly good...." God does rejoice in all He does.

In part one I mentioned the fact that the Sabbath represented the totality of God's reign, His ultimate kingdom. I showed how the Sabbath is the ultimate, and the Holy Days hang on the 'hook' of the Sabbath and explained how you get there.

Somebody pointed out to me that I neglected to mention one Holy Day, that is the Day of Atonement. It's, as Fred would say, a 'Freudian slip.' You have to have the Day of Atonement there because you have to have sin purged. If you don't you don't have sin purged, you can't have the Kingdom of God. All the Holy Days are there. I did not intentionally neglect to mention the Day of Atonement. It was just one of those slips.

We're talking about the numbers three and seven; Genesis 2:2: "And by the beginning of the seventh day..." You should know that it does mean *by*. In the King James and some other translations, it will say 'on the seventh day,' or 'at the beginning of the seventh day.'

The Hebrew preposition is translated: *in*, *with* or *by*. Clearly the meaning is *by*. How soon before the end of the sixth day, we don't know, but clearly before the beginning of the seventh day, God finished the work of recreating the earth.

I thought I would read it to you in the Hebrew so you could see what I meant when I said there are three clauses of seven words each. Three times seven or twenty-one. This is God's 'signing off' in His own way, in His own inimitable style, the creation week. In fact, Gen. 1 through Gen. 2:1-3, is a creation hymn. We don't know who wrote that. We really don't. Obviously, Moses put it in here, but that doesn't mean that Moses wrote it. Adam could have written it. Noah could have written part of it. Abel could have written part of it. Who knows? What we have here in the beginning of Gen. 2:2-3 is *seven*:

- and finished God, by the day, the seventh, the work which He had made
- the day He ceased from those works
- (reading the third clause in Hebrew)

Three times seven.

In part one I pointed out that the term 'ha Shabbat,' *the Sabbath*, does not fit in here. It's just not here. Scholars have pointed it out. They will tell you that unless you automatically equate the Sabbath with the seventh day, it's not there. You have to assume it's there. Sabbath simply meant the day of rest.

Anybody remember the name Constantine, the great emperor of Rome who made a form of Christianity in that day one of the official religions of the empire? What did he say at the Council of Nicea and elsewhere? *Everyone shall rest on the venerable day of the sun!* So, Sunday was a sabbath; it was a day of rest. That's all it meant. That's all the Sabbath means, a day of rest.

As I mentioned, it really confused me, because I would read the works of the pilgrims and certain conservative Protestant groups and they talked about keeping the Sabbath. I thought to myself, 'That's crazy. They didn't really keep the seventh-day Sabbath.' No, they didn't! They kept Sunday, but Sunday was the Sabbath to them; it was a day of rest. Notice what God says here. God is driving home the point: No, we're not specifically talking about the Sabbath, we're talking about *His* Sabbath, the seventh day. That is the point. What does He say?

Genesis 2:2: "And by the beginning of the **seventh day**... [the first time He mentions the seventh day] ...God finished His work, which He had made. And He rested on the **seventh day** from all His work, which He had made. And God blessed

the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work, which God had created and made” (vs 2-3). There’s that number three again, three times. He’s finalizing it. He’s saying, ‘Look. I am making the seventh day the Sabbath.’

Any number of scholars have pointed out that this is simply a declarative narrative, here. It just talks about what God did, but no command for man to keep it. That’s not necessarily so. It depends upon how you understand the Hebrew.

I wrote out a little narrative of my own to give to you to point out some things. We have this:

God desisted from creating on the Sabbath, the seventh day. He hallowed the seventh day, set it apart from profane usage. The Sabbath demands more than stoppage of work. It is specifically marked off as a day consecrated to God and to the life of the spirit. That’s one aspect. The word ‘Sabbath’ does not appear here, nor does Gen. 2 seem to bear a form of a command of a statute or binding, but both ideas are there in the Hebrew.

The verb is God *blessed* the seventh day. That word carries a double idea, that of *blessing* and also of *worshipping*, in particular, the manner of bowing the knees. God is not going to bow His knees to anybody or any of His creation, but man does and man should. It’s there, implicit, in the Hebrew. Although, if you just read it in the English, you’d never get that.

The verb may be taken just like in the English, you have different forms of the language. You have the command form, the imperative and you have the declaratory. We all know that in English. Every other language has the same thing. Hebrew has what means *causative*. Let me read to you the full meaning that this verse conveys from the Hebrew, itself:

And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made and God commanded **man** to bless and worship on the seventh day and ordered him... [man] ...to sanctify it.

The conclusion by many of these scholars is that it appears that from the original text that the words were given in form of command from God to Adam.

You see, it really is there. What if you don’t like the seventh-day Sabbath? You want nothing to do with the seventh-day Sabbath? You just forget it! You just let it go by. You see, it doesn’t have to be read that way. What was God’s intention? I submit

to you that God’s intention was that it is in the form of a command. So, we have the Sabbath. Now, let’s look at those verses again. First of all He says:

Genesis 2:3: “And God **blessed** the seventh day...” In Hebrew we have many different prayers. The opening of many a prayer is: ‘Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, King of the universe.’ Then you go on with praying about whatever you’re chanting.

Is there any other day of the week that you find in this Book that you call the Bible where God blessed it that way? *None, only the seventh day!* Remember, not the Sabbath, the seventh day, because at this point, it’s not known as the Sabbath. Then it says that He *sanctified* it. That means that He *hallowed* it. He made it *Holy*. What other day of the week did God ever make Holy other than the Sabbath? *Search the Book!*

In fact, the Catholic Church knows that and it has said so. It has said to many a Protestant, ‘Look, if you’re going to follow the Bible, you might as well keep the seventh-day Sabbath, because that’s the only day made Holy. But we, the Catholic Church, papa, the ‘vicar of Christ,’ changed it. So, when you keep Sunday, you’re following us.’ Protestants have their own mind, their own way of doing things and God will open their minds one day, not yet today.

Genesis 2:3: “And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work...” Here we have in vs 2 & 3 the word ‘Shabbat’ that simply means *ceasing*. God ceased and desisted on that day, the seventh day.

Exo. 16—supposedly, this is the first time that the word *Sabbath* as a command was given. This was about the manna, the children of Israel were murmuring—oh, were they murmuring—they like to murmur a lot. They were champions of murmuring.

Exodus 16:16: “This *is* the thing, which the LORD has commanded. ‘Each man gather of it according to his eating, an omer for each one, according to the number of your persons....’”

Verse 17: “And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, and some less. And when they measured with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little lacked nothing....” (vs 17-18).

