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“Leviticus 23-25”

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With

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Leviticus 23-25

This episode discusses items in three chapters of Leviticus including how Leviticus 23 conceptualizes the Sabbath, how its description of Israelite feasts and festivals diverges with other passages in the Torah, the imagery of the “shewbread” (“bread of the Presence”), the principle of *lex talionis*, and the concept of jubilee in Leviticus 25 and other sources, such as the New Testament and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

paper referenced:

Wacholder Chronomessianism The Timing of Messianic Movements and Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 83, Leviticus 23-25. I'm your layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hi Mike, how are you doing this week?

MSH: Very good, three chapters today. What do you know?

TS: That's good. Three as in trey, so that's always a good number.

MSH: Yeah, ok, well, we're almost out of Leviticus, these three and then the final couple of chapters coming up soon here.

TS: And then we'll have another Q&A after that, so, at least, we're trying to catch up with your Q&A questions. And I guess, Mike, I'm going to go ahead and just ask now a call for questions. If you have any questions specific to Leviticus, please email me and we'll get that email on our Naked Bible Podcast website. And email me any specific Leviticus questions you have. That way, when we do our Q&A after Leviticus, we'll hopefully have some relevant questions. You won't have to wait as long because I know we still have a big queue of questions and we're getting to them but maybe I can sprinkle some more relevant questions to Leviticus in that Q&A.

MSH: People just don't want to let Leviticus go so this is your chance to keep it going. Alright, well let's jump in here. We're going to cover Leviticus 23,24, and 25. And as you might imagine based on our past patterning and also the fact I've grouped these, we're going to pick something in each chapter and sort of camp on it for a little while, some things that are interesting. Just a quick overview though, Leviticus 23 is basically a chapter that gives readers a calendar of the annual feasts of Israel that were celebrated in biblical times. It includes the Sabbath, even though the Sabbath isn't really a calendrical festival because it's weekly. But the chapter does include that.

This chapter, though, there's going to be some differences here between Leviticus 23 and other chapters in the Torah that talk about in the annual calendar and the feasts and festivals so we'll say something about that when we get there. Leviticus 24, sort of a little collection of laws but there are some things to notice here about the lance in the sanctuary and the so-called showbread, the bread of the presence, how that's arranged in the sanctuary. And there's some laws about blasphemy and other crimes so we'll pick a few things there to talk about. And then Leviticus 25 is the major chapter in the Torah about the land, specifically, land tenure, rights of landowners, the whole issue of indebtedness and even more specifically, the system of indenture.

That was where a person who had serious debt, to repay the debt, they would give the person owed the debt their labor. And then there is the whole issue of the cycle of sabbatical years and then the Jubilee system, that's all in Leviticus 25 so we want to camp a few places there, too. So let's jump into Leviticus 23. It is a calendar of annual festivals. There are others in the Torah. You'll see some of this material in Exodus and Deuteronomy as well. And when you compare Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus here in chapter 23, you will get some divergences in the way the annual feasts and festivals are described. There are actually sort of three systems. This is the way scholars would look at this whole situation. Scholars would talk about there being three systems, one in Exodus, one in Deuteronomy, and one in Leviticus 23 to sort of outline the festival calendar and these events, these feasts and festivals that were observed.

And the reason for their differences would be that they derive from or reflect three different contexts or times in which the material was actually written down. So you can already tell that the issue with the feasts and festivals and the fact that when they're discussed in the Torah that they don't always agree, that this is sort of a sub category, a sub item to the whole issue of Mosaic authorship, because if it was all written at one time by one person, why on the world would you have these differences? It's a good question. It's a legitimate question. And listeners to Naked Bible and readers of the blog know that while I don't buy into the typical JEDP documentary hypothesis, I think that's based a lot on circular reasoning, so while I don't buy that, I also don't buy this notion of Moses wrote every word the Torah or even the lion share of it.

I don't see any reason to reject Mosaic input, whether that meant him telling somebody write something or him contributing something and then was accrued later. I'm what used to be called a classic supplementarian when it comes to what's in the Torah. What we're going to talk about here is sort of a classic illustration of why the question even comes up. It doesn't come up because there's lots of evil people out there, critics that just hate the Torah. Well, yeah, in the 19th century, you had some of those. They were driven by anti-Semitism and other forces. But there are actually things in the text that create the question. So in Exodus 23, for instance, verses 12 to 19, that passage talks about the Sabbath, the three pilgrimage festivals, namely the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of the Harvest or Spring, and the Feast of the Gathering. It's very straightforward.

Deuteronomy 16, first 17 verses in that chapter talk about Passover so not the Sabbath. And it talks about the Festival of Weeks in the late spring and the Festival of Booths in the autumns. And you might wonder well, what happened to the Feast of Unleavened Bread? That gets lumped in with the Passover. Between the three passages, it's going to be one of the differences. What about the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Is it part of or ancillary to the Passover? The point is that it's discussed in different ways. Now we get to Leviticus 23 and in Numbers, I should mention Numbers 28 and 29. That's also part of this picture, but specifically in Leviticus 23 where we're at today, that passage, that chapter details the festivals throughout the year so it's a bit more comprehensive. It sort of gets pride of place when it comes to this kind of thing. So it talks about the Sabbath in verse 3, if we read that,

³“Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work.

MSH: Then in verses 5-8, we read about the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Then in verses 9-22, we get offerings from the new grain crop, and that's sort of new material compared to the other passages in the Torah, specifically the grain crop during a seven week period. They were observing that, counting it, doing it. Then on verses 22-25, we have a note about the first day of the seventh month being a day of commemoration. That's when they blew the shofar. That's not in the other ones, the other passages. And then following that verses 26-32, we get the 10th day of the seventh month, which is the Day of Atonement. And then finally in verses 33-36 and on to the end, we get the Festival of Booths, which we're told began on the 15th day of the seventh month. So it's a little more comprehensive. Now I don't want to get bogged down into sources and all this kind of stuff, when was this and that written?

