

# SESSION 5

## Scripture: Leviticus 25

### "The Land Will Observe a Sabbath to God"

**25<sup>1-7</sup>** God spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai: "Speak to the People of Israel. Tell them, When you enter the land which I am going to give you, the land will observe a Sabbath to God. Sow your fields, prune your vineyards, and take in your harvests for six years. But the seventh year the land will take a Sabbath of complete and total rest, a Sabbath to God; you will not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Don't reap what grows of itself; don't harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land gets a year of complete and total rest. But you can eat from what the land volunteers during the Sabbath year—you and your men and women servants, your hired hands, and the foreigners who live in the country, and, of course, also your livestock and the wild animals in the land can eat from it. Whatever the land volunteers of itself can be eaten.

### "The Fiftieth Year Shall Be a Jubilee for You"

**8-12** "Count off seven Sabbaths of years—seven times seven years: Seven Sabbaths of years adds up to forty-nine years. Then sound loud blasts on the ram's horn on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement. Sound the ram's horn all over the land. Sanctify the fiftieth year; make it a holy year. Proclaim freedom all over the land to everyone who lives in it—a Jubilee for you: Each person will go back to his family's property and reunite with his extended family. The fiftieth year is your Jubilee year: Don't sow; don't reap what volunteers itself in the fields; don't harvest the untended vines because it's the Jubilee and a holy year for you. You're permitted to eat from whatever volunteers itself in the fields.



<sup>13</sup> “In this year of Jubilee everyone returns home to his family property.

<sup>14-17</sup> “If you sell or buy property from one of your countrymen, don’t cheat him. Calculate the purchase price on the basis of the number of years since the Jubilee. He is obliged to set the sale price on the basis of the number of harvests remaining until the next Jubilee. The more years left, the more money; you can raise the price. But the fewer years left, the less money; decrease the price. What you are buying and selling in fact is the number of crops you’re going to harvest. Don’t cheat each other. Fear your God. I am God, your God.

<sup>18-22</sup> “Keep my decrees and observe my laws and you will live secure in the land. The land will yield its fruit; you will have all you can eat and will live safe and secure. Do I hear you ask, ‘What are we going to eat in the seventh year if we don’t plant or harvest?’ I assure you, I will send such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. While you plant in the eighth year, you will eat from the old crop and continue until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.

<sup>23-24</sup> “The land cannot be sold permanently because the land is mine and you are foreigners—you’re my tenants. You must provide for the right of redemption for any of the land that you own.

<sup>25-28</sup> “If one of your brothers becomes poor and has to sell any of his land, his nearest relative is to come and buy back what his brother sold. If a man has no one to redeem it but he later prospers and earns enough for its redemption, he is to calculate the value since he sold it and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it; he can then go back to his own land. If he doesn’t get together enough money to repay him, what he sold remains in the possession of the buyer until the year of Jubilee. In the Jubilee it will be returned and he can go back and live on his land.

<sup>29-31</sup> “If a man sells a house in a walled city, he retains the right to buy it back for a full year after the sale. At any time during that year he can redeem it. But if it is not redeemed before the full year has passed, it becomes the permanent possession of the buyer and his descendants. It is not returned in the Jubilee. However, houses in unwalled villages are treated the same as fields. They can be redeemed and have to be returned at the Jubilee.

<sup>32-34</sup> “As to the Levitical cities, houses in the cities owned by the Levites are always subject to redemption. Levitical property is always redeemable if it is sold in a town that they hold and reverts to them in the Jubilee, because the houses in the towns of the Levites are their property among the People of Israel. The pastures belonging to their cities may not be sold; they are their permanent possession.

<sup>35-38</sup> “If one of your brothers becomes indigent and cannot support himself, help him, the same as you would a foreigner or a guest so that he can continue to live in your neighborhood. Don’t gouge him with interest charges; out of reverence for your God help your brother to continue to live with you in the neighborhood. Don’t take advantage of his plight by running up big interest charges on his loans, and don’t give him food for profit. I am your God who brought you out of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.





39-43 "If one of your brothers becomes indigent and has to sell himself to you, don't make him work as a slave. Treat him as a hired hand or a guest among you. He will work for you until the Jubilee, after which he and his children are set free to go back to his clan and his ancestral land. Because the People of Israel are my servants whom I brought out of Egypt, they must never be sold as slaves. Don't tyrannize them; fear your God.

44-46 "The male and female slaves which you have are to come from the surrounding nations; you are permitted to buy slaves from them. You may also buy the children of foreign workers who are living among you temporarily and from their clans which are living among you and have been born in your land. They become your property. You may will them to your children as property and make them slaves for life. But you must not tyrannize your brother Israelites.