Verse 19: And Moses said, ‘Let no man leave any of it until the *next morning*.’ But they did not hearken to Moses, and some of them left *part* of it until the *next morning*. And it became rotten...” (vs 19-20).

Verse 21: "And they gathered it morning by morning..."

Verse 23: "And he said to them, 'This *is that* which the LORD has said, 'Tomorrow is the **rest of the Holy Sabbath to the LORD**.... ['Shabbat' and it's called *Holy*] ...Bake what you will bake *today*, and boil what you will boil....'"

Verse 24: "And they laid it up until the *next* morning as Moses said. And it did not stink..."

Verse 25: "And Moses said, "Eat it today, for today *is a Sabbath to the LORD*....""

Verse 26: "**"Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath,** in it there shall be none." And it came to pass *that some* of the people went out on the seventh day in order to gather..." (vs 26-27).

The point is, v 28: "And the LORD said to Moses, '**How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My laws?**'"

Remember something. Theoretically, when was the Sabbath first given? *A week ago!* Wait a minute, a week ago and God says, '**How long** will you refuse to keep My Sabbaths, My laws?' Obviously, this was known way before then. Why would God say 'How long?' They only heard about it seven days ago.

We know from Gen. 26 that this is the time when God was speaking to Isaac and Isaac didn't know exactly what to do because there was a famine in the land.

Genesis 26:2_[transcriber's correction]: "And the LORD appeared to him and said, 'Do not go down into Egypt. Live in the land, which I shall tell you of. Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath, which I swore to Abraham your father. And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens...'" (vs 2-4). God's rehearsing what He said to Abraham.

We've read this before but it's good to dwell on it. Why is God going to do all this? Verse 5: "**"Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."**" I challenge you to look from Gen. 1-25 and find all the statutes, commandments and laws that God gave to Abraham. You won't find them, but they were there. *They knew them!*

Remember the days of Noah when God said, 'Noah. Noah. Yoo-hoo! Come here! Listen! I've got news for you. I've had it with this planet. I've had it with these people. I'm going to wipe them out, but I'm going to save you. So, Noah, build the boat. Make it a big one because we're going to have lots

of animals on board that boat. I want you to bring seven of the clean, seven-by-seven, two-by-two unclean.'

Noah went ahead and did so. He didn't say, 'Lord, what do you mean clean and unclean? How do I know?' *Noah knew!* How did he know? *Obviously, it was known!* Obviously, God gave the knowledge, but it wasn't necessary. There was no people, as such, that God was dealing with. So, He didn't codify it.

Abraham kept those statutes. Are we to believe that Noah knew about the law of clean and unclean meats but had no knowledge of the **Sabbath**? No knowledge of the seventh day? *NO! They knew!*

God was getting angry with the children of Israel. In fact, if you go back into Jere. and Eze., what does God say about Israel? In Jeremiah, God says, 'Oh, this is a stiff-necked people. From the day I brought you out of Egypt, you rebelled against Me.' But, they knew His laws and that was the point that I want to make here.

Let's take a look in Exo. 23; this is actually part of the Old Covenant. What we call the Old Covenant comprises primarily of three chapters of the Bible, Exo. 21-23. You find that right after God gave the Ten Commandments He gave these judgments to Moses. In v 24, you can read where a covenant was ratified.

Exodus 23:12: "Six days you shall do your work, and on the **seventh day** you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your handmaid, and the stranger, may be rejuvenated." That is interesting because we have different words for rest. The seventh day you shall rest; that is *you shall cease*, but the second 'rest' is not that word, it's a different word.

We're going to take a look at God's command of the **Sabbath**; Exodus 20:8: "**"Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy."**" God hallowed it. 'I made it Holy, you be sure that you keep it Holy.'

Verse 9: "Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the **seventh day**..." (v 9-10). God is driving home the point: 'What day is the real Sabbath? *God's Sabbath?* *The seventh day!*

"...is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter; your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your livestock, nor the stranger within your gates... [What is the rationale for it?] **...for in six days the LORD made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and**

rested the seventh day" (vs 10-11). This seventh day really is *a rest*.

Have you ever heard the name Noah? *His name means rest!* That's his name: *rest*. In his day, interestingly enough, part of the curse of the land was lifted. It happened in the days of Noah, if you go through the chronology. They're to rest this day. So, God *blessed it, sanctified it and hallowed it*.

Exodus 23:12: "Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day **you shall rest**, so that your ox and your donkey may **rest**..." 'No ah,' really means *rest*.

"...and the son of your handmaid, and the stranger, may be rejuvenated" (v 12). This is a very interesting word. It comes from the word 'nepesh/napesh,' which means *vitalization*. If you were to go back in Gen. 1, God made the great living creatures and all that—'nepesh/napesh.' It simply means *life, bubbling life, life with movement*. When you keep the Sabbath, God says, 'let those people be revitalized/rejuvenated.' In fact, we will see in another Scripture, where it says that the Sabbath rejuvenated God. *Now, how do you figure that?*

We'll take a look at that. In Gen., we talked about the Lord God made man, talking about making Adam. What did He say about that?

Genesis 2:7: "Then the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.**" A 'nepesh,' merely *a breathing, vitalized, moving being with life*. The way it is read is revitalized.

You will see how important the Sabbath is to God in the way He phrases it; Exodus 31:13: "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, 'Truly you shall keep My Sabbath ... [Shabbat] ...for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I am the LORD Who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is Holy to you. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death...'" (vs 13-14).

This doesn't mean 'be put to death.' This is 'to death, he must die.' The word *die* or *death* is twice in here. You don't get that in the English but it's in the Hebrew. This is a double meaning. It's a one-two punch, if I can put it that way. God means business here. He's not kidding.

"...for whoever does *any* work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done, **but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest...**" (vs 14-15). Again, a play on words. This is 'Shabbat Sabbaton'—twice. In other words, a Sabbath of solemn rest.

In Lev. 23 we have all the Holy Days mentioned. Talking about the Day of Atonement, about not doing any manner of work; Leviticus 23:32: "It shall be to you a **Sabbath of rest...**" 'Shabbat Sabbaton.' Again, a double meaning. A double one-two punch. He doesn't say that all that often, but when He does you better believe it, He means it.

Exodus 31:17: "It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, **and on the seventh day He rested**, (ceased) **and was refreshed**"—He was *rejuvenated*. Wait a minute. God is a Spirit. How is a spirit being revitalized, rejuvenated? *He's using human words to describe how He felt on the Sabbath!* Man is to imitate God.