What I want to focus on here are a few things about the Sabbath, about the work language, and then I'm going to read you something from Levine about how the three passages considered in tandem, how scholars have looked at them and why it's an important thing to think about, at least in terms of authorship. So let's go back to verse 3. We have a very simple comment, 'six days shall work be done but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest.' Now it's interesting the word work here is *melachah*, and that derives from the same root of the word, *mal'ach*, angel or messenger, comes from. And both of them in turn have a verbal root *l'ach*, which means to send or dispatch. That makes sense because of *mal'ach* is a messenger. Now you might think well, is there a relationship here? We have *l'ach*, the verb, to send. We have *mal'ach*, the noun, the sent one, the messenger. What about *melachah*, translated as work? What does that mean?

Well, the way scholars look at the relationship between these three terms that share these consonant roots is basically that *melachah* here in this passage of the Sabbath refers to assigned tasks, things that you were sent by your master, by your employer if using today's language, things you were sent out to do. These are things that are assigned by someone else for you to do. If we go back to *mal'ach*, that's what a messenger does. A messenger is a subordinate position and does what they're told to do. So why am I bringing it up? Well, I'm bringing it up because the main object of the Sabbath law here in Leviticus 23 is to avoid doing certain daily tasks that are normally assigned for you to do on the Sabbath. In other words, it doesn't preclude doing tasks that sort of arise from the occasion. And this is why if you remember when Jesus talks about the Sabbath, he gives these examples when he's criticized. The Pharisees want to say you're working on the Sabbath because you're plucking grain because you're hungry or something like that, you and your disciples. And Jesus gives the example well, what happens if a man's donkey falls into a pit?

Do you just leave it there? No, you go get it out for him. You help him. That wasn't a normal assigned task. It was just something that arose from the situation and a good thing to do for your neighbor is to help them out, even though it required physical exertion. So the Sabbath law isn't about avoiding all physical exertion, at least in the Torah. Now pharisaic law and the fence laws that were added to the Torah laws, it becomes that legalistic. But here we have here, even in this term *malacach*, because of the verbal root from which it derives, it really refers to things which you are assigned to do with regularity according to whatever the pecking order is, whoever has authority over you. Those are the things you avoid. And that's going to be an issue because in Leviticus, that language is going to tip us off to something a little bit I think different from other portions of the Torah when it comes to talking about the Sabbath.

Now, we typically, I've heard a number of evangelicals that will say something like this, that the Sabbath is what it is because the Sabbath is sort of built off of or references the creation week. Now, that's true because you go back to Genesis 1-2, you have God working on six days and then he rests on the seventh. It's not true that every place the Sabbath is talked about that the creation week is in view. And this instance in Leviticus 23 is one of those. Now if you go to Exodus and you're talking about the Sabbath, you can make that argument. Don't work because in six days, the Lord made in heaven and earth and all that sort of stuff. But here, you are to abstain from assigned tasks. And what scholars have gleaned from this, what they've observed here is that the wording, there's no reference to the creation in Leviticus 23. What it's about here, what frames the Sabbath discussion here is deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, that

you no longer have to every day do these tasks that were assigned to you by your taskmasters, by your overlords.

You don't need to do that. You've been liberated. You're God's people now. And so there's a different rationale that lays behind the wording here about the Sabbath. The Sabbath rest is the expression of liberation or freedom from bondage. It's not referring back to the creation week. So even though that makes sense, even though that's true in certain contexts, it's not true to say that all of the Sabbath language has the creation week in mind. And I bring that up, in turn, because lots of people will say well, you have to affirm a literal seven day, 24-hour solar day creation week or else you're somehow denying the Sabbath. That just says too much. That overstates the data as we would say an academic discussion. It's a claim that overreaches what you can really say and frankly what really is in the Torah about the Sabbath. It isn't that simple. So I wanted to point that out.

The other thing about the Sabbath I should comment on is that to this point in scholarship, there's really no Ancient Near Eastern parallel that makes sense to the Sabbath, to the one in seven principal, or this weekly day of rest idea. Now scholars have tried to link it to the Mesopotamian *shapotou*. It's very similar in terms of the wording, which was a special day. But the problem is that even though this was a special day and involved sort of a change in routine, *shapatou* in Mesopotamia was associated with phases of the moon, and phases of the moon are not weekly so it messes up the analogy. The biblical Sabbath has nothing to do with the lunar cycle. It's a 1 in 7 principal. So the division of time into regular periods of seven that end in a Sabbath day cannot be aligned to a system of lunar months. So the Mesopotamian counterpart here, the *shapotou*, really hasn't worked and scholars have, for obvious reasons, not been satisfied with it. So apparently, the Sabbath is an original Israelite institution. It's something that's different.

Thought I would mention that because I do get that question from time to time, where did the Sabbath come from. It appears to be an original Israelite idea. And what's really kind of interesting there is if it is linked to the deliverance of bondage from Egypt, you'd actually have both things going on. What's the pattern here? We don't have to conform now to having our regular work schedule and all that sort of thing and then they can think about the creation idea, depending on when the specific creation account was written. That's in Genesis 1. A lot of people would put that late in Israelite history, Genesis 1 to 11, because Genesis 1 to 11 has very obvious Mesopotamian back stories to all of it whether it's creation, whether it's the flood, whether it's the Nephilim with the Apkallu, if you've read the Unseen Realm, you know about that now, Tower of Babel, all of this sort of stuff, all of these things have Mesopotamian touch points. And at the Exodus, Mesopotamia is not the context.

