

Chat With The Chaplain

In case you've been asleep at the wheel for a time, you might have noticed that we've had another 'New Year' come our way. It's a time for resolutions of all kinds, a changing of the guard of sorts, and maybe a clean slate to start the year with. Someone has said, "No one can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and have a new ending". Now we could argue about the logic of that statement all day long, but I think I'm going to head off in another direction of sorts. Have you ever heard the word Shemitah? Yeah, me neither. I stumbled across it here awhile back, and it's a Hebrew word meaning 'release', or in our manner of speaking, a 'New Beginning'. The Shemitah was, and still is, the 7th year of a 7 year agricultural and cultural cycle. During the year of Shemitah, all crops and croplands were allowed to 'rest'(lay fallow), debts were forgiven, and much more, even extending into the realms of finance, labor, production and consumption. Stick with me for a bit – I'm going somewhere with this. The principles in this were all God ordained and if followed (by the Israelites), was designed to be a blessing on their nation. In Exodus 23:11 it says, "Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the 7th year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat". Also during that year, Leviticus 25:5 says, "What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land". Another principle included in this year of Shemitah is probably the most difficult pill to swallow for most, and that is in Deuteronomy 15: 1,2 where it says, "At the end of every 7 years (the last day of the 7th year), you shall grant a release of all debts. And this is the form of the release; Every creditor who has lent anything to his neighbor shall release it; he shall not require it of his neighbor or his brother, because it is called the Lord's release(Shemitah)." I think I can hear all of the loan companies and credit card empires calling foul on this one! I can imagine trying to buy a brand new Road Glide on a 10 year note.

Anyhow, it's true that the 7year cycle was directed specifically to one nation, Israel. The Shemitah was meant to be a blessing to Israel, a nation that once knew God. But , as it gradually removed God from its life, it became a sign of judgment. And the judgment came in the form of Babylonian captivity. As for how this relates to America, there's all sorts of info out there, but here I'm trying to focus on the personal aspect. Individually, as we leave 2017 and enter 2018, we could make this time of transition our personal time of Shemitah, 'releasing' the old things of the past. As we do that, we are 'released ' to clear the decks for a new start, something like a spiritual resetting. And while we are resetting, we can also be renewing, re-energizing, regenerating, and reviving our relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! This can and should be a daily (moment by moment) activity, not just on Sundays, or in 'church'. If you have not trusted in Jesus for salvation as yet, what in the world are you waiting for? When you do put your trust in Him, He will grant you a supernatural, divine 'release' from the curse of all sin in your life, and transform your heart and life from the insideby your personal invitation only. Romans 12:2 says, " And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect". And, there's more ... much more;

---Romans 8:1,2 – You are freed forever from all condemnation

---Romans 8:28 – God works all things together for good

---Romans 8: 35—39 – God will never allow anything to separate you from His love

---2 Corinthians 1:21-22 – God will cause you to stand firm in Christ, and the Spirit He gives you secures your future.

---Philippians 1:6 – God has begun a good work in you and will bring it to perfection

--- *Philippians 3:20 – You have been made a citizen of heaven*

--- *2 Timothy 1:7 --- God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind*

*And finally – 1 Corinthians 2:9 – “ But just as it is written, ‘ Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard,
and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for
those who love Him’.*

Have a happy and Blessed New Year! See you down the road.

Wanted – More Bikers In Heaven!!

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