So, when He ceased working on the sixth day and blessed and hallowed the seventh day, it was as though—implied in the Hebrew—He sat back and was *very satisfied*. He looked at it and WOW! it was like looking at a perfect Earth. It was like seeing the Grand Canyon for the first time. It's like going into Yosemite Valley and you see El Capitan, North Dome and Half Dome for the first time. It is absolutely magnificent! You know the feeling that sometimes you get when you see something like that. It was like trying to picture God in the same way that He was so satisfied *it was as though He was rejuvenated*. No, not physically. He wasn't tired. He didn't say, 'Oh, I had a tough day at the office:

- Do you know how hard it was rearranging those electrons, protons and neutrons?
- Do you know how hard it was:
 - ✓ to get that atmosphere just right?
 - ✓ to get the droplets of the water?
 - ✓ to show the waters above and the waters below?
 - ✓ to put that moon where it is and the Earth?
 - ✓ to get everything turning around?
- Do you know how hard that was?

Man, I'm beat! *No, no, no!* That wasn't it. He was satisfied with His work. Just like you do a work.

Can you imagine Van Gogh painting and he steps back and he looks at his painting and you know he's satisfied. Or a great sculptor who finally finishes his work and he sits back and he looks at that piece and he says, 'Man, that is good.' That's how God was. We are to be revitalized in the same way that God is. We are to put ourselves in God's shoes in that regard. We are to look upon the Sabbath in that way.

That is what I want to emphasize here, on the Sabbath. We're not going to go with all the ins and outs in other places about keeping the Sabbath, etc. This was a concept of the Sabbath. *A cycle of the seventh day of the seven-day cycle.* A day sanctified. A day hallowed for relaxation and worship of God. *That is the end of the cycle of the Sabbath for our purposes today.*

We will go to another seven-day cycle. I can do that in just a few minutes. In Exo. 21, we have the beginning of the judgments and notice what we have:

Exodus 21:2: "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years. And in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself. If he was married, then his wife shall go out with him" (v 2-3).

He's to serve six years because he had troubles or got into economic difficulties, I don't know. Too much credit card debt, maybe? I don't know but it's tough and he couldn't make ends meet. He says, 'I need a break. I can't survive. So, he sells himself. God says, 'Okay, if your brother does that, six years, but in the seventh year, he goes out free.'

We'll see where God says in Deut., and in Lev. God says, 'Send him forth with of your own abundance.' You are not to just send him off empty handed. Notice something interesting here:

Verse 4: "If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself."

If he comes as a single man and the master servants and he marries one of them, he didn't pay for it, the master gave him the girl to be a wife and then in the seventh year he wants to go out free, the master says, 'No, the wife and kids they're mine. I gave them to you.' That's kind of harsh in a way. God is saying, 'Hold on now. You went in by yourself. You go out by yourself. You took your master's woman, one of his slaves, one of his servants and you had children by them. He fed you. He clothed you. You want to go out that's okay. You got yourself into that mess. You should not have done that, but you did. Okay, you did. I made provision for it, but what you got from your master, you leave with him.' That's a harsh lesson but a tough one. But notice:

Verse 5: "And if the servant shall plainly say, 'I love my master, my wife, and my sons. I do not want to go out free,' his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door or to the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever"

(vs 5-6). That's just the way the system was set up in ancient Israel.

We're going to cover more of that in part three, what God also said about different aspects of it. That gets us into this cycle that he is not to be made a servant for more than six years. In terms of freedom and liberty, there are three types of freedom:

1. political freedom
2. individual freedom
3. national freedom

Many a person on this planet, down through history, has not chosen individual freedom. It's fascinating!

There is a series of lectures on history and freedom. National freedom, yes, but individual freedom, many a person wants security. Down through the ages they have chosen to be ruled over by tyrants, by dictators and by kings, because they don't have the burden of caring for themselves.

- the king will provide the food
- he will provide the land
- he will provide safety
- he will prove a job

Sort of like socialism! They'll provide everything. I don't have to do anything.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Psalm 104:30-31
- 2) Genesis 1:31
- 3) Genesis 2:2-3
- 4) Exodus 16:16-21, 23-28
- 5) Genesis 26:2-5
- 6) Exodus 23:12
- 7) Exodus 20:8-11
- 8) Exodus 23:12
- 9) Genesis 2:7
- 10) Exodus 31:13-15
- 11) Leviticus 23:32
- 12) Exodus 31:17
- 13) Exodus 21:2-6

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The Cycles of Seven III

God Isn't Fair, God is Righteous

Michael Heiss—September 30, 2015

This morning we're going to continue more or less where we left off, but I have to back up and partially apologize.

Yesterday, I finished up the presentation on the Sabbath and I left some stuff hanging. So, we're going to go back and rehash that.

Before I do, there's a basic, fundamental principle that we all need to realize and that is this: When you look at the statutes of God, His judgments and His ordinances as you find them in the books of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Exodus, remember one thing, ***they all reflect the mind of God!*** Not my mind, not your mind, but they reflect the mind of God. This how He sees it and we need to learn to see things as He sees them, and that is not always easy.

God is unlimited. He is all-powerful, but He has limited Himself. In a way it reminds me of a comment once made by Peter the Great, one of the great Czars of Russia, at least he's reported to have said this—maybe he didn't say it, maybe it was falsely attributed to him, but I can see him saying it—"I don't rule Russia; 10,000 clerics rule Russia." Meaning, of course, no matter how hard he tried, and he was a pretty autocratic Czar, he couldn't get things through to the far-flung provinces. There were just too many people. He couldn't get anything done. Look at Congress. Do you think they can get anything done? That's just the way it is, human nature.

So, God has limited Himself in that he's working through human beings. When God gives His Law—His statutes, ordinances, judgments—He knows human nature. He knows how people generally react. He's trying to:

1. improve a condition
2. promote a condition
3. reduce, lessen or eliminate an excessive negative

When you read them, ask yourself these questions:

- What is God getting at?
- What is He trying to accomplish?
- What is He trying to do through this particular ordinance?

I think that one of the best ways to illustrate this is through a presentation I gave on the death penalty, to see what God did with that and how He also limited it. God was concerned about something, very much.

Gen. 9—this is the time period right after the Flood. God blesses Noah and his sons (v 1) and talks about

Genesis 9:2, God is speaking: "And the fear of you and dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth..."

Verse 5: "And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed by man—for He [God] made man in the image of God" (vs 5-6):

- there is our principle
- there is the statement
- you commit a capital crime
- you commit murder
- you die

No explanation! That's just a general statement. God limited Himself in that, because He put a condition upon that. You will see the mind of God at work:

Deuteronomy 17:2: "If there is found among you, inside any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, in breaking His covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the forces of heaven, which I have forbidden, and if it is told you, and you have heard and inquired diligently, and, behold, it is true and the thing is certain, that such abomination is done in Israel; then you shall bring forth that man or that woman who has committed that evil thing to your gates, even that man or that woman, and shall stone them with stones until they die.... [the limitation] ...At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death" (vs 2-6).

Consider this: God is concerned and His concern somewhat reflect the philosophy of the American judicial system. We say, 'Better that a hundred people should go free, even though they've committed a crime, than one man should be unjustly convicted. God is not getting at that so much. What He's getting at is: Did this person actually commit the crime? How do you know that he committed the crime?

If you've ever watched any of the series of 48 Hours or Dateline, you will see all kinds of crimes committed and how they go about trying to

prove who did what. If you don't have a direct witness there is no death penalty. You must have two witnesses. Many states have abolished the death penalty because they found that people on death row—with the advent of DNA, CSI procedures—they're innocent. They didn't do it. Therefore, they're eliminating the death penalty.

God knew that could happen. I haven't studied all those cases. I can't lay claim to the hundreds of cases that have come about, but the ones that I have read is considerable, and not one of those cases listed two or more witnesses. It was either circumstantial evidence, or you had conflicted evidence, but it was enough evidence to convict the person. Really, according to God's rule, not enough to impose the death penalty. The death penalty should never have been imposed or have tried to be imposed, in the first place. You've got to have two or three witnesses.

What about the condition? Somebody enters the house, stabs a person to death or shoots him, whatever it is, and unbeknownst to him there's a family member hiding in the house. Someone else is in the house he doesn't know about. He sees it and he testifies in a court of law, *I saw him do it. I saw him stab the man to death.* One witness, no good, not enough for the death penalty. Why? Because how do you know he's telling the truth?

Of course, several witnesses could lie, that's true, but God crossed the line with two. When you read this you realize that God is thinking, 'Okay, I'm dealing with these human beings. There's a lot less chance for two witnesses to be mistaken than there is for one.' God is willing to forego the death penalty in order to make sure an innocent man is not convicted and executed. That doesn't mean that you can't convict a man of a crime. It doesn't mean you can't punish him some other way, but not the death penalty.

When you read this statute, you realize what God is getting at. You talk about witnesses, I'll show you where even two or more witnesses can get it all fouled up. Let's take a look at the trial of Jesus. You want to talk about false witnesses, come turn with me to the Gospel of Mark. If you can read between the lines, you will see that Jesus had to use connivance to get Himself convicted to be crucified. If He hadn't done it, He might not have been crucified and the whole plan of God could have gone awry.

Mark 14:55: "And the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were trying to find testimony against Jesus, to put Him to death; but they did not find *any*. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.... [they couldn't get their act together] ...And some rose up and bore

false witness against Him, saying, 'We heard Him say, "I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" But neither did their testimonies agree with one another" (vs 55-59).

They could not get two witnesses to agree. You have to remember that the high priest understood that law. The Sanhedrin understood that law. Even though they were not the most righteous of men, they did try to obey that particular aspect of the law. They could not convict and execute a person or send him to Pilate to be executed, unless they had two or more witnesses.

Verse 60: "Then the high priest stood up in the center *and* questioned Jesus, saying, 'Have You nothing to *say in answer to* what these are testifying against You?' But He remained silent and answered nothing..." (vs 60-61). He didn't say a word! All the way through the trial He didn't say much of anything.

"...Again the high priest questioned Him, and said to Him, 'Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?'" (v 61). You can just picture Jesus thinking to Himself, 'I've got my Father's plan in mind here. We've got to get this done. I came to die for the sins of the world. If I don't give them an excuse, if I don't give them something to hang their hat on to convict Me and send Me to Pilate, it's all going to go down the tubes. I can't let that happened.' So, what did He say?

Verse 62: "And Jesus said, 'I AM. And you shall see the Son of man sitting at *the* right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven'... [look at the results] ...Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments *and* said, 'What further need do we have of witnesses?'" (vs 62-63).

We don't need witnesses for this. We all heard Him. This us utter blasphemy. That's all, in their minds, that they needed, but they understood that you had to have two or more witnesses. They couldn't even get two witnesses.

Yes, you can have lying witnesses, but God wanted to do His best. He wasn't like Zeus, throwing his thunderbolts. Every time a tribunal met, every time you had a case coming before the Sanhedrin or a local court and a bad decision was rendered, God wasn't like Zeus hurling thunderbolts and said, 'Bad decision!' He didn't do that. He lets *man* do that. That's why He put the safeguards in.

With that in mind, Exo. 21 is where they said we're talking about a cycle of seven because this is six years out of seven.

Exodus 21:1: "And these *are* the judgments which you shall set before them. If you buy a

Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years. And in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.... [you will let him go] ...If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself. If he was married, then his wife shall go out with him.... [here comes the crux where we left off yesterday] ...**If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself”** (vs 1-4). I remember first reading this and I thought: something's wrong here. This isn't right. This is not just. As I have said before: this is not fair.

I did give one message based on fairness and I tried to point out that there is no word for *fair* in Hebrew. The Bible doesn't have the word *fair* in it. God is never declared to be *fair*. He never calls Himself *fair*.

- God is kind
- God is merciful
- God is good
- God is righteous
- God is Holy

But He never calls Himself *fair!* What is *fair*? What is fair to thee and what is fair to me may not be fair to the guy behind the tree. You've heard the old saying. What is fair?

This administration, like Mr. Obama using *fairness*; everything is *fairness* with him. I remember in 2008 when the campaign was getting going and Charlie Gibson of ABC News nailed Mr. Obama on this one. Mr. Obama did not have an answer, except for *fairness*. He wanted heavy taxes and Charlie Gibson pointed out, ‘Mr. Obama, history has shown that every time you reduce the capital gain tax:

- money flows in
- the economy perks up
- money flows to the economy
- jobs are created

Why do you want to raise the capital gain tax?’ Obama kind of stammered and said, ‘Fairness, it's a matter of fairness. It's not fair that some people should pay a high tax rate of 35% or 30%, or whatever it is, while some of these rich guys only 15% or 10% or whatever it is for capital gain.’ It's the only answer he had. He said that the American people want a ‘fair shot.’ They want a fair shake. I'm saying, ‘I don't know what that means.’ I kiddingly said, but it's true.

I'm a great baseball fan. I love the game of baseball. I know what fair means in baseball. I know that if a batter drives a line-drive shot down the left field line, if that ball falls on the left side of the line it's a foul ball. Back batter, back to the plate, redo,

reset. But if that ball falls on the line or inside the line, fair ball, in play. I know what that means, but I don't know what *fair* is. It's an American institution. It's an American phenomenon. Kid's all love a baseball diamond or a football game:

- Hey, it's not fair!
- You're hitting!
- It's not fair!
- You interrupted with him!
- That's just not fair!
- It's not fair he got that job!
- It's not fair, he won the lotto!
- It's not fair!