Egypt is the context. So we could even have the creation week specifically laid out later and maybe its reverse, maybe the creation week is actually designed to be an analogy to the Sabbath idea. It's a chicken or egg kind of thing, but you can have the whole process reversed. Things just aren't that simple so we need to avoid simplistic arguments to prop up a particular view of creation or Mosaic authorship or whatever. When you actually get into the text, it's often just not that neat. Now in regard to the annual festivals, I want to quote something from Levine here. He has a nice summary of the differences between the three, Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus, and sort of how that has provoked discussion about when these things were written. On one level it doesn't matter when they were written unless you're married to a very arcane view of Mosaic authorship.

Hebrew *Torah Moshe*, the law of Moses, does not have to mean the law that originated with Moses. I've said this before, both on the blog and in the podcast. It's a simple construct relationship. The meaning of the Hebrew could just mean the Torah that is associated with Moses or the Torah that you can have originated with Moses or the Torah that is associated with Moses because he's a central character, the central character. It can mean any of these things. It doesn't have to mean authorship, point of origin. It might but it might not so we need to get away from the simplistic sorts of ideas. Because when you actually dig down into the text, there are things that just mess it up, and here we go. Levine writes this. He says,

“The three annual festivals are called *chagag* in Hebrew, which means pilgrimage. In the earliest laws of the Torah, which are preserved in Exodus 23, this method an Israelite wishing to celebrate the festival was obliged to undertake a pilgrimage [**MSH: That’s why they were called *chagag*, pilgrimages.**] The Israelite was obliged to undertake a pilgrimage to a cult center or to a temple or some sacred spot according to the early law of Exodus 20:24. God could be worshiped at any properly constructed altar at which worship is conducted in the correct manner. There were cultic centers throughout the land of Israel suitable for such festival celebrations. [**MSH: You had to migrate if you’re an Israelite. You had to go to one of these places and observe the festival and pretty simple.**] Deuteronomy 12 and 16 invalidate this pattern. All sacrifices including those for festival celebrations were to be carried out at one unique central temple in both of those passages. In practical terms, this meant that the duty of pilgrimage could no longer be fulfilled at local or regional shrines or cult centers but exclusively at the central temple. This restriction altered the character of the annual festivals and basic ways, affecting their scheduling, their duration, and the manner in which they were observed. The most thorny problem created by Deuteronomy's restriction of sacrificial worship to one central temple concerned the Passover offering and the *Matzot* festival, the unleavened bread festival. The Passover sacrifice could no longer be offered near one's home [**MSH: If you remember back in Exodus, you could do it in your house**], not only rescheduling but restructuring the entire celebration was called for. Israelites would have to arrive at the religious capital before the eve of the *Matzot* festival and then remain there, in most cases, until the seventh day of the festival when the pilgrimage was celebrated. They might not have time to get home and back in a period of six or seven days. It was therefore ordained in Deuteronomy 6:1-8 that the Passover sacrifice be offered later in the evening, in the evening when the sun sets is the wording. In this way the Passover sacrifice could also serve as the sacrifice for the first day of the *Matzot* festival. This explains why, according to Deuteronomy 16:8, *Matzot* must be eaten for six days, not for seven, as it was in the earlier laws. The Passover sacrifice counted as part of the pilgrimage, which now occurred on the first, not the seventh day of the festival, thus leaving only six remaining days. The morning after the Passover sacrifice, an Israelite returns to “to his tent”. He was required to

eat *Matzot* until the seventh day of the festival and to observe the seventh day as an *atzeret*, which means concluding assembly, a day on which labor was forbidden. This *atzeret* was a remembrance of the *chagag*, pilgrimage that had formerly occurred on that day. The Holiness code, which includes Leviticus 23, accepts Deuteronomy 7 week postponement of the spring pilgrimage festival. Therefore in Leviticus 23:15 and following, we get a restatement of the duty to count seven weeks. Here, calculated from the offering of the first sheaf of grain, consonant with the emphasis on the Holiness code on the importance of the Sabbath, even sabbatical weeks, weeks ending on the Sabbath, are to be counted in this cycle. This postponement is understandable only as a response to Deuteronomy's deferral of the spring harvest festival. Actually, Leviticus 23 has only two pilgrimage festivals instead of three, *Matzot* and *Sukkot*. The *chagag*, the pilgrimage, called *shabaut*, weeks, in Deuteronomy 16:10 was henceforth to be celebrated in the sanctuary and in the Israelite settlements. The quotation is, from your settlements, in there in Deuteronomy 16:10. Loaves of leavened bread made of semolina wheat flour, *solet* in Hebrew, were delivered to the sanctuary and there offered to God. In Leviticus 23:15, the spring harvest festival is not designated as a *chagag* because there was no pilgrimage.”

MSH: Now that's a summary of some of the issues that you get, some of the differences you get in the festival calendar and also the way that the three feasts and festivals were conducted and celebrated when you compare Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus 23. And this is just one example of why, if this was all written by one person at one time in one historical context, why does this happen? It creates enormous confusion if all of this content is written to a people living at the same time and in the same circumstance. Prior to going into the land where eventually you're going to have a central sacrifice location, you're going to eventually have a temple. Remember Moses isn't allowed to go into the land.

He never gets there and there is no formal place like this prior to that time as we just read. There were sacred spots according to those who worship Yahweh that you could go and celebrate these things. And the Passover, in that case, you could do it in your house, at least back in Exodus. But you couldn't in these other passages. So they reflect different times, different historical circumstances, and some people say those are like prophecies. Those are just looking forward to the time and whatnot. There are plenty of people out there who just aren't satisfied with that because they're not worded as prophecies, and this gives rise to the whole question of maybe some of these things were written in a different time by different prophetic figure other than Moses, and it just reflects Israel sort of where they're at at that particular time. They're in the land, the spot at which the temple is going to be built or has been built is already there. And so we need to change these things.

We need to make the dwelling place of God now the central focus to these things and whatnot, different times, different places, different seasons, different occasions. I just wanted to throw that in again because it's something that we can look at Leviticus 23 and its material that actually produces something to think about when it comes to how we view Torah, how we view Scripture. Leviticus 24, let's jump into that. I want to say something about the rows, the

arrangement of the bread of the presence. Let me just read here. Let's just start in verse 1 Leviticus 24, and I'll read through the first 8 or 9 verses. It says,

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²“Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. ³ Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the LORD regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. ⁴ He shall arrange the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD regularly.

⁵“You shall take fine flour and bake twelve loaves from it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. ⁶ And you shall set them in two piles, six in a pile, on the table of pure gold before the LORD. ⁷ And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD. ⁸ Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the LORD regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever. ⁹ And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the LORD's food offerings, a perpetual due.”

MSH: Now just a few observations. When it comes to the description of actually eating, we just read that this is for Aaron and his sons. They shall eat it in a holy place. But yet, you've got this thing about the Lord's food offerings, the holy portion for the Lord's food offerings. The food offerings we discussed much earlier in Leviticus. Here you have bread that is part of what the priests are to be allowed to eat. The frankincense that was mentioned was something that would've been burned when the priest removed the bread each Sabbath when it's time to dispose of the rest of it. The loaves are a presentation to God. We have frankincense. We've got loaves. We've got it positioned right where God is.

The bread was supposed to, in one sense, be viewed by God so you put it right there before the Lord so God can see it. And by that means, the assumption is, if nothing bizarre happens, the assumption is correct, that God accepts the bread offering, the bread as an offering. Subsequently, the loaves get apportioned to the priest. The whole picture here is that it kind of mimes what happened in earlier sacrifices that were blood sacrifices because the frankincense gets burned near the loaves of bread, and so God is, right in front of God, right before the Lord, where the divine presence is. So God is sort of pictured as, when the incense is being burned and going up, the picture is God is sort of smelling the aroma of the frankincense and that sort of becomes an offering by fire, even though the bread isn't consumed. The bread is going to go to Aaron and the priests and whatnot. So there's this sort of rationale that goes with it, the way things are arranged, the eternal light and all that sort of stuff.

It's consistent with earlier sacrifices, the picture of God inside his house enjoying, in this case, a bread offering, the bread of the presence. I want to read something else here about the logic here. The rest of Leviticus 24, as I alluded to earlier, is an assortment of laws and some of these are about blasphemy, cursing. And there's an issue of the severity of the penalties. Some of these merits of death penalty and whatnot. So I want to get into that a little bit, but as part of

this, I want to read you, we'll go with Leviticus 24, we'll go to verse 10. We'll just jump in where we left off here. We have here the bread of the presence and now we get some laws. It's really an odd place to put a few laws but I think we'll see the connection here in a moment.

¹⁰ Now an Israelite woman's son, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the people of Israel. And the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought in the camp, ¹¹ and the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the Name, and cursed. Then they brought him to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. ¹² And they put him in custody, till the will of the LORD should be clear to them.

¹³ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁴ "Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. ¹⁵ And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. ¹⁶ Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

MSH: Two issues here, one is the severity of the penalty and whatnot, but did you notice the interchange between the Name and some of these other designations of God? If you've read Unseen Realm or if you're familiar with my content, the Name, *hashem*, is another way of referring to God himself and that becomes important when you get to Exodus 23:20-23 about the Angel of the Lord in whom it the Name. you have a second Yahweh figure because Yahweh actually is in this angel who appears as a human being in human form elsewhere in not only the exodus, the wilderness wanderings but other passages as well. I'll read it again. I'll read these parts again. Look at what's done with the language here.

¹¹ and the Israelite woman's son blasphemed the Name,

¹⁵ And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. [**MSH: Well, I thought he blasphemed and cursed the Name? Well he did. That's the same as blaspheming and cursing God**]

¹⁶ Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

MSH: God, the name of the Lord, and the Name are used interchangeably in this passage. The Name is God. The Name is the presence of God. This is the presence, essence, of God. This is not some sort of convenient abstraction to avoid talking about God, even though it becomes a technique later on to avoid saying the divine name. Be that as it may, you're still talking about God. And in biblical material, biblical theology, *hashem*, the name, is God. And that's going to take you into what we talked about in Unseen Realm and on the blog as well about the two Yahweh's idea, that Yahweh can be the same yet two different entities, different places, sometimes in the same scene, sometimes distinguished, sometimes not, sometimes it's blurred. Here you have another passage.

I don't own reference this in the Unseen Realm but here you have another passage that's very clear. Now what about the harsh punishment? This is something I'm more or less just want you to be aware of. There's been a long-standing controversy, and it started with the rabbis in rabbinic literature, about whether the language of such passages like this, even though this one seems pretty clear but other eye for eye passages, the Latin for that is *lex talionis*, your punishment is commensurate with the crime. It matches the crime, this eye for eye, tooth for tooth kind of thing that you read about elsewhere in the Torah. The debate is that many rabbis thought and still think that the original intent of the Torah was not to carry the literalism of a death penalty offense like this to extremes.

In other words, again taking some of the eye for eye language, when you injured someone, a fellow Israel and they lost an eye, many rabbis taught the punishment for that wasn't to lose your own eye but you had to give compensation in some way. In other words, the point of most of these laws, not all of them, the point of most these laws was not to inflict the same injury on the offender but to allow and substitute some form of compensation. Now murder is an obvious exception. You have passages like Numbers 35:31 says,

³¹ Moreover, you shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer, who is guilty of death, but he shall be put to death.

MSH: In other words, there's no substitute to happen here. You can't ransom. The Hebrew might be better to render as redeem. You can't buy them out of the situation. You can't offer anything in terms of a ransom or a substitute for this person. He will lose his life because he committed a willful act of homicide. So murder is a very clear exception to this but there other things that make you wonder. For instance, let's read Leviticus 24:17-22. This is right after the blasphemer being put to death. We read this,

¹⁷ "Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death. ¹⁸ Whoever takes an animal's life shall make it good, life for life. ¹⁹ If anyone injures his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him, ²⁰ fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him. ²¹ Whoever kills an animal shall make it good, and whoever kills a person shall be put to death.

MSH: The phrase make it good and put to death are two different phrases in Hebrew so people have seized upon that. And all the way back to the rabbis and said now wait a minute. If we have an animal life, does it really mean that whoever takes an animal's life then loses their own life? Are animals and humans on the same level here? It says, 'whoever kills an animal,' in verse 21 'shall make it good and whoever kills a person shall be put to death.' So obviously that verse, verse 21, sort of makes us think about the wording of the previous three verses. Maybe it's not this match for match kind of thing because it doesn't end with an exact match for the crime committed. Maybe make it good should apply to all of these things except where the Old Testament clearly offers, clearly demands an exception like in the case of murder, or 17, back to Numbers 35:31.

And so this became a huge debate. In the Talmud you'll read, look, if you look at this language here and they would say it doesn't make sense and the Torah does not require because

of the difference in wording, make it good versus put to death in verse 21, it doesn't make any sense to have a matching eye for eye, tooth for tooth penalty in a number of these laws. Compensation, make up for the loss, make it good in some way. That is the point of the Torah and so because of the language here in Leviticus 24, that has a ripple effect elsewhere in the Torah when you get this sort of language. So many rabbis argue that the Torah doesn't really intend this literal corresponding mutilation or maybe even always loss of life. Premeditated murder might be an exception.

What about other cases, that sort of thing? Maybe the whole idea is compensation. Maybe that's the bigger picture as opposed to taking the thing literally, and that's really the debate. Other than premeditated murder, many of the rabbis said look, we can't take this literally because of verse 21 here. And this isn't the only verse but this is a good place to bring it up because we're here in Leviticus 24. Maybe the idea is some sort of compensation and not inflicting the same sort of injury, the same mutilation, that sort of thing. Levine notes here, I'll just read a brief statement of his. he says,

“Compensation is a very ancient alternative to mutilation in other near Eastern law. For example, the Code of Hammurabi ordains bodily mutilation in some cases and legislates compensation in the others. The Code of Eshnunna frequently allows for compensation in cases of bodily injury. The same is true in Hittite law. The same is true in middle Assyrian laws. Often times the criterion for what you do, mutilation versus compensation, is social status. Injuries inflicted on slaves seldom require retaliatory punishment because they're lesser in social class. **[MSH: It doesn't mean we look at these passages and say not every person is a human being. Let's talk about abortion. That's a misapplication of this sort of language. They're not thinking from a scientific worldview, is this a human person are not, or all this sort of stuff we talk about today. It's strictly social status and we can look at that and sort of find that repugnant. It's their culture. It is what it was. Levine's point is that you see this operating in other law codes. Maybe this is what's going on in the Torah as well, at least in certain circumstances. So he adds,]** A form of stratification also figures in biblical law.

MSH: Exodus 21:26-27 is his example. I'll read that. It says,

²⁶ “When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. ²⁷ If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

MSH: So there's some compensation. The person who did this doesn't have their eye plucked out, doesn't have their tooth knocked out. It's not a mutilation for mutilation scenario. The penalty incurred by the inflictor was he had to let his slave go. It was a form of compensation. So I just want to give you a flavor for, we do have language in the Torah that raises this question and it naturally raises another question in turn. How did they know and how do we know? How

do we know how to interpret what's going on here? How did they make these decisions? About the safest thing you can say is that the realities of the Old Testament punishment system really did both. It recognizes both courses of action. There is death penalty, life for life. There may be mutilation for mutilation in some passage but it also recognizes compensation instead. It's not strict in that regard.

It employs both kinds of punishment selectively. It really is a case-by-case basis. It's therefore reasonable to think that maybe something like intentionality factored into this. In other words, let's take a case where one Israelite deliberately maimed another Israelite, deliberately took something and maybe poked out an eye or something in anger, in a fight or something. Well, if it's deliberate intent was discerned, chances are and the Torah would allow them to return the mutilation. It also allowed them to insist upon some other compensation to the person harmed. So if there wasn't intent, that's a different story. So the Torah is actually going to do both. You're going to see examples of both. So the next time you hear some critic or some, I would call them, dishonest atheist or somebody like that is wanting to throw this at you, like you worship a God that likes to hack people's limbs off. Look, it's just not that simple. It's just not that silly, either.

You do get language here and you do get examples that there's a case-by-case sort of basis. And it's a little more thoughtful than it might sort of appear on the surface. It is still hard for us to understand why different choices were made. We don't have a perfect understanding of this but there are analogies where compensation was allowed to substitute for mutilation and you do get that in the Old Testament law as well. So it's not this barbaric thing that people like to portray it as. Homicide, that was very severe. Blaspheming God, as we just read, that was a very severe punishment there. There were things that merited the death penalty. But when it came to this mutilation kind of thing, there was a lot of latitude there and we get glimpses of that in the Old Testament. I want to switch gears here and go to Leviticus 25. And the big deal here is the land principle, the whole idea about sabbatical week, sabbatical years, the Jubilee, so on so forth. We'll jump in here. Let's start in verse 3.

³ For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, ⁴ but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵ You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. ⁶ The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired worker and the sojourner who lives with you, ⁷ and for your cattle and for the wild animals that are in your land: all its yield shall be for food. ⁸ "You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. ⁹ Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. ¹⁰ And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. ¹¹ That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you;

in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. ¹² For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field. ¹³ “In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property. ¹⁴ And if you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not wrong one another. ¹⁵ You shall pay your neighbor according to the number of years after the jubilee, and he shall sell to you according to the number of years for crops.

MSH: You say, what's the point with all this? Well, the key principle is actually is sort of summarized later on in versus 23 and 24 were we read,

²³ “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me. ²⁴ And in all the country you possess, you shall allow a redemption of the land.

MSH: The idea is that Canaan belonged to God and he had granted it, he had rented it, he had leased it to the Israelites as the Hebrew term *ahuza*, which means and is translated elsewhere as something like tenured land or a landholding. The Israelites could not think of the land as sort of just inherently belonging to them. It inherently belonged to God. It was not theirs to do whatever they wanted to do to it. It could not be permanently sold or permanently given up. Israelite landowners, when they had something happen and they had to sell their land, maybe they owed a lot of money or they had to do something with it to pay off a debt or whatever, no matter what they had to do, they retain the right to redeem that property because God had given it to them.

We have the tribal allotments and then within the tribal allotments you're going to have the exchange of land and whatnot. What this system is is basically a system of reset. After so many years things get restored to the original owner. People can go live in their original home if they've been alienated for some reason. Maybe they had to indenture themselves or something like that. Land had to go back to the original owner. That was thought of as sort of a reset button and the whole idea behind it was these relationships you create when it comes to the land, whether it's buying or selling or indenturing or mortgaging or lending or leasing, all of those are secondary because the real owner of the land is God and God is letting you lease it. He's letting you live here. Now Levine says this.

“Land tenure is at the heart of the chapter, which does not provide for a moratorium on debts every seventh year as does the law of Deuteronomy 15, nor does it require the release of indentured servants every seventh year as Deuteronomy 15 and Exodus 21 do so. We need to factor them in. Both of those chapters are primarily concerned with the alleviation of poverty. So Leviticus 25 is about teaching the idea of who owns the land. Parts of that system gets applied in different ways, Deuteronomy 15, Exodus 21, with how God, who is the ultimate landowner, wants the land used to care for the poor, wants the land used to alleviate situations of indentured servitude and whatnot.”

MSH: So all these chapters together, they're not contradictory. They have to be taken together because there are different situations to which the idea of God's ultimate ownership is applied. God is the one telling you, since I'm letting you live here, and we're describing that here in Leviticus 25, over here in these other passages, here's something else I want you to do with my land. This is how I want it handled. And so we have to factor this into the system. If you think about it, back in these days, most people made their living, their livelihood was linked to land. This is an agrarian culture. It's an agrarian society. Whether you were in debt or out of debt, whether you were poor or wealthy, ultimately in 99.9% of the cases depended on whether you had land or not, whether you can you live off that land or not.

So when people had to borrow certain things, or when they got into debt, when they had been years, the fact they were tied to land created both positive and negative situations. But what God is saying here's look, that's all well and good but I'm going to introduce and tell you according to certain cycles at some given points in time, I want it reset. I want it to go back to the way it was at the beginning. People who no longer had land, they had to pledge it. They had to sell it off to pay debt or whatever, they're going to get that back. They're not going to continually be in a situation where they have nothing. In an agrarian culture they're not going to be continually at the disadvantage. We're going to reset the system at certain points of time to avoid a cycle of poverty. This was the whole idea and God, as landowner, is telling people this is how I want it done.

I don't want the abuse of fellow Israelites to happen and I don't want this cycle of poverty to continue. Now when you get down to, you read a little bit through this, through the whole thing, we need to say something about kind of conceptually beyond land maintenance, beyond teaching the one lesson of who owned the land, what's the bigger picture? What's the bigger theological picture? There have been a lot of people who've addressed this. I'm going to quote from an article by a fellow whose last name is Kiwoshima, and I kind of like his summary here of his take on it. It's not the only take but it's his take on it. So aside from land maintenance, alleviation of poverty, because oftentimes when you hear this passage taught, if you do, it sort of morphs into some social justice thing and that's there. We just talked about it but there's something bigger going on here, a bigger biblical theological thing to think about in all this. So here's what Kiwoshima says, and I just like his summary.

“Interpretations of the Jubilee year in Leviticus 25 have tended to read it through the lens of various historical issues, how it fits into the legal historical context of the Ancient Near East, it's literary historical relationship to other biblical sources, other passages, and the historical background of ancient Israelite society. While these are undeniably important questions, they fail to address the meaning and function of the Jubilee year within the larger priestly cultic system of ritual and thought. The Jubilee year symbolizes and completes an atonement of socioeconomic pollution and spiritual pollution because it's linked to the Day of Atonement. The priestly system of thought imagined Israel at the moment of its creation by Divine Fiat as an ideal correlation of people and land, a sacred order which, not unlike the organization of creation itself as described in Genesis 1, must periodically be restored.”

MSH: In other words, what he's saying is that not only is this a reset to take care of things like poverty, but the land of Israel and the people of God, the land of Yahweh, the people of Yahweh, Yahweh gives his people the land to live on and then they manage it, and going throughout the cycles of life, people lose land. People gain land. You have debt, poverty, wealth, all this stuff that just happens in life. When it's reset in the Jubilee year, it's like going back to a utopia, going back to the utopia of Eden, the original creation. And what was the original creation? What was Eden? Not all the earth is Eden, we know that. But what was that perfected thing back in Genesis 1, this place we call Eden?

It was the abode of God. Well, isn't that what Canaan is? Canaan is where Yahweh dwells. This is his land. So when we reset it, in a very perfect, very utopian sort of idea, everybody has land; nobody's poor. The land is mine and I want it distributed. It goes back to its original owner. People can go back to their original homestead and make a living and kick start over and all that kind of stuff. We reset everything to go back to this harmonious idea of God's people, Yahweh's people living with him in his living space, in his abode, in his land. It's a mirror of Eden. It's an Edenic reset. The system is, as I talked about an Unseen Realm a lot, the system is designed to inform people that what's happening here in this place we call Israel with these people we call Israelites and their God who is Yahweh, the true God, the God of gods, the most high, what's happening here is a restoration, a resetting of Eden.

This is the whole idea. This is the plan to kickstart Eden on earth. I've repeated this many times on the podcast, in Unseen Realm and other sources, but this is always lurking in the background, the restoration of humans, God's family, living with God in his living space, in his abode, It's right here in Leviticus 25. This is the bigger picture of the Jubilee reset. Kiwoshima continues, he says,

“The disruption or chaos caused by an Israelite’s falling into slavery, indentured servitude, or selling off his property is viewed as a form of pollution. **[MSH: It's a perfect thing become corrupt. It's a utopian thing become corrupt. It mars the picture. It shouldn't be this way.]** It's viewed as a form of pollution because people have been separated from their ancestral land, compromising the nation's geopolitical order. In order to eradicate the possibility of an irremedial pollution, the Jubilee year abolishes slavery and selling of land. One can only sell one's labor, Leviticus 25:40, or the crops of one's field, Leviticus 25:16, but not one's actual person or field for both already belong to Yahweh. Whatever pollution does accrue, whatever corruption does accrue in the interim, between Jubilee years, is symbolically eliminated through the proclamation of liberty. **[MSH: We just read that word, people having liberty, being set free.]** Liberty is defined as returning home on the Day of Atonement, Leviticus 25:9, on the very day that the goat for Azazel, the scapegoat in some translations, carries away or disposes of the people's sins out into the wilderness. **[MSH: Remember in Eden, there was no sin. It's going to become corrupted because of rebellion]** On the very day that the goat goes out into the wilderness carrying the sins of the people away, the people and the land return to their original sacred distribution. Eden is restored.

MSH: It's a utopian reset. It's a back to Eden theme which I've belabored both here in the podcast and in Unseen Realm. All that's Old Testament theology. Now before we wrap up, I want to talk about two other things. What about how people thought about the Jubilee notion later on? What about after the Old Testament period in the intertestamental period, the Second Temple period? How do people think about the Jubilee then because now we're under dominion of foreign powers, the Romans or whoever, and we have this spiritual sense in Deuteronomy 32 where the nations around us are under the dominion of other gods, and this is Yahweh's portion. Look at our situation. We know why we're here.

We're sent into exile because we apostatize. This is why idolatry, disloyalty to Yahweh, was linked to being in the land or not. It's as if dad, Yahweh, is saying, you don't want to live in my house. You don't want to honor me. Go live somewhere else. And they did. He sent them away but it wasn't permanent. The result was this restorative idea. Well, when you're in this situation in the Second Temple period, how are people thinking about that and that includes the New Testament. The New Testament is part of the Second Temple period. Most Bible students will know that Jesus was considered to be the eschatological or ultimate fulfillment of the Jubilee liberty. That's because of the episode in Luke 4:16-19. If we go to Luke 4:16, this is the scene. Jesus goes into the synagogue at Nazareth and verse 17 says,

¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

MSH: We know the rest of the story about their reaction to this. They don't like it. Now, most Bible students will know that in that episode when he quotes Isaiah 61 that Isaiah 61 is borrowing from Leviticus language, Leviticus 25, this whole idea of proclaiming liberty to the captives. Now it's kind of interesting to see how Luke is thinking about this and reflecting how Jesus was thinking about this. If you Isaiah 61, which is about the servant of the Lord, the tasks are as follows, if you just stick with Isaiah 61, if you start there. The tasks are to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and freedom to those who are bound, fourth, to proclaim the year of Yahweh's favor and the day of his vengeance, five, to comfort those who mourn. Now in Luke, what Luke does with it, here are his tasks.

They're different; to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty for the captives and sight for the blind, and that wasn't Isaiah 61, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, number four, to set the oppressed at liberty. So in other words, Luke omits the second and fourth tasks from Isaiah 61. He makes the third task little shorter and he adds a new task, which is taken from Isaiah 58:6, this idea about oppression. Now I'm not going to get into how those things are reconciled. A lot of it involves comparing the MT and the LXX and all that stuff. We're going to skip all the technical stuff and ask two questions instead because they're interesting questions. What were the people in Jesus day, and presumably us, what were they liberated from?

And second, what about skipping the day of the Lord language, the judgment language from Isaiah 61? Why did Jesus do that? Back to the first question, what were they liberated from? Now most people would assume it's sin. It's their sin. That's true but elsewhere in Luke when Luke talks about liberation language when he uses these terms, there's a bit of a different perspective. In the story in Luke 13 for example, with the woman who has a disabling spirit for 18 years. She was bent over, couldn't straighten herself. Jesus sees her and says woman you're freed from your disability. He lays his hands on her and she stands up straight. The ruler of the synagogue has a cow, familiar story. Jesus says,

¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

MSH: The loosing language here is the same as the loosing language, the liberation language elsewhere including Luke 4 and going back to the Septuagint of Leviticus 25. And so a lot of scholars are saying well, because it's Jesus and because he's the Messiah and because of the implications of the cross, if we asked the question, what were people in Jesus' day liberated from, it was their sins in a salvation sense, but it also speaks about the idea of the defeat of Satan and the liberation from the captivity of a world held in bondage to spiritual forces of darkness. That is part of the picture. That's going to become important because when you think about, now think about what we talked about in Leviticus 25 with the Jubilee, that it's a utopian reset. It's a reset of Eden.

It's not just about poverty. It's not just about sin. It includes this idea of a spiritual bondage and not just referring to one's sins but also referring to the defeat of Satan and the dominion of the nations. Didn't Jesus come as the Messiah, as the liberator, as the reseter of the Gentile also? Well, if that's true, that links all of what we been saying to the Deuteronomy 32 worldview, the reclamation, the reclaiming of the nations and the defeat of the spiritual powers who are in dominion over them. If you're going to reset the land, and by the way, since the church is the circumcision neutral people of God and the people of God are no longer bound to one geographical region, this thing we call Israel or this thing we call Canaan, since now the people of God and the domain of God is the entire globe, to reset the globe you have to reclaim the nations. You must defeat the powers that hold the nations in dominion. You have to defeat the fallen sons of God.

