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"Liberated to Live"

Tape 1659

Paul's Jubilee

Law 25:10

We chose that topic because we took it in the light of what you are celebrating. Here now, we are celebrating many jubilees. Jubilee was given to the Jews fifty years, and in the fiftieth year a number of things were told to God's people to do. They were going to celebrate how good God was for fifty years, and yet the celebrations had a message and the message was in these words, in Leviticus 25:10.

Jewish Jubilee

There was a message to be proclaimed and the message was called liberty. It was going to be proclaimed throughout the land to all the inhabitants of the land. To the rich, to the poor, to the educated, to the religious, and to the non-religious people. It was liberty throughout the land, to all the people in the land it was liberty. There was no exception, there were no people who were left out. The jubilee embraced the whole nation and God said only one message and that was 'Liberty to the land.' When you hear the word 'liberty' what does it tell you? It tells you that people were not liberated. The poor were under the slavery of poverty. The bankrupt had nothing to pay, many people had lost their property. There were many who were wandering around without a home. There were strangers all over Israel, there were lonely people, there were tired people there were many people in despair, and God had all of them upon his heart.

When the fiftieth year came round, it was as if the heart of God was beating fast. The heart of love. It pained God's heart to see people who were not free. People who longed to be at home but could never be at home. People who longed to be free but could never be free, there were reasons why they couldn't be free. If you were in a deep debt and you had nothing to pay it with how could you be free? If your land had been sold because of your poverty, how could you be free? There were reasons which made these people slaves. They were victims of circumstances.

God can never be happy to see his people like that, so he said on the fifth day a special day called the day of atonement, "Blow the trumpet everywhere, every valley and every hill, and the sound speaks of liberty, liberty everywhere." And then a number of beautiful things were said in the message of liberty, it was "be free from now." You the poor, can now eat you who had debts they are now cancelled. You who had nothing to pay can now ask for your land to be given <sup>you</sup> back. You can imagine the relief which penetrated the land, somehow the tired felt they were refreshed. People in despair could see the ray of hope, and the heart of God was rejoicing.

"It shall be a jubilee for you when each of you shall return to his property, and each of you shall return to his family." This was what was jubilee, each to his property, each to his family, and then a new word was "return, return, return. Return from your slavery back here. The great problem of the human race is estrangement, it is that problem which has caused despair and war and hatred, but this estrangement begins fundamentally at the foundation of life. Man was created for communion with God, in fellowship with the source of life man was complete and God, of course, was his friend, and man was at home in the family of God. There was a loving relationship between man and his creator, and therefore there was no estrangement at all. God was a friend, God was a source of life, life, life was a gift from God and therefore life was full of joy, it was full of meaning, there was no emptiness because God there and man was rightly related to his source of life. His life was wonderful, his world was wonderful, his fellow men and women were wonderful, then something terrible happened.

In the Bible it is called to miss the target. Christians and theologians call it sin.

man created for communion with God

But we may call it to miss the target for living! God was our target for life and when man turned off from God God missed the target for living and therefore his life became aimless, and when man missed the target, he was invaded by emptiness and his life went on refusing the emptiness and yet having it. And of course as human beings, we have tried to fill it. We put in pleasure, we put in money, we put in education, better life, better cars, better houses, more political philosophies, we bring all sort of things. We want to fill this gap, but they have refused to fill it. When man missed the target for life his life became aimless, and he became a wanderer in life, looking here, looking there, looking everywhere, groping in darkness after something they don't know what.

missing the target for living

In Africa when they feel like that they go and look for more cows. Some Africans go and get married to ten wives hoping to fill the gap and instead they get more trouble and many ultimately hang themselves. Abandonment is the problem of humanity. When you are a stranger to God, life, life becomes a stranger, men become strangers, the world becomes a strange place, even your thoughts become strangers, and we have been just wandering poor people and no one could really bring himself back. One of the great terrible thing of sin is this, it makes you a stranger and it takes away your ability to go back home, because when I am selfish and I am rebellious and I am seeking my own interests and God is kept out, I become a cripple, I can't move to God because I have put up barriers in my way. I put them up but I can't take them away, they are too strong for me, I am too weak to take them away. I become miserable, I long to get home, there is no bridge between me and that God, God remains a distant not, not because he doesn't love me, but because my sins have made me a stranger. I am threatened by him. I don't like to go anywhere near him, I wish I could, but I have no ability to go.

lost at a distance

I wish somebody would help me, but I am too proud to be helped. I don't even want other people to know my condition. I become a hypochondriac, a pyromaniac, a pre-tender, I give wrong impressions, I give impressions that I am happy when I am sad. I give the wrong impression that I am free when I know I am a slave.

