

CELL MEETING GUIDE 25 MAR TO 31 MAR 2024

Sermon Title: Liberty, Family and Property (Part 4)

Sermon Date: 24 Mar 2024

Reference Text: Leviticus 25:8-22

Speaker: SP Lawrence Chua

Sermon Recap

- One of the things Jubilee involves is Israelites returning to their possession and reclaiming their rightful place of land.
- Applying this principle of Jubilee to our context today, we too are in danger of losing our possession of our property. Not our homes, nor our country, but our possession of the earth as a shared humanity.

God's role and Man's role over creation

- In the beginning...
 - God has a sustaining work over Creation
 - Colossians 1:15-17
 - Man also has a sustaining work to do
 - Genesis 1:26-28 "dominion" means to be responsible for. Our rightful place over creation is to be responsible over creation.
- Today, we enjoy common grace - God's sustenance of the world benefits all mankind, not just God's chosen people (or people who are "good")
 - Matthew 5:43-45 "For he makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."
 - In this passage, Jesus teaches us that God's common grace over us all is the basis for us to forgive one another.

Deep connection between earth and mankind

- Deu 11:11-12 shows us that God cared about Israel's land.
 - "But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end."
 - In the past, land was important to allow God's people to have food to eat. Hence there was a close relationship between Man and land.
- Today, we feel more "distanced" from our land because we do not personally fulfil our needs directly from the land.
 - However, that does not take away the importance of land to us. Land is still a critical resource for our survival today.

- “The world is quietly losing the land it needs to feed itself”
 - Climate change, loss of biodiversity and desertification are serious problems.
 - Desertification: the process by which fertile land becomes desert, typically as a result of drought, deforestation, or inappropriate agriculture.
 - Unsustainable agricultural practices, overworking the land
 - Resulting in an urgent need for land restoration projects.

Rest for our land

- God, in His grace, provided a preventive measure to Israel through the Levitical law.
- God cared for the Israelites deeply. He provided for their needs by instituting rest.
 - Genesis 2 - God rested from His work.
 - Exodus 23:12 - On one day each week, everyone (Man, livestock, slaves and sojourners) would rest.
 - Leviticus 25:1-7 - Every six years, the land would rest in the seventh year.
- The Jubilee rest for the land provided an **extended** rest for Israel's land, in addition to the rest every Sabbath year.
 - The land rested for two years, every 50 years (the Jubilee year).
- God cared for the Israelites by instituting consumption restraint and natural rejuvenation of the land.
 - This sustainability is also relevant to our time.

Sharing and Praying

1. Reflect on how 2024 has been for you. Have you been restful in your daily walk? Have you been going about your days resting in God's provision? Do you feel rested?
2. How has your attitude been towards your work? Have you been working from a place of rest and ultimately trusting in God to provide, or have you struggled to do so in any way?
3. On the earth being our shared possession as God's creation, have we been responsible over creation? Do we care about sustainability and care for God's earth? Do we treasure the earth as God's provision to us?