47-53 "If a foreigner or temporary resident among you becomes rich and one of your brothers becomes poor and sells himself to the foreigner who lives among you or to a member of the foreigner's clan, he still has the right of redemption after he has sold himself. One of his relatives may buy him back. An uncle or cousin or any close relative of his extended family may redeem him. Or, if he gets the money together, he can redeem himself. What happens then is that he and his owner count out the time from the year he sold himself to the year of Jubilee; the buy-back price is set according to the wages of a hired hand for that number of years. If many years remain before the Jubilee, he must pay back a larger share of his purchase price, but if only a few years remain until the Jubilee, he is to calculate his redemption price accordingly. He is to be treated as a man hired from year to year. You must make sure that his owner does not tyrannize him.

54-55 "If he is not redeemed in any of these ways, he goes free in the year of Jubilee, he and his children, because the People of Israel are my servants, my servants whom I brought out of Egypt. I am God, *your* God.

## -Prayer of the Day-

Joyful Spirit, Your loving hands are always creating freedom, release, and fresh starts! Help us do the same today by caring for all living things with gentleness and care. Open us to humbly receive that same care ourselves. Make our hearts smile and our actions sing with your promise of abundance toward the whole world. Amen.



# Reflect

What are ways that you find to relax and restore yourself?  
Do you make these a priority every day?  
What if you did...  
could that change anything else in your life?

Think about what having a fresh start means? Have you ever had one?  
If not, could one be in your future?  
What is the freedom that comes along with a fresh start?  
Are there any negatives?

Have you ever mentally or physically felt the need to be cared for? How did "needing" someone else feel?

How do you think this person felt about being needed? What if the situation were reversed; how would you feel being needed?

Have you ever worked yourself to exhaustion?  
Did you allow yourself a break? Why/Why not?  
How does rest allow us to be more compassionate with others?  
Does it make a difference?



Create

1

Find an image that speaks “peace” to you. Save it or print it out and keep it with you. If you have a cell phone or tablet with you often, think about making it your screen saver or wallpaper! When you need a moment of serenity, look at this image. Let whatever about the image that speaks “peace” to you enter your heart. Close your eyes and let the image sink in.



2

**Create a “happiness” board out of poster board and cut out images.**

*Print photos, find images online, or go through old books! Anything that brings joy to your soul, by simply looking at it—glue to the poster board.*

**Place this board in a location you look often, and remind yourself of all the**







# CONNECT

## With God

Whether you are alone or with others, go to a quiet space for a few hours. Let yourself unplug from all devices and just be. Experience what comes naturally and let go.

Take deep breaths, refresh and renew,





*Yoga began as a spiritual practice in ancient India, centering on bringing the mind, body, and spirit into oneness with the Divine. This meaningful practice has grown globally, with people of all faiths and belief systems finding nourishment in different variations - a powerful reminder of how we learn from one another. When we say, "Namaste," we connect with siblings across the world.*

Breathing is the heart of yoga, and breath itself is a physical way to receive and release. As we reflect on the ways compassion makes us release, accept, and welcome, we will focus on breath alongside some basic yoga poses.



**Sit on the floor, legs crossed.** Take three deep, slow breaths together, with one person saying the following during inhales and exhales:

**INHALE:** *I am a part...*  
**EXHALE:** *of God's balance and fresh starts.*

**INHALE:** *I am a part...*  
**EXHALE:** *of God's balance and fresh starts.*

**INHALE:** *I am a part...*  
**EXHALE:** *of God's balance and fresh starts.*



**Slowly rise, stand in mountain pose (Tadasana),** arms straight and strong by your side, feet firmly planted on the ground. One big breath in, one big breath out. One person can say:

*"In mountain pose, we feel our strength. We are unshakeable."*

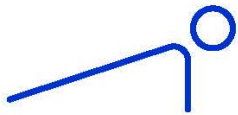
# Breathe In...



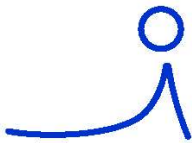
**Reach your arms up to the sky, then back down as you bend into forward fold (Uttanasana),** hands on the ground or resting on your shins (wherever is comfortable). Take a breath in and raise your hands to your knees, head looking forward. One person can say:

*"We prepare and focus our eyes forward."*

Take a breath, and put your hands back to the ground in forward fold.

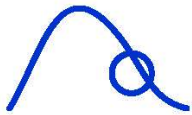


**From forward fold, jump both legs back (or step one leg, then the other) into plank pose (Phalakasana).** Lower further to the ground.

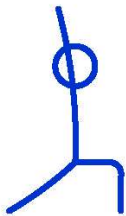


**Straighten your arms and stretch your upper body, head toward the sky, into upward facing dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana).** Hold this pose while breathing in and out a few times. One person can say:

*"We face the sun and welcome with courage what this day holds for us."*



**From upward facing dog, lower your upper body back to the ground, and push your hips and legs up into downward facing dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana).** Raise your right leg up, then step it forward into a lunge, foot between your hands.



**Raise your upper body, arms up to the sky, chest and face forward, into Warrior I (Virabhadrasana I).**



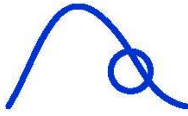
**Square your shoulders to the left and extend your arms out wide, parallel to the ground, