



PARASHAT BEHAR

פרשת בהר

Leviticus 25:1-26:2

by
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& his kids

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.



Great Discoveries in This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 25:1 Sabbatical Year or Seven-Year Land Sabbath
- 25:8 The Fifty-Year Jubilee
- 25:14 Sequence of Events Leading to Enslavement
- 25:23 How to Get Your Family Land Back
- 25:35 Compassion for the Poor
- 25:39 An Israelite's "Slave" or Indentured Servant

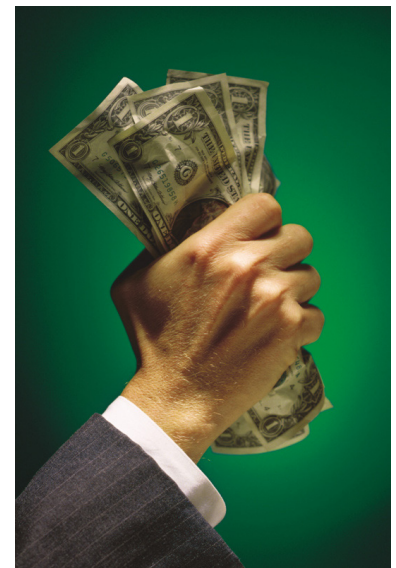
Exploring This Week's Parashah

1 YHVH's Laws Protect His People from Covetousness (Leviticus 25:1-7)


The Torah helps to protect man from covetousness and greed—something in our sin nature against which most of us have to struggle. A person who is covetous is one who strongly wants something that belongs to someone else. Greed is the strong and selfish desire for things like money and physical possessions. A greedy person does not want to share what he has with others, but wants to hang on selfishly to his money and possessions. He is stingy and is not generous.

-  (a) What are some things that people covet (strongly desiring something that belongs to someone else) and are greedy for?
-  (b) Does one of the Ten Commandments deal with the issue of coveting? (Read Exodus 20:17.)


The land Sabbath or sabbatical year were laws that YHVH made that prevented men from being too greedy and covetous. When practiced in the nation of Israel, they kept people from




becoming too wealthy at other people's expense. They also kept people from becoming so poor that they could never escape their poverty.

-  (c) Did you ever know someone who worked seven days a week trying to make as much money as possible? They never stop! We call these people "workaholics," since they are addicted to working. These type of people never stop for a moment to rest and to think about YHVH who gave them the ability and strength to work and to get wealth. How do the Sabbath and YHVH's feasts keep people from becoming addicted to work?

In the Torah, YHVH gave the Israelites some laws that would keep people from being workaholics and from forgetting about him.


-  (d) What did YHVH command the Israelites to do for six years? (Read Leviticus 25:3.) Then what were they to do on the seventh year? (See verse 4.)


-  (e) Can you imagine a vacation for one year every seven years? What would you do during that year? How would you use your time to focus on YHVH who gave you the blessing to get wealth for the other six years?



We also learn in Deuteronomy 15:1-3 that during the sabbatical year all debts were forgiven. That means that if your rich friend let you borrow some money in your time of need, whatever portion of the loan you had not paid him back would be forgiven.

The sabbatical year was a way of making things equal among all of YHVH's people. What this meant was that those who had become poor got a fresh start, the land got to rest (no crops were planted) so that the soil would be restored and built up with life-giving nutrients for a year so that it could produce even more fruits and vegetables the next six years. At the same time, YHVH's people could rest from many of their labors and renew their strength and ties with YHVH and each other. What a wonderful system this was!

-  (f) How did YHVH promise to bless the Israelites with special blessings in the sixth year to make up for their lack of crops (fruits and vegetables that they could harvest) in the seventh year? (Look at Leviticus 25:21.)


-  (g) What does this teach us about how YHVH will take care of his people who obey him? Though we are not farmers living in the land of Israel, YHVH still cares for us as he did for his people in ancient Israel. Can you think of some special blessings that have come from YHVH just because you love and obey him and he loves and cares for you?


2 The Poor Get a Second Chance (Leviticus 25:8-22)

Imagine that you're playing the game Monopoly and you are losing badly. You have had to sell your properties to raise money, and your opponent has purchased your old properties and has placed hotels on them. You only have a few dollars left and one more time around the board and you know you'll be wiped out and have to go bankrupt. Now suppose that your opponent gives you all your old properties back. How will this effect your position in the game now?




