

How to Receive Your Blessings of the Jubilee

With the world falling apart around us, many, including Christians, are prophesying gloom and doom for the near future, with predictions of looming chaos.

These predictions have led to a sense of fear, including among Christians. Natural disasters, wars, economic uncertainty and the four Blood Moons are only a few end-time indicators that are keeping people on their guard.

That brings us to the year of Jubilee and the beginning of the Jewish New Year.

We hear many Christian leaders focus their messages on the end times, financial collapse, the Blood Moons and God's judgment; in particular, many have given a negative prognosis for this month, September 2015.

Many of the above-mentioned topics apply to us as Christ followers right now. However, we need to focus on preparing for the blessings of the year of Jubilee and not on the negative possibilities and the end of the world. If you are ready for Jubilee, then you are ready for the end times.

This truth became clear to me earlier this month when Rev. Ron Burhoff, a Jewish believer and minister from the ministry Friends of the Bridegroom, delivered a word to me and to several others. The message conveyed how to receive the blessings of Jubilee. The message was so important and time-sensitive that I knew I must share it far and wide, including writing this article. I encourage you to share it, too.

The Year of Jubilee

This message is about the year of Jubilee. It's about the

choice of whether to receive its blessings. The Year of Jubilee, which happens every 50 years, is based on the Sabbath year cycle of 49 years ($7 \times 7 = 49$). The Year of Jubilee, described in Leviticus 25, is the year that follows the 49 years—the 50th year.

Jubilee is accepted and practiced by both Jews and Christians alike. As Christ followers, we are tied to Israel and the blessing of Jesus Christ through Israel.

What are the blessings of Jubilee according to the Bible? Leviticus 25 describes them as freedom for slaves, servants, restoration of possessions, restoration of marriages and families, multiplied increase from labor, deliverance and freedom from oppression, safety and triple blessings, among other things.

Offenses and the Skandalon

How we deal with offense is a huge factor in whether or not we receive these blessings. Jesus taught His disciples about it in Luke 17:

“Then He said to the disciples, ‘It is impossible except that offenses will come. But woe to him through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he was thrown into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves.

“‘If your brother sins against you, rebuke him. And if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turns to you, saying, “I repent,” you must forgive him.’

“The apostles said to the Lord, ‘Increase our faith.’

“The Lord said, ‘If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, “Be uprooted and be planted in the sea,” and it would obey you!’” (Luke 17:1-6,

MEV).

Jesus said it is impossible that offenses won't come to you. The word "offense" comes from the Greek word skandalon. A skandalon is a trap—a pit with spears placed into it facing up and a veil put over the top. When we receive these guaranteed offenses, we act and we take those offenses upon ourselves. When we step on the veil, we become speared with the skandalon.

We as believers know we can go to the Lord and say, "Lord, please forgive us for receiving that offense, for taking that offense, for responding in that way." The Lord then takes that offense and throws it as far as the east is from the west. It is thrown into the sea of forgetfulness. What we don't realize as believers is that the skandalon, the spears, are still stuck in our soul.

Luke 17:5 says the disciples asked for more faith. Then Jesus said, "If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and be planted in the sea.'" Many of us think that's the same basic concept discussed in Mark 11:21 or Matthew 21:21. The concept is correct, but Luke 17 is very specific regarding offenses.

The disciples are talking about increasing their faith so that they can get rid of the skandalon and get of the trap. If you read it that way, you see that if you have the faith of a mustard seed, you can say that to the tree. What kind of tree? This particular time it's an exact kind of tree, a Sycamine tree, also known as the tree of mourning—the tree of weeping, the tree of pain. The pain caused by the skandalon is a seed that grows into a tree in our souls. We can use even a tiny bit of faith and say to the tree (which has a very deep root system), "uproot yourself and throw yourself in the sea of forgetfulness."

That's what we're to do. We're supposed to take action using

our faith—the faith of God—to uproot the trees that are rooted deep in our soul. We are to take the tree of the pain, the mourning and so on and uproot them and throw them in the sea of forgetfulness.

The Ten Days of Awe

The Jewish New Year began on September 13, kicking off what is called the Ten Days of Awe (Yamim Noraim) that precede Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This ten-day period is when it is incumbent upon us as believers, according to Jewish teaching, to ask God to search our hearts and illuminate any offense we have not dealt with.

