



Ye.

THE YEAR OF

Jubilee

ELDER KEITH J. WALKER

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

Written by
Elder Keith Joel Walker

Introduction

The word “Jubilee” in Hebrew is לְבּוֹן (pronounced “Yovel”). The term is derived from the root word לְבּוּן (Y-B-L), which means “to bring” or “to flow.”

In the context of the biblical Jubilee, it refers to the year of release and restoration that occurs every 50 years, during which debts are forgiven, and land is returned to its original owners. The Jubilee year is a time of liberation, celebration, and a fresh start for individuals and families within the community.

The concept of Yovel emphasizes themes of social justice, community, and divine providence, reflecting God’s intention for His people to have opportunities for renewal and restoration.

Seven Biblical Principles for Never Going Broke

1. Pay Your Tithes and Give Offerings: The first principle to never go broke is to pay your tithe to your pastor and give offerings into good soil.

Scriptures:

- Malachi 3:7-10 - “Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How

are we to return?’ Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

- Genesis 13:21 - “And the Lord said to Abram, ‘To your offspring I will give this land.’ So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.”
- Proverbs 3:9-10 - “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.”
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook teaches that giving tithes is not merely a duty but a way to elevate one’s own spiritual and material existence. When we give, we align ourselves with divine abundance.

2. Stewardship: Understand that everything you have is a gift from God.

- Scripture: Psalm 24:1 - “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.”
- Metaphorical Insight: Just as a gardener tends to a garden, cultivating it with care and diligence, we are

called to tend to our resources, nurturing them to bear fruit.

- Sage Commentary: The Chafetz Chaim emphasized that being a steward means recognizing that we are caretakers of God's creation. Our stewardship reflects our gratitude and responsibility.

3. Avoid Debt: Avoid unnecessary debt and live within your means.

- Scripture: Proverbs 22:7 - "The borrower is slave to the lender."
- Fable: The story of the grasshopper and the ant teaches us the value of preparing for the future. The ant works diligently and saves, while the grasshopper spends freely and faces hardship when winter comes.
- Proverbs 21:5 - "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Nachman of Breslov taught that living within one's means is a form of wisdom that leads to peace of mind. Debt creates anxiety and disturbs the soul.

4. Work Diligently: Hard work and diligence can lead to financial stability.

- Scripture: Proverbs 10:4 - "Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth."
- Poetic Insight: "In the fields of labor, where sweat

meets the soil, the seeds of prosperity are born from toil.”

- Ecclesiastes 9:10 - “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.”
- Sage Commentary: The Talmud teaches that work is a form of worship. By engaging in diligent labor, we fulfill our purpose and contribute to the world.

5. Save and Plan: Saving and planning for the future can help you weather financial storms.

- Scripture: Proverbs 21:20 - “The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down.”
- Allegory: The wise owl, known for its foresight, gathers food in the summer, preparing for the winter when resources are scarce. The foolish bird, who lives only for the moment, finds itself hungry when the cold winds blow.
- Proverbs 30:25 - “Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer.”
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Yisrael Salanter taught that saving is a form of self-discipline. It prepares us for unforeseen challenges and allows us to be generous when others are in need.

6. Generosity: Being generous can create a cycle of blessing.

- Scripture: Acts 20:35 - “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
- Tale: The tale of the widow’s mite illustrates that even the smallest acts of generosity, when given from the heart, can have great significance and lead to divine favor.
- Proverbs 11:25 - “A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”
- Sage Commentary: The Baal Shem Tov emphasized that generosity opens the gates of heaven. When we give, we not only help others but also invite blessings into our own lives.

7. Seek Counsel: Seeking wise counsel can help you avoid financial pitfalls.

- Scripture: Proverbs 15:22 - “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed.”
- Insight: Like a ship navigating through treacherous waters, wise counsel can be the lighthouse guiding you safely to your destination.
- Proverbs 19:20 - “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end, you will be counted among the wise.”
- Sage Commentary: The wisdom of our elders and mentors is invaluable. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein taught that seeking counsel is a sign of humility and strength.

8. Trust in God: Trusting in God for provision can alleviate financial anxiety.

- Scripture: Matthew 6:31-33 - “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”
- Poetic Insight: “In the stillness of faith, where worries cease to roam, the heart finds peace, and the soul finds home.”
- Philippians 4:19 - “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Hillel taught that faith in God and trust in His provision are foundational to a life of peace and abundance.

Seven Jewish Principles from the Old Testament

1. The Law of the Harvest: You reap what you sow.

- Scripture: Galatians 6:7 - “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.”
- Metaphor: Just as a farmer plants seeds in the ground, knowing they will yield a harvest, our actions and decisions will bear fruit in our lives.

2. The Jubilee Year: Every 50 years, debts are forgiven, and land is returned to its original owners.

- Scripture: Leviticus 25:10 - “Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan.”
- Allegory: The concept of jubilee teaches us about the importance of forgiveness and the cyclical nature of life and resources.

3. The Importance of Community: Support one another in times of need.

- Scripture: Deuteronomy 15:7-8 - “If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need.”
- Fable: The story of the bundle of sticks illustrates that when individuals come together, they are stronger than when they stand alone.

4. The Command to Save: Set aside a portion of your harvest.

- Scripture: Exodus 23:16 - “Celebrate the Festival

of Harvest with the firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field.”

- Metaphor: Like a wise squirrel storing nuts for winter, we are called to save a portion of our resources for future needs.

5. Honesty in Business: Fairness and integrity in transactions.

- Scripture: Proverbs 11:1 - “The Lord detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favor with him.”
- Insight: The tale of the honest merchant shows that integrity in business leads to lasting success and trust within the community.
- Leviticus 19:35-36 - “Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight, or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights.”
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk taught that honesty in business is a reflection of one’s character and a pathway to divine blessing.

6. The Value of Learning: Pursue wisdom and understanding.

- Scripture: Proverbs 4:7 - “The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”
- Poetic Insight: “In the pursuit of knowledge, the

heart finds its way, illuminating the path to prosperity each day.”

- Sage Commentary: The Chassidic master Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev emphasized that true wealth lies in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

7. Gratitude and Contentment: Recognizing and appreciating what you have.

- Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:13 - “That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.”
- Tale: The story of the grateful man who, despite his modest means, finds joy and contentment in his daily bread, teaches us that true wealth lies in gratitude.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18 - “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”
- Sage Commentary: Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach taught that gratitude transforms our perspective and opens our hearts to receive even more blessings.

The Year of Jubilee

1. Biblical Basis:

- The Year of Jubilee is outlined in Leviticus 25:8-55. It follows the cycle of seven sabbatical years, which

occur every seven years. After seven cycles of seven years (49 years), the 50th year is designated as the Jubilee year.

2. Restoration of Land:

- During the Jubilee year, all land that had been sold or transferred is to be returned to its original owners. This means that ancestral lands, which were often sold due to economic hardship, would revert to the families to whom they originally belonged.
- Leviticus 25:10 states: “Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan.”

3. Release of Debts:

- The Jubilee year also involves the forgiveness of debts. If someone had fallen into debt and sold their land or themselves into servitude, they would be freed during the Jubilee year, allowing them to start anew without the burden of past financial obligations.
- Leviticus 25:39-41 emphasizes that if a fellow Israelite becomes poor and sells themselves, they are to be treated as hired workers and released in the Jubilee year.

4. Implications of the Jubilee:

- Social Justice: The Jubilee year is a profound expression of social justice, ensuring that wealth does not accumulate endlessly in the hands of a few and that all families have the opportunity to reclaim their heritage and land.
- Economic Reset: It serves as an economic reset, preventing long-term poverty and disenfranchisement among the Israelites. By returning land to its original owners, the community is ensured a more equitable distribution of resources.
- Spiritual Significance: The Jubilee year emphasizes reliance on God's provision. It reminds the Israelites that the land ultimately belongs to God and that they are stewards of it. This fosters a sense of communal responsibility and connection to God's covenant.

5. Cultural Practices:

- Although the practice of the Jubilee year was central to ancient Israelite society, its observance has varied throughout history. In modern times, the concept of Jubilee is often reflected in discussions about social justice, debt forgiveness, and economic equity.

6. Modern Interpretations:

- Today, the idea of a Jubilee year can be seen in various movements advocating for debt relief, land reform, and social equity. It serves as a powerful metaphor for renewal, forgiveness, and the restoration of balance in society.

7. The Shunammite Woman:

- The story of the Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 8:1-6 illustrates the principle of restoration:
- 2 Kings 8:1-6: “Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, ‘Go away with your family and stay for a while wherever you can, because the Lord has decreed a famine in the land that will last seven years.’ The woman proceeded to do as the man of God said. She and her family went away and stayed in the land of the Philistines seven years. After the famine had ended, she came back from the land of the Philistines and went to the king to appeal to him for her house and land. The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, and had said, ‘Tell me about all the great things Elisha has done.’ Just as Gehazi was telling the king how Elisha had restored the dead to life, the woman whose son Elisha had brought back to life came to appeal to the king for her house and land. ‘Gehazi said, “This is the woman, my lord the king, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life.”’ The king asked the woman about it, and she told him. Then

he assigned an official to her case and said to him, ‘Give back everything that belongs to her, including all the income from her land from the day she left the country until now.’”

The concept of the Yovel (Jubilee) year is an important aspect of Jewish law and tradition, primarily discussed in the Torah, specifically in the book of Leviticus (Vayikra). Various rabbinic commentators have explored the significance, laws, and implications of the Jubilee year throughout Jewish history. Here are some notable rabbinic sources and commentaries related to the Yovel year:

1. Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki) - Rashi's commentary on Leviticus 25 provides insights into the laws of the Yovel year, including its timing and the implications for land ownership and servitude.
2. Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra - His commentary on the Torah often provides additional historical and philosophical insights into the laws of the Yovel.
3. Maimonides (Rambam) - In his work “Mishneh Torah,” particularly in the section on the laws of the Jubilee (Hilchot Shemitah ve-Yovel), Maimonides outlines the laws and principles governing the Yovel year.

4. Nachmanides (Ramban) - In his commentary on the Torah, Nachmanides discusses the spiritual significance of the Yovel year and its impact on the Jewish people's relationship with the land.
5. Sforno (Rabbi Ovadiah Sforno) - His commentary often emphasizes the ethical and moral dimensions of the Yovel year, focusing on themes of freedom and social justice.
6. Talmud - The discussions in the Talmud (especially in tractates like Arakhin and Shevi'it) delve into the laws of the Yovel year, including the implications for property and the release of slaves.
7. Midrash - Various Midrashic texts explore the themes of the Yovel year, often highlighting its spiritual significance and the broader ethical lessons to be learned.
8. Sefer HaChinuch - This work discusses the commandments associated with the Yovel year, providing insight into their purpose and significance.
9. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik - In modern Jewish thought, Rabbi Soloveitchik has discussed the spiritual and philosophical implications of the Yovel year in various lectures and writings.
10. Contemporary Commentators - Many

contemporary rabbis and scholars continue to explore the significance of the Yovel year in light of modern issues, including social justice, land ethics, and community.

These commentaries provide a rich tapestry of interpretations and insights into the Yovel year, reflecting its importance in Jewish law, ethics, and spirituality.

The concept of the Jubilee year (Yovel) holds deep significance in Jewish tradition, particularly in relation to themes of freedom, redemption, and social justice. As a “son of Abraham,” this phrase can be understood both literally and metaphorically within Jewish thought. Here’s an exploration of what the Jubilee year means for a Jew, particularly through the lens of rabbinic commentary:

1. Spiritual and Ethical Redemption

- **Freedom and Release:** The Yovel year is a time of liberation. It marks the release of slaves and the return of land to its original owners (Leviticus 25:10). For the descendants of Abraham, this represents a return to spiritual and ethical roots, emphasizing the importance of freedom and justice.
- **Moral Responsibility:** As sons of Abraham, Jews are called to uphold the values of justice and compassion.

The Yovel year serves as a reminder of the ethical obligations to care for the less fortunate and to ensure that society remains equitable.

2. Connection to the Land

- Divine Promise: The land of Israel is central to Jewish identity and is seen as a gift from God to the descendants of Abraham. The Yovel year reinforces the idea that the land ultimately belongs to God, and humans are stewards who must treat it with respect and responsibility.
- Restoration: The return of land during the Yovel year symbolizes restoration and renewal, reflecting the covenant between God and the Jewish people. It emphasizes the idea that all material possessions are temporary and that true ownership belongs to God.

3. Community and Social Justice

- Collective Responsibility: The Yovel year is not just an individual experience; it emphasizes community. The release of debts and the return of property foster a sense of unity and mutual support among the people.
- Social Equity: Rabbinic teachings highlight the importance of ensuring that wealth is not concentrated in the hands of a few. The Yovel year serves as a corrective measure to address economic

disparities.

4. Spiritual Reflection and Renewal

- Introspection: The Yovel year encourages individuals to reflect on their spiritual and ethical lives. It is a time for renewal, both personally and communally, allowing individuals to reconnect with their values and purpose.
- Covenantal Relationship: For the descendants of Abraham, the Yovel year is a reminder of their unique covenant with God. It calls for a commitment to live in accordance with divine commandments and to embody the principles of justice and mercy.

5. Rabbinic Insights

- Rashi and Others: Rashi and other commentators often emphasize the spiritual implications of the Yovel year, linking it to themes of atonement and divine favor. They highlight that the observance of the Yovel year is not just about the laws themselves but about the underlying values that they promote.
- Maimonides: In his writings, Maimonides discusses the importance of the Yovel year in maintaining social order and ethical behavior within the community.

For a Jew, being a “son of Abraham” during the Yovel year means embodying the values of justice, freedom,

and responsibility that are central to Jewish identity. It serves as a powerful reminder of the ethical and spiritual dimensions of life, urging individuals to reflect on their roles within the community and their relationship with God. The Yovel year is not merely a historical or agricultural event but a profound opportunity for renewal, justice, and connection to the divine promise.

An in-depth study of the Yovel (Jubilee) year according to rabbinic literature encompasses various sources, interpretations, and themes. Below is a structured list of key texts and concepts that provide a comprehensive understanding of the Yovel year as discussed by rabbinic authorities (the “Rabbe”):

1. Biblical Source

- Leviticus 25: The primary biblical text outlining the laws of the Yovel year, including the proclamation of liberty, the return of land, and the release of slaves.

2. Talmudic Discussion

- Tractate Arakhin: This tractate discusses the laws of valuation related to the Yovel year and the implications of the Jubilee on land ownership and servitude.
- Tractate Shevi’it: Contains discussions on the

agricultural laws, including the Sabbatical year and how they relate to the Yovel.

3. Mishneh Torah (by Maimonides)

- Hilchot Shemitah ve-Yovel: Maimonides provides a comprehensive legal framework regarding the Yovel year, including its observance, the release of debts, and the return of property. This text is foundational for understanding the laws and principles governing the Yovel year.

4. Commentaries on the Torah

- Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki): Rashi's commentary on Leviticus 25 provides insights into the practical implications of the Yovel year, emphasizing its ethical dimensions.
- Nachmanides (Ramban): Ramban's commentary often explores the spiritual significance of the Yovel year, connecting it to the covenant between God and the Jewish people.
- Sforno (Rabbi Ovadiah Sforno): Offers a moral and ethical interpretation of the Yovel year, focusing on themes of justice and community responsibility.

5. Midrashic Literature

- Midrash Rabbah: Various sections of Midrash

Rabbah discuss the Yovel year, often highlighting its spiritual significance and the broader ethical lessons to be learned from it.

- **Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer:** This text provides additional insights into the historical and theological implications of the Yovel year.

6. Sefer HaChinuch

- This work outlines the commandments associated with the Yovel year, providing insights into their purpose and significance from a moral and educational perspective.

7. Contemporary Rabbinic Thought

- **Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik:** His teachings often reflect on the spiritual and philosophical implications of the Yovel year, particularly in relation to modern ethical issues.
- **Rabbi Jonathan Sacks:** In various writings and talks, he discusses the Yovel year in the context of social justice and community responsibility.

8. Legal Codes and Responsa

- **Shulchan Aruch:** The legal code compiled by Rabbi Joseph Caro may contain references to the Yovel year and its observance, particularly in the context of

agricultural laws.

- **Responsa Literature:** Various rabbinic responses address contemporary issues related to the Yovel year, providing practical applications of its principles in modern life.

9. Philosophical Texts

- **The Kuzari** (by Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi): Discusses the significance of the land and the Yovel year in terms of Jewish identity and spirituality.
- **The Guide for the Perplexed** (by Maimonides): While not focused solely on the Yovel, it provides philosophical insights into the nature of commandments and their purposes, including those related to the Yovel year.

10. Historical Context

- **Historical Sources:** Writings from historians and scholars that examine the practice and observance of the Yovel year throughout Jewish history, including its relevance in different periods and communities.

An in-depth study of the Yovel year according to rabbinic literature reveals a rich tapestry of legal, ethical, and spiritual dimensions. The Yovel year is not only a time of agricultural significance but also a profound opportunity for moral reflection, community building, and spiritual renewal. Each of these sources

contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the Yovel year and its importance in Jewish life and thought. If you would like to explore any specific aspect or text further, please let me know!

Final Conclusion

The Year of Jubilee is a rich biblical concept that underscores themes of restoration, justice, and community welfare. It serves as a reminder of the importance of social responsibility and the need to care for one another, ensuring that no one is permanently marginalized or impoverished. The return of land to its original owners during the Jubilee year is not only a legal mandate but also a profound spiritual and ethical principle that resonates through Jewish tradition and continues to inspire contemporary discussions on justice and equity.

Themes of Yovel in Apostolic Pentecostal Christianity

1. Restoration and Redemption:

- Baptism in Jesus Name and the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues this is the New Birth: In John 3:5, Jesus speaks of being “born of water and the Spirit,” which is central to Apostolic Pentecostal Doctrine is the Apostles Doctrine . The new birth represents a restoration of the individual’s relationship with God,

akin to the restoration of land and property in the Yovel year.

- Forgiveness of Sins: Acts 2:38 emphasizes the importance of repentance and baptism in Jesus' name for the remission of sins. This act is a personal restoration, paralleling the Jubilee's theme of debt forgiveness and reclamation.

2. Freedom from Bondage:

- Spiritual Liberation: Luke 4:18-19, where Jesus proclaims the "year of the Lord's favor," speaks to the liberation from spiritual bondage. This is echoed in Romans 8:1-2, where Paul writes about being free from the law of sin and death through Christ.
- Deliverance from Sin: Apostolic Pentecostal teaching emphasizes that through the Holy Spirit, believers can overcome sin and live in freedom, reflecting the liberation that the Yovel year signifies.

3. Fulfillment of Prophecy:

- Jesus as Fulfillment: The New Testament presents Jesus as the fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies (Matthew 5:17). The Jubilee year, with its themes of restoration and freedom, is seen as a precursor to the spiritual realities that Jesus brings to His followers.
- Promises of Renewal: In 2 Corinthians 1:20, Paul

states, “For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen.” This underscores the belief that the promises made in the Old Testament, including those associated with the Jubilee, find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

4. Community and Sharing:

- Early Church Practices: Acts 2:44-45 describes how early Christians shared their possessions and supported one another, embodying the communal spirit of the Yovel year. This reflects the call for believers to live in unity and generosity.
- Social Justice: The principles of equity and justice found in the Jubilee year resonate with the Apostolic Pentecostal emphasis on caring for the marginalized and advocating for social justice, reflecting God’s heart for the oppressed.

5. Personal Reflection and Renewal:

- Spiritual Renewal: The concept of a Jubilee year encourages believers to engage in self-examination and renewal. Lamentations 3:40 calls for individuals to “examine and test our ways,” which aligns with the introspective nature of the Jubilee.
- Reclaiming Identity: Embracing the idea that “it all returns to me” encourages believers to reclaim their identity in Christ, as reflected in Galatians 2:20,

where Paul writes, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

The phrase “it’s my year of Yovel when it all returns to me according to the Lord Jesus Christ” serves as a powerful affirmation of faith and hope. It encapsulates the transformative power of the Gospel, emphasizing themes of restoration, freedom, community, and personal renewal. By understanding the Yovel year through the lens of Apostolic Pentecostal Christianity, believers can find encouragement and motivation to live out their faith actively, embracing the promises of God and the new life offered through Jesus Christ.

whpctuttle.com