In ancient Israel, just like in our world today, some people worked harder than others and were blessed and became rich. Sometimes people get rich through honest means, and sometimes they do so through dishonest means. At the same time, some people become poor because they are lazy and don't want to work hard, or for other reasons that may not even be their fault. It often happens that the rich get richer, while the poor get poorer. Once this happens, in some countries there is often little the poor can do to get back on top again. YHVH solved this problem. He is wiser than men and has all the answers to men's problems if we will only trust his Word! His solution was this: every 50 years, YHVH gave the poor a second chance and a fresh start. This prevented the rich from getting too rich and the poor from getting too poor. This fiftieth year was called the Jubilee Year.

 (h) What special thing happened signaling the beginning of the Jubilee Year and when did the jubilee start? (Read Leviticus 25:9.)

 (i) How would wealth be redistributed in the Jubilee Year? (See verse 10, 13.)

Notice that not only would all land return to the original owners, but all debts would be forgiven, and slaves could go free as well.

 (j) What was the purpose of the Jubilee Year? (Look at Leviticus 25:14, 17.) What were the benefits of observing this commandment? (Read verses 18-19.)



3 Jubilee—A Picture of Yeshua Saving Us from Slavery to Sin and the Devil (Leviticus 25:8-22)

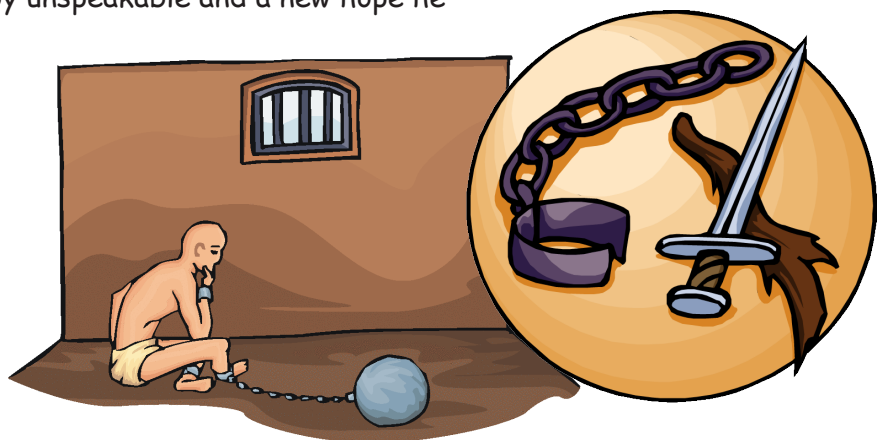
The Jubilee Year was also a spiritual picture of something else. During one's lifetime, one can become little more than a poor wretch as a slave to sin and the devil. Yet when one hears the glorious gospel (good news) of salvation and deliverance from sin and the devil that is available through faith in Yeshua, one can be totally set free. The year of jubilee was a time of great rejoicing and jubilation in Israel. Even so, when a sinner is set free from the death grip of sin and the devil through faith in the atoning blood of Yeshua, he has joy unspeakable and a new hope he never had. The poor become rich in Yeshua with all the glories and riches of heaven awaiting him.

Be encouraged with the following Scriptures:

But as it is written, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which Elohim has prepared for them that love him." (1 Corinthians 2:9)

Listen, my beloved brethren, has not Elohim chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him? (James 2:5)

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich, in that he is made low, because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away, for the sun is no






sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withers the grass, and the flower thereof falls, and the grace of the fashion of it perishes, so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. (James 1:9-11)

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. (Ephesians 1:18)

4 Compassion for the Poor (Leviticus 25:35-38)

Yeshua said that the poor would always be among us (Matthew 26:11). Everyone is poor compared to someone else and rich compared to someone else. Sometimes the rich oppress and take advantage of the poor, as James 5:1-6 talks about. Whatever the case, YHVH has compassion on the poor and expects his people to do so as well.

-  (k) If you have more wealth than your fellow man, what does YHVH expect you to do? (Read Leviticus 25:35.)
-  (l) If you have money, and your poor brother needs a loan, are you to charge him interest? (See verse 36-37.)
-  (m) Why do you suppose YHVH wants his people to take care of the poor? (Note verse 38.) Why did he remind them of their being slaves in Egypt at this point? Are slaves rich or poor? Is YHVH rich or poor? How did YHVH set us an example of how the rich are supposed to treat the poor when he delivered them from bondage in Egypt? (Look at 1John 3:17 which teaches us how we are to act toward the poor.)



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Acquisition

Aftergrowth

Buy Back

Countryman

Fiftieth Year

Food

Gather

Jubilee

Levite Cities

Live Securely

No Interest

Pasture Field

Poor

Possession

Produce

Prune Vineyard

Purchaser

Reap

Redemption Right

Sabbatical Year

Seventh Year

Shofar

Slave

Sold

Sow Field

Sustain

Uncle

Untrimmed Vines

Villages

Walled City

Year Of Crops

Yom Kippur