We need to search our hearts for any skandalon that we have fallen into and any weeping trees that have come as a result, and to ask forgiveness for the offenses that we have both taken and given. When we give offense, as it says in the same verses in Luke, “It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he was thrown into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones.”

The point here is that we give offense and we take offense, and it is our responsibility to deal with it properly. We must release people from the jails of our minds, from the jails of our judgments. We use our faith to uproot anything that we planted in other people’s lives that are not of God, as well as uproot any such things that has been planted in our own lives.

These Ten Days of Awe are for that purpose; to clean our hearts of offense. We unwind the things that we’ve done to others—at least in the spirit—and what has been done to us. Sometimes the Lord will tell you to approach that person and ask forgiveness, and sometimes the dialogue will stay between you and God.

It is also important for us to make an offering to God for the Jubilee year in the amount and to the place where the Lord

leads you (my belief is that making an offering that is tied to Israel is important). Then, the blessings of Jubilee are guaranteed for us.

According to Judeo-Christian teaching, the process of the Ten Days of Awe are so important that our entering into and receiving the blessings of Jubilee are dependent upon it. Rev Burhoff warns that, between now and September 23, the first day of Jubilee, we will have more opportunity from the enemy to take and give offense than we may have ever seen. The enemy does not want to give back everything he's stolen and certainly does not want us to receive God's fullness.

Don't take the bait! Be vigilant not to give or receive new offenses during this time and immediately deal with any we do we allow.

I realize the time is short and you may be reading this with only a few days of Awe remaining. Nevertheless, please be encouraged that we have a gracious and merciful heavenly father who can work with whatever time you have to accomplish his work in you in his timing. There is never a bad time to cleanse your heart.

This is not simply a Jewish observance. It is interesting to note that the Catholic Church has a special Jubilee door at St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican called the Holy Door. All the four papal basilicas in Rome have what is known as a holy door. They are only opened during Jubilee years. When you enter St. Peter's Basilica, the last door on the right-hand side is the Holy Door. The Holy Door represents Jesus, the Good Shepherd and the gate of the sheep pen. The Bible says in John 10:9, "I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved." This "Holy Door" is also known as "Door of the Great Pardon."

Other churches besides St. Peter's Basilica that have a Holy Door include: St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, Basilica of

Saint Paul Outside the Walls and Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

Application by the Prayer of Faith

Here is a short example of how I apply this teaching. Set aside time each day to pray and ask God to search your heart and reveal any person that you may have offended or has offended you and meditate on it throughout the day. God is faithful and will reveal whom you need to deal with. Write down any names the Lord puts on your heart. (In my case, I did not know to do this and the list of offenses I had given and received and not specifically dealt in this manner was quite extensive.)

Once you know the names, depending on your comfort level, you can be general or specific in applying your faith. My preference is to be specific with the people the Lord brought to my remembrance and general with those I may have offended and not have remembered. My brief experience with this process is that every day new names come to mind. I like to deal with each as they come up.

My prayer is simple: It is the faith of God that brings about the results, not by my power or might but by His Spirit. When I have the person and situation visualized, I ask the Lord for forgiveness for specifically what I did and then I speak to the Sycamine tree (tree of offense) saying, "In the name of Jesus by His blood, power and authority, I speak to the tree of offense that was planted in my soul as a result of my taking offense from something this person said or did, and I command it to be uprooted and cast into the sea of forgetfulness." Then it is finished!

In the same way I address any trees of offense I have planted into someone else's soul through my offending them, once I have gotten through dealing with specific offenses. Then, I pray a general prayer to uproot and cast into the sea any and

all trees that have been planted into my soul or I have planted into anyone else's soul that I may not remember or which I may not be aware. I repeat this process daily. There is no magic to my process so I encourage you to be led by the Holy Spirit and all will be well with you.

It is my prayer that the Lord brings you everything you need to know about this in time, and the blessings of Jubilee will be released into your life and into the lives of your loved ones for His glory. God bless you, and may your days ahead be amazing, prosperous and offenseless. In Jesus' name.

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