And this is part of the picture of a Levitical, a Jubilee reset associated with the Messiah. It's a whole lot bigger than some of these other things we've been talking about. Now the second

thing, what about the judgement language because isn't this reclaiming of the nation's idea, isn't the ultimate reset, the global reset where the land of Yahweh is the world and the people of Yahweh are all believers, Jew or Gentile, extracted from the nations held captive, isn't that something that happened at the end of the eschaton with the day of the Lord and the second coming and all this stuff? Yes, the answer to that is yes but Jesus skips that part, the ultimate eschaton, the day of the Lord language, he skips that part when he quotes Isaiah 61 because he knows how this is going play out. He knows that what he's doing now, what he will do on the cross is the inauguration of all of that. It's not the consummation of the kingdom. It's not the ultimate reset back to Eden, but it begins it.

It's the inauguration of all of this. So this language that he skips, this language of eschatological judgment is a nod to the notion of the already but not yet notion of eschatology in the New Testament of what the Messiah is doing. The ultimate retribution means the judgment of the nations. It means the restoration of the entire people of God from every tribe of Israel and from every nation held in honor under dominion by the forces of darkness, the fallen sons of God. To get a genuine Jubilee fulfillment it all has to come back. Everything has to be liberated. That means the powers have to be defeated. And you get this language in the New Testament. I hate to keep going back to Unseen Realm but I talk about this at length that you get this language about Jesus conquering the powers and being seated at the right hand of God above all the principalities, Satan falling like lightning from heaven. It has all been put in motion and the motion will never cease. It is inexorable. It inches forward on a continuing unstoppable basis. The gates of hell will not be able to withstand the kingdom of God. The reset has begun. We are just waiting for it to cycle through.

It cannot be stopped. So the whole Jubilee thing applied to New Testament theology is very consistent with the inauguration of the kingdom and this already but not yet sort of thinking. Now before we wrap up, what about that day of the Lord language? Jesus goes into the synagogue. They hand him the scroll. He goes to Isaiah 61 and skips things because he knows how this is going play out, but there was a Jewish expectation prior to Jesus leading up to all this. Guess what? That included all of this that factored in a messianic appearance and an ultimate restoration, an ultimate Jubilee, an ultimate reset. You actually find this in Second Temple text like the one I'm going to take you to here is called 11 Q Melchizedek. It's one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, cave 11. It's called 11 Q Melchizedek for a reason. Melchizedek is mentioned. And guess what, guess what? Melchizedek becomes analogous to Jesus in the book of Hebrews, and that's no mistake. It's no accident. I'm going to read you 11 Q Melchizedek because not only will that passage quote Leviticus 25, because it's talking about the liberation of the captives and all at stuff, it's also going to quote, believe it or not, Psalm 82. So here's 11 Q Melchizedek. This is column two. It says, and it's fragmentary, but a lot of this is his present.

“And as for what he said, (Leviticus 25:13), in this year of jubilee, you shall return each one to his respective property. Concerning it, he said (Deuteronomy 15), this is the manner of release. Every creditor shall release what he lent to his neighbor. He shall not coerce his neighbor or his brother for it has been proclaimed a release for God. Here's its interpretation, line four, for the last days refers to the captives who (gap in the text) and whose teachers who have been hidden and kept secret and from the inheritance of Melchizedek and they are the inheritance of

Melchizedek who will make them return and liberty will be proclaimed them to free them from the debt of all their iniquities. And this will happen in the first week of the Jubilee, which follows the nine Jubilees. In the Day of Atonement is the 10th Jubilee (490 year cycle associated with Daniel 9) Line 8, this is the 10th Jubilee in which atonement shall be made for all the sons of light and for the men of the lot of Melchizedek according to all their works for it is the time for the year of grace of Melchizedek and of his armies, the nation of the holy ones of God of the rule of judgment as it is written about him in the songs of David, (Psalm 82) elohim will stand in the assembly of God, in the midst of the gods he judges.”

MSH: Did you catch what they just did in that text? They linked the Jubilee cycle prophetically to be associated with a coming Messiah, a coming liberator figure, who in some way is linked to Melchizedek who is also the elohim who judges the other elohim in Psalm 82. That is a pre-Christian Jewish text among the Dead Sea Scrolls. They are tracking on a lot of the ideas that I've talked about it in Unseen Realm. But it shows you that when Jesus comes along and you get certain New Testament writers that link these ideas, too, their audience is going to be able to process what is being said. They're going to be able to look at Jesus and identify what the truth claims are. Jesus quotes the thing.

He puts the scroll away and say this day all of this has been fulfilled in your hearing. In other words, when he says that, he's basically saying I am the Jubilee liberator and in your tradition you know what that means. So later on when the writer of Hebrews writing to Hebrews, he links Jesus to Melchizedek. It brings with it all these ideas. All these ideas are attached to these sorts of things and so they had this notion that the Messiah was going to do these things and the appearance of the Messiah would have to have something to do with the judging of the gods over the nations in Psalm 82 and the liberation, we're going to go back to our ancestral homes. It's going to be a reset. It's a back to Eden kind of thing. It's a restoration of the kingdom. All of those ideas are floating around in every reasonably educated Jew's head so when Jesus says certain things and the New Testament writers write things, they can process the material.

They're connecting the dots in their head. And it's a little harder for us to do that but that's the point of the podcasts. It's the point of the book. So to bring this to a close, it's legitimate to read a passage like Leviticus 25, the Jubilee cycle and presume this has something to do with Messiah and the way Jesus handles it is, well yeah, all the stuff's been set in motion but it's not quite here yet. The Jubilee cycle has not yet been completed. It will be completed when I return because that's when we get the day of the Lord. That's when the nations are reclaimed. We're in the process now. The Deuteronomy 32 worldview applied in the New Testament book of Acts. We spent a lot of time on that. It's up and running now. It's already here but not yet. So these ideas are not just sort of idiosyncratic to me or to my book or to the podcast or whatever. This is the way an ancient person would've processed this kind of material.