We say it all the time. God doesn't care about fairness. *He cares about righteousness! He cares about justice!* Sometimes His justice... We don't see justice as He sees it. We have to learn to see things as He sees them. Sometimes that can be hard. It can be difficult. It could be a ‘hard’ saying.

Let's take a look at a ‘hard’ saying, that some of Jesus' disciples couldn't take. Then we will see where God talks about His mind and His thoughts *vs* our mind and our thoughts.

All of this is being set up to explain what we have here, in Exo. 21. Then we will pull a Paul Harvey. Remember Paul Harvey? *Now you know the rest of the story!* The rest of the story is not in Exo. 21. The rest of the story is in Deut., and when we see what the rich landowner had to give the man when he went out. We will see why God said what he did.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is talking to His disciples, some of those people who were following Him. He wasn't saying this to the scribes or the Pharisees or the Sadducees.

John 6:51: “I am the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.’ Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, ‘How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?’ Therefore, Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me. This is the Bread, which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever.’ These things He said in *the synagogue* as He was teaching in

Capernaum. Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said, ‘**This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear it?”** (vs 51-60).

Drink the blood of the Son, eat His flesh. This is barbarism! This is cannibalism! This is what they were saying. ‘I can’t take this.’ They didn’t understand.

Verse 61: “But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, ‘Does this offend you? What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before? It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. **The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life”** (vs 61-63).

Verse 66: “From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Are you also desiring to go away?’ ... [Simon Peter gave the right answer] ... Then Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life’” (vs 66-68). *The Author of the judgments in Exo. 21 has the words of eternal life!*

I would think that this man got a wife from the master, had kids and he ought to be able to go out with his wife. After all, he worked hard. You don’t want to separate families—do you? *No!* Then, why would God do this?

Let’s see what God says to me in my impudence, in my arrogance, in my ignorance. This is what God declares:

Isaiah 55:8: “**For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,**” says the LORD. ‘**For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts”** (vs 8-9). *You need to see how I see it and I will show you why I judge this way!*

Now that we have that in mind, let us see what is going on here. In Exo. 21 this person got sold to a master, he served him six years. Whether he was married or single, he can go out in the seventh year. **There’s our cycle of seven. The seventh year was the year of freedom!** If the master *gives him a wife* and she has bore him sons, then no! Why is God saying that?

In essence, you can see the mind of God at work: ‘You’re single and you want to get married, then you go get a grubstake. Go work for someone, earn money, then you go out and get a wife. Don’t think that you can go work at free room and board, the master gives you a wife and you can go and leave with that woman. You can’t do that. I’m telling you, the way you get a wife is that you go and

work for money and then you have money to support a wife.’

We’re about to see the rest of the story. Those words may be somewhat harsh to the laborer, not fair to the laborer, but notice what God says to the rich landowner to the master; see what God commands him to do:

Deuteronomy 15:12: “**If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you.** And when you send him out free from you, you shall not let him go away empty. You shall **liberally** bestow upon him from your flock, and from your grain floor, and from your winepress; with what the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him” (vs 12-14).

Goats, maybe sheep, cattle, dry food, whatever it is, this man is going out with some substance. No, he’s not going to be rich in gold and silver and cattle, that’s true, but he’s going to go out with substance.

God tells the master, ‘You don’t send him out with nothing. You give to him.’ If the laborer did that and left, he now has substance. He now has a grubstake. He now can go out and afford a wife. In reality God is fair after all! He doesn’t use the word *fair* but He’s righteous, but He’s setting down parameters. He says:

1. None of the socialist stuff.
You don’t go in there, take from the government, in this case take from the master, and leave with the master’s possessions (wife he gave you) and those kids.
2. No, you don’t do that because you didn’t earn that wife.

Granted, Jacob did. Jacob did agree with Laban to serve. That’s different, that was a separate contract. This is not a contract. He just married one of the master’s women that were there in his empire, so to speak; it’s his landmass.

Notice what God says to the master, v 15: “And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you. Therefore, I command you this word today.” So, you better give to him. Now, sometimes, the man doesn’t want to leave, he doesn’t want to leave the master. ‘I don’t want to go out and earn a living. I don’t know.’

It’s sort of like the homeless. There’s so many homeless people. I feel for the homeless people, I really do. I’m not a hard taskmaster down on the homeless. Anybody remember Mitch Snyder? He was the hero of the homeless. The one who was the crusader to help the homeless. Years and years

ago they asked Mitch, 'Mitch, how many homeless are there?' He said, 'I don't know.' 'Come on Mitch. Give us a number.' 'I don't know. I'll say there are three million.'

All of a sudden the word went forth, three million homeless. There never were three million homeless. There weren't even 500,000 homeless. In fact, one of the men, one of the homeless people who actually froze to death, made headlines. His brother said, 'No! He had a home. He had a room. He could come here and live any time he wanted. We could not get him to stay with us.' You couldn't commit him to an institution. You just can't go out there and incarcerate him in an institution somewhere. We couldn't do that. So, he froze to death of his own free will and volition. Some people just don't like that freedom. There are three types of freedom:

1. national freedom
2. political freedom
3. personal freedom

We in this country believe that everybody wants freedom. Everybody believes in freedom. No, that's not true. Down through the ages that's not been proven true. What is the most fundamental desire? *Power, that's what's desired!* There are many countries where people aren't free and they don't mind it because:

- they get food
- they have a bed to sleep on
- they get a job guaranteed them by the government

They don't want freedom, as long as you:

- feed the belly
- give me food
- warm me up

I don't care!

Political freedom? *They don't care about political freedom!* It's like China today and even Russia. Historically these countries never had freedom. The people don't care for freedom. National freedom? Oh, yeah. National freedom they have. Look at Mr. Putin. He has national freedom and many Russians back him up for national freedom. Political freedom? No, they don't have political freedom. Political freedom means that you can choose your rulers, you can vote, you can argue against certain policies—you'd better not.

If you want your own economic freedom—whether it's in imperialist China or imperial Russia—the chairman will say, 'God bless you my son.' They don't believe in God. Go make lots of money for China. They don't care. Be a butcher, baker, or candlestick maker, build a better

mousetrap. Don't bad mouth the government; don't criticize any government policies, but you can do whatever you want. They had freedom like that. But the majority of people don't want that freedom.

That's why God says, 'If the person doesn't want to leave, then you bore the ears through with an awl and he shall be your servant forever till the day he dies.' He chose that.

