

Land Ownership

Scripture Reading — Leviticus 25:8-13

"Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land ..." Leviticus 25:10 —

Throughout history people have struggled over land rights or claimed territory as their own. Unresolved disputes often developed into war, and the land went to the victors. Today courts hear claims about land that should be returned to its original owners. But then who are the original owners?

When Israel took Canaan by force, others had lived there for centuries. Canaanite vineyards, wheat fields, and water resources became Israelite possessions.

The Bible is clear about land ownership. There is only one original and present owner: the Lord God, Creator of all things. People everywhere graze their animals, drink water, cultivate crops, and develop cultures on land that is not their own. Israel never owned the land, and never would--for the earth belongs to the Lord.

Leviticus 25 teaches Israel to cultivate the land according to God's instructions. Any debts or disputes that remained after a 49-year period would be forgiven in the 50th year, and the land would return to the original landholder. The year of jubilee reminded God's people of God's gift of land, of the privilege to serve God alone without the burden of ownership.

God's priestly people understand that the whole "earth is the LORD's, and everything in it" (Psalm 24:1). It is temple property managed by the King of kings.

Prayer

All that we have is yours, O Lord, a gift from you through Christ. Help us to be faithful stewards of all you give us, and to share of the bounties of your land with others. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Leviticus](#)

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