This is another effect of sin in life. It makes us see things that we should be blind to. There is a battle all the time, there is no liberation, we are strangers in the world which God created for us. So, the jubilee comes, God sees us as we are, strangers wandering along, alone, you can even be a stranger in the city of Lausanne among the people who speak the same language as yourself. A young man can be a stranger with his brothers around him. A girl can be a stranger with mother and father near to her. A complete state of estrangement. This happens all the time, that's why there are suicides, this is why in Africa people are killing one another. Strangers to one another. Now we need help. We need someone to something. Things we have, but things cannot help, things do not understand the estrangement of the heart. They can be used outside, but they don't reach the inner man, so the inner man goes on suffering, utterly lonely until something happens.

This is the Christian jubilee. You know the jubilee never happened among the Jews. They were given instructions about it, it was a wonderful idea, it excited their hopes, but they had no experience of it at all. They never entered into it, it remained far away, it waited for you because Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. God had to move, He is moving all of us as strangers. Seeing some young people in the city of Lausanne walking alone as strangers. Seeing husbands and wives strangers to one another. Seeing businessmen in your city strangers to their fellow businessmen. Seeing members of a church like this strangers to one another.

God because he is a God of love, did move. He decided to do something about it. When we could not move, he moved. When we could not act, he acted. How did he act? Did he bring a new teaching? Did we need a new religion? We needed God, and we needed God in human terms. A God who could be near enough. A God who could come near this African in his own way, who could speak the language of my heart, who could touch the touch of this man of this man. Who could understand the guilt of my conscience. This is the God we needed. No longer a strange God of our ancestors, nor the great big God of the Greeks. No, not at all. We needed God in human terms. So near that he could speak good French to your heart, and that he could communicate with you as a Swiss in the Swiss way. Not like this African.

*Good News*

This is the kind of God we wanted, and this is why when he came in the New Testament he is called 'Good News'. Because that amazing God, that pure and holy God who is known as the convincing fire in the Bible in relation to his people. He looks like a man, full of absolute love, the absolute love, the kind of love which you cannot understand intellectually, but you can see it demonstrated in the person of Jesus Christ. God became a man in the person of his beloved son. Born as a baby, grew as a boy, walked among the poor, became a friend of prostitutes. What a God. He God met and loved everyone everywhere. In the presence of that God, young people were understood, old people were understood, bad people were understood. Religious people were understood. Rich men were understood and poor men were understood, by what God.

*Jesus entered our strangeness*

He entered the estrangement of men and women. He was not afraid, he walked with his eyes open, he knew what was going on in the hearts of the people. Do you know that he knows you in the crowd of Lausanne, and he knows you by name? And he understands the language of your heart and he loves you exactly as you are. Some of you don't love yourselves, no wonder. Where can you begin to love yourself?

You are so bad! You are so full of conflict! You simply can't love love yourself but God loves you! You say "How did I know that?" The thing I'm going to give you is a verse from Paul. He was excited about this Romans 8:14 and 15. 8:14 & 15. This is spiritual jubilee. You have not received the spirit of slavery again. This is Paul speaking of excitement, witnessing the jubilee of the heart; on the road to Damascus a man who was a slave, full of hatred, very proud, then this wonderful God and Paul was an Anarchist for the Christians. He was all out to destroy, women and children and everyone, he had no mercy because really insisted he was suffering man. This man is going to destroy, he is a slave, he doesn't know any liberty, he can hardly breathe because when you hate you can't breathe. The atmosphere is full of carbon dioxide and this was what Paul was like.

*Spiritual Jubilee  
Rom. 8:14 & 15*

*Paul's jubilee*

And as he neared Damascus he met fresh in Jesus came in the Holy Spirit, and you know the Holy Spirit is called the breath of life, fresh wind of life, and he shone around this poor man, and the glory overcame him and he fell on the ground like a dead man and he lay at the feet of the feet of the risen savior. The Holy Spirit proclaimed liberty. That was a jubilee for Paul. It may be jubilee for you today. Why not? It's for us. ~~Each~~ Each of us should return home. Where is the home of the heart? Where God is, that's where the home is. Home is not just a building, home is to go exactly where you came from. And when Paul discovered that, when he was taken by the risen savior and with his wonderful love in the power of the Holy Spirit, he entered the heart of that man and he began to liberate it.

And from that moment, the love of God removed every barrier. And you ask me how did that happen? What was the center of this miracle? The cross. That is where God sacrificed himself. This is where God acted to remove enslavement. And the love of God like mighty power, broke down Paul's

barriers one after another and introduced this man into the fresh air, and he began to breathe. His breath was full of love and he couldn't stop proclaiming liberty. He was liberated to live and his life became infectious.