My point here is that this judgment of God was to show that:

1. don't look for something for nothing
2. don't try to get something from your master that wasn't yours in the first place

If you go in by yourself, you're entitled to go out by yourself. If your wife and you go in together, you're entitled to go out together. Don't expect to marry someone in the master's harem, or the master's group of women or however he has it lined up and expect to go out free. That woman was part of the master's realm.

I wouldn't necessarily think that way, but God thinks that way. If anybody has a problem with it, you got to realize you got a problem with God. I had to come to terms with it until I understood what God was saying. That's the way it is. Then God says, 'However, if he's by himself or with his wife, and he goes out, you feed him, you give him grain, you give him wine, you give him of your flock.'

You see, God put restrictions on everybody. *These judgments reflect the mind of God!* That's why it is in Exo. 21 that if you go in and you take a wife from your master, you can't take your wife with you. Don't do that. *That's the lesson, don't do that!* Go in, save enough money then you'll have your wife.

Does anybody remember the name, Josiah Wedgwood? Chinaware? the fine china? There's a fascinating story about him. He had smallpox growing up. He was from a potters field in Burslem, England—filthy, gritty, grimy. One day a rich relative, a squire, came by and his beautiful daughter was there. They fell in love at first sight. Here was this pot-marked, Josiah Wedgwood and there was the beautiful daughter Sarah. They fell in love. She brought him books to read. He wanted to marry her, but he couldn't marry her. How could he? He didn't have any money.

All of a sudden he said, 'I've got to do something.' He was a potter. Wow, was he a good one! He said, 'One day I'm going to marry her. I'm going to be the best potter England ever saw.' He made good his boast. He created pottery, porcelain.

He sold it for fancy prices to the rich people in London and elsewhere in the realm. He gathered up more money, as much as he could. Finally he had enough money and the rich squire said, ‘Well, I guess you’ve done it. I guess you’ve earned it.’ He had to give his daughter to Josiah Wedgwood.

Remember the Scripture says, ‘He who is diligent, he shall stand before kings.’ Josiah Wedgwood didn’t stand before kings, that’s true. He was only knighted by Queen Victoria, the most powerful monarch in England.

That’s the thing that God says to do. ***You go, you earn and you get your wife. You don't go in and try to take a wife from a master and expect to leave with her.*** To some of us, that may not set right, but if you think it through, you’ll see God’s wisdom.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 9:5-6
- 2) Deuteronomy 17:2-6
- 3) Mark 14:55-63
- 4) Exodus 21:1-4
- 5) John 6:51-63, 66-68
- 6) Isaiah 55:8-9
- 7) Deuteronomy 15:12-15

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The Cycles of Seven IV

Land Sabbath/Year of Release/Jubilee Year

Michael Heiss—October 1, 2015

Good morning, everyone! What I hope to do in this final message is to sort of wrap up the land Sabbath, the Shemitah, the seventh year of release and an overview of the Jubilee year and, hopefully, read you a portion from a news clipping I read years ago showing that God's covenant with those people of Israel is valid even today in the 20th and 21st century.

God made certain promises and He keeps those promises. You and I are not under the Old Covenant. Technically, we're not in the New Covenant, yet, but we're under the terms of the New Covenant. The New Covenant will be firmly established with the return of Jesus Christ.

The Jewish people in what is known as 'Eres Yisra'el,' the land of Israel, were told to do certain things. If they did them, God promised He would bless them. I'm going to read you some astounding accounts of what God did during and after what we would call the *Shemitah year or the land Sabbath*, what He did with crops and what He did to stop the locust plague. You will be amazed. This is historically documented. Of course, it didn't get very much play in the press, obviously. You don't want to really acknowledge God very much. Nevertheless, it's there.

The Land Sabbath:

Here we have the basis of it, Exodus 23:10: “And you shall sow your land six years, and shall gather in the fruits of it. But **the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie still**, so that the poor of your people may eat. And what they leave, the animals of the field shall eat. In the same way you shall deal with your vineyard *and* with your olive-grove” (vs 10-11).

Let us look clearly at v 11. It talks about in “...the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie still...” The word for *rest* is the basic Hebrew word that means *leave it alone, unplowed, don't touch it, let it go*. The word for *still* means *unused*.

If you want to have a more literal translation to get the feel of it, it would be *let it go and leave it alone*. One act is to let the land go. Hey, come on, stand back, you've been working it for six years, let it go, let it rest. Once it's away from you, stay away from it and leave it be. It's sort of a play on words in a way. It means to *let it go and let it be*. In that way, the land would rest and be still.

Something is very interesting, here. You will notice what it says in that same verse, v 11: “...so

that **the poor of your people** may eat....” I thought God was supposed to bless the people. I thought there weren't supposed to be poor people there.

Verse 3: “Neither shall you be partial to **a poor man** in his cause.” A poor man? Yes, *they're poor!*

Verse 6: “You shall not pervert the judgment due to **your poor** in his cause.” Now notice something that God says which is very striking. God made almost a blockbuster statement, if we can use that language. What does He say?

Deuteronomy 15:11: “**For the poor shall never cease out of the land**. Therefore, I command you saying, ‘You shall open your hand wide to your brother, **to your poor, and to your needy**, in your land.’”

It was also echoed by the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. Let us see what He had to say on this subject about the poor. Let's look at the Gospels. We'll find the same thing in Matt. 26, Mark 14 and John 12.

Matthew 26:6: “Now, when Jesus was in Bethany, in Simon the leper's house, A woman came to Him with an alabaster flask of ointment, very precious, and poured *it* on His head as He sat down *to eat*. But when His disciples saw *it*, *they* became indignant *and* said, ‘What reason *is there* for this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for much, and *the money given to the poor*.’ But Jesus knew *this* and said to them, ‘Why do you cause trouble for this woman? For she has performed a good work toward Me. **For you have the poor with you always**, but you do not always have Me’” (vs 6-11).

Why are there poor people? A *number of reasons!* Sometimes, it's time and chance. Sometimes accidents happen. Sometimes the husband dies and leaves the wife alone. As we used to say when I was growing up, sometimes you have what goes for a husband is a dirty ratfink and leaves her. So, she's stuck. Some cases, it's just plain poor judgment. There's an old saying, ‘Poor people tend to have poor ways.’ We used to say, ‘You can take the boy out of the country but you can't take the country out of the boy.’ You can take certain people out of poverty, but that doesn't mean you can take the *poverty-thinking* out of the person. For any number of reasons you could have the poor.

For further instruction in this land Sabbath, Leviticus 25:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses in

Mount Sinai, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, “When you come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath to the LORD”’’’ (vs 1-2).

This is also a play on words. It’s amazing how many times you see this. What it really means is: ‘The land is to cease; a Sabbath ceasing to the Lord.’ While the term *Sabbath* is listed here once, it actually appears twice in the Hebrew. It’s a ceasing to the Lord, double emphasis. God puts emphasis on this land Sabbath. This is very important to Him.

To you and me, living today, we’re not living in that economy. We’re not under this Old Covenant. It doesn’t mean that much to us. To them and to the God Who gave it to them, it meant a lot. That’s why He put it this way. So, He says:

Verse 4: “**But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest to the land...**” This Sabbath of rest, this is what is called ‘Shabbat sabbaton’ and consequently, it is *a solemn rest, a solemn Sabbath*. It’s a Sabbath to the Lord. So, we’re told:

Verse 5: “You shall not reap that which grows of its own accord for your harvest, neither gather the grapes of your undressed vine *as a harvest. It is a year of rest to the land.*” It’s a *solemn rest* to the land. *Not just a rest—solemn!*

- God’s driving home the point!
- He’s serious!
- He does mean business!

When it came to the Day of Atonement, we’ll see the same language. God doesn’t use this language with every Holy Day. He doesn’t use this language every time you see the word *Sabbath*, but He uses it here. So, the Day of Atonement is a very special day to God.

Leviticus 23:32: “*It shall be to you a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict yourselves....*” That phrase is again, ‘Shabbat sabbaton,’ *a solemn rest*. Other Holy Days, God doesn’t put it that way. There’s something special about the Day of Atonement. Perhaps because that is the day that symbolizes the complete wiping out of sin, the complete cleansing of the people. On that day is when the high priest went into the Holy of Holies with the incense, and Israel’s sins were wiped clean, *physically speaking*, not spiritually, but in terms of being ritually pure for temple worship. That was very important.

To show you what God thinks of it and those who broke it... God was very serious and this is one of the reasons that He drove Israel into captivity.

Leviticus 26:33: “And I will scatter you among the nations, and will draw out a sword after you. And your land shall be a desolation, and your

cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy its Sabbaths, as long as it lies waste, and you are in your enemies' land; then shall the land rest and enjoy its Sabbaths. As long as it lies waste it shall rest because it did not rest in your Sabbaths when you lived on it” (vs 33-35).

God says, ‘I’m going to give the land rest. After all, whose land is it? It’s My land, not yours. I give it to you. You have homes on it. You plant. You sow your vineyards, your fields, but remember, the land is Mine. I *order* you to let it rest on the seventh year. You didn’t do it. You’ll be in captivity for 70 years so the land can have it’s rest.’

He says the same thing, again, 2-Chronicles 36:20: “And the ones who had escaped from the sword, he carried away to Babylon where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia, To fulfill the Word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days of the desolation it kept the Sabbath to the full measure of seventy years” (vs 20-21).

God says, ‘I’m going to give My land a rest. You will be in captivity. When the land has had its rest, I will bring you back, because I have plans for you.’ He also had some secret plans about His Son, which He did not tell them at the time. God had a purpose for it.

This land and this promise was made to the people living at that time, but it isn’t just for that time. Now, I want to read to you about a certain kibbutz in the land called ‘Eres Yisra’ēl.’ In that land, the land God gave to Israel by the hand of Moses. Moses didn’t go in, he lost his temper. Joshua led them in. Remember, the Old Covenant is still there.

This was a kibbutz. It was a religious kibbutz, not a secular one. What happened was a certain Rahj, a certain great religious leader had about 500 residents in this kibbutz. They were going to start almost a Shemitah year, beginning of the seventh year land Sabbath. They didn’t plant everything until toward the end of the sixth year.

- Where were crops?
- What are they going to eat?
- What was going to happen?

Let me read as it was printed:

The miracle promised by the Torah had been very much in evidence for anyone whose stubbornness has not blinded him to the obvious. As if extending an invitation to all of Israel to observe Shemitah unconcernedly the wheat crop that year was 300,000 tons, double the amount of the

previous year. In characteristic fashion, the directors of the agricultural ministry told the press conference that the bumper crop was merely the result of aggregate improvement in farming technique. Similar explanations were offered for the bumper crop of citrus fruits in the orchards of the Negev.

That, too? You know secular-minded people. They do not acknowledge the hand of God.

The people...however, had no doubt whatsoever as to what was responsible for the sudden prosperity. The moshav orchards produced three times their normal crop, a jump from an annual sum of 700 containers to more than 2,000. Jewish agency representatives came to investigate this highly publicized phenomenon, but could not find any rational reason for it.

Well, the reason for it is, there was no rational reason. God said, 'If you do this, then in the sixth year I will command the land to produce.' That's exactly what God did. These were carnal-minded people, to use our old expression. They do not accept the name of Jesus. They do not accept Him as the Son of God. They are Jews, but they acknowledge the God Who led them into the land, or the God as they understand Him. He told them to do this and they did. God said, 'If you do this, then I will do that.' They did this and God did it. There's more:

During the three past Shemitah years...

We're going back 21 years over the years time.

...observed by these faithful farmers, there was no shortage of wondrous happenings. Fourteen years ago the orchard, which produced the triple crop last year, was written off as 'certain failure' by expert agronomists. The trees were planted shortly before the advent of the Shemitah year and were then abandoned on the orders of the Rahj of Mendelson, which forbade his followers to perform any labor in caring for them.

That's what God said, 'Don't touch them. Leave them alone. Don't plow. Don't harvest—for food, of course, you can pick apples or pears or whatever you've got, citrus fruit—but do nothing. Do not put fertilizer on them. Leave them alone. That's what they did.'

The experts predicted that the saplings would die in a matter of months unless they received the intensive care accorded to other trees planted at the same time. The

people of this kibbutz ignored the gloomy predictions and their faith in God was vindicated. Their trees fared even better than the trees of the neighbors.

Another amazing thing. Then there was the miracle of the rotten seeds.

When it came time for planting in the eighth year...

Remember, now, this was the first time they'd had this kibbutz. This the first time they had planted anything. They needed seed to plant in the eighth year. They didn't have any seed. They went around to neighbors, 'You have any seed? You have any seed?' A couple of the irreligious people said, 'We do have some of these old seeds but we don't know if they're any good or not.' They found such seeds and they planted them and once again, a bumper crop. God said that that's what He would do. If that isn't enough, I still marvel at this:

Perhaps one of the most striking miracles of all was that of the locust plague. All of the settlements around this religious kibbutz suffered that Shemitah year from produce-devouring insects, but when the army of locusts reached the borders of...it miraculously came to a halt, as if someone had issued an order that the fields of the Shemitah observers were not to be touched.

They just stopped. They were seen on the fences mulling around, but they never went over the fence into the crop of the Shemitah believers. There's no doubt, God told those locusts, 'Halt! Go no further!' That Old Covenant, believe me, is still in effect and God still honors it. Is God going to honor it in lands other than that land? *I don't know!* I'm a little hesitant because:

- God didn't say it to the people in Africa
- He didn't say it to the people in Asia
- He didn't say it to the people in Central and South America

He gave the command to the people of Israel who went into that land that God called His land, but it's still there. God still honors His Sabbatical year.

The Year of Release:

Along with that, we also have what we call, the *year of release*. This is not specifically the land Sabbath, but the land Sabbath is not what we're looking at specifically. This is what God says was to happen:

Deuteronomy 15:1: "At the end of *every* seven years you shall make a release"—Shemitah. That's where we get the name.

Verse 2: "And this *is* the manner of the release: Every man who has a loan to his neighbor shall release it. He shall not exact *it* from his neighbor or from his brother because **it is called the LORD'S release.**"

Verse 4: "Except when there shall be no poor among you. For the LORD shall greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance to possess it."

Remember, we talked about before? God just said that He'll bless them. There's a caveat there and Fred Coulter has often pointed this out: IF, IF, IF!

Verse 5: "**Only if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God** to be careful to observe all these commandments which I command you today." They didn't do that.

You can go back and you can see for the first couple of generations, they went into the land. Read in Joshua and Judges 1—the people during the lifetime of Joshua and the generation of the first judges, they obeyed God. After that, they went after one false god after another. Just read the book of Judges. Every time, God had to bail them out with a judge. That's why, although God said He would bless them, He said, '**Only IF you obey Me. Obey My voice. Do what I tell you to do.**' They didn't do it.

That's why there was really 'poor' among them. They didn't realize what they were doing. They really didn't, but it didn't matter. God said, 'Here's My Law and statutes. You see the pillars, obey.' They wouldn't do it.

This year of release took place at the *end* of the seventh year. Remember, for agricultural purposes and for commercial purposes, the year does not begin in the spring—like with Passover, Nisan to Nisan—NO! It begins in the fall of the year with the Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah as Jews call it.

It begins on Tishri 1 and it ends 12 or 13 months later, depending on whether it's a leap year or not, on Elul 29. Elul always has 29 days. Just before our Feast of Trumpets, the day before, was Elul 29. *On that day the debts were released!* That doesn't mean that if you were a kind soul you couldn't have released them during the year. You could do that, but **you had to release them before sunset beginning the Feast of Trumpets!** What does God say:

Verse 6: "For the LORD your God blesses you as He promised you. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow...."

Verse 7: "If there is among you a poor man of one of your brothers inside any of your gates in your land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart..."

Verse 8: "But you shall open your hand wide..."

Verse 9: "Beware that there is not a thought in your wicked heart, saying, '**The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand,**' and your eye may be evil against your poor brother, and you give him nothing...."

Verse 10: "You shall surely give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him because for this thing the LORD your God shall bless you..."

Verse 11: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land...."

The point was, it was a national calendar and the seventh year was the seventh year for all of Israel. No such thing as the seventh year being a seventh year for one and another year being a seventh year for somebody else.

God is saying that if it's coming the fifth year and your brother needs a loan and you're saying that He needs \$10,000 and he can pay it back \$2,000 a year. 'I can do math! I can calculate. Wait a minute, \$2,000 the sixth year, \$2,000 the.... I'm just...' Abbot and Costello: as Costello would say, 'Hey, about 6,000 bucks just went south!' God says, 'Don't do that! Don't think that way! I will bless you. I will increase your harvest. I will increase your produce!' This was the *year of release*. Think of what a wonderful thing it would be.

The Jubilee Year:

We don't have time to go into the Jubilee year. In the 50th year, all debts released. You lost your home that you lived in, you could always redeem it if you could. If you couldn't, remember, God said that all the land was His. God said, 'This is your ancestral home. You shall not lose it.'

If you had a house in a walled city and you lost it and you couldn't redeem it. *Tough luck! You lost it!* But, if it was your home, your ancestral home, the home that God gave you, *it had to go back to you in the Jubilee year.* No great 'boom/bust.' You're not going to have thousands of people or more crowding into cities because they lost their homes. What an incredible blessing this would be to a country in its agricultural methods, in aiding in production. You would not have the terrible mess that we have today in this country.

So, God said, ‘The seventh year of release from the debts and of course in the Jubilee year, their homes. If he’s serving you, it doesn’t matter, if he serves you, he shall go back free.

Suppose he serves you before the Jubilee year? You know, it’s about 36 years and the 7th he shall go free. What if he’s sold to you in the 47th year or 48th year? ***The Jubilee year trumps the year of release!*** If I’m sold to somebody in the 47th year, I’m only going to serve 2½ years or so, because in the Jubilee year, God says, ‘You go back home. You are released.’

- that’s how important the Jubilee year was to Him
- it’s how important the Shemitah year was to Him
- it’s how important the Sabbatical year, the land Sabbath, was to Him.

It was a rest. It’s a rejuvenation so that a nation would always be on a sound, economic footing, not like we have today with a horrific ‘boom/bust.’ There would be no massive wealth in the hands of just a few people.

That doesn’t mean that God is against wealth. It doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t have ‘rich’ people. He wasn’t talking about that. When you have 4%, 5%, or 3% of the population in control of 80% or 90% of a country’s wealth, it’s unconscionable almost.

If people think it’s bad in the U.S., you can go back in history, back to the Pharaohs of Egypt, and back to the rulers of Babylon. In fact, at the beginning of the rise of England, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, 2% of the population—that would be Her Royal Majesty, herself, the clerics and the nobles—owned over 85% of all the land and the worth in England. Go to France, where Louis XIV reigned, it was even worse. They called him the ‘Sun King’ for nothing. He just bled his subjects.

That is not to happen in Israel! Therefore, you’ll always have a prosperous country! I hope this gives you an overall view of:

- the Sabbath year
- the Sabbath Day
- the land Sabbath
- the year of release
- the Jubilee year

I hope you’ll read more in Lev. 25 of the specific commands on the Jubilee year. It is fascinating.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 23:10-11, 3, 6

- 2) Deuteronomy 15:11
- 3) Matthew 26:6-11
- 4) Leviticus 25:1-2, 4-5
- 5) Leviticus 23:32
- 6) Leviticus 26:33-35
- 7) 2-Chronicles 36:20-21
- 8) Deuteronomy 15:1-2, 4-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Mark 14
- John 12
- Joshua
- Judges 1

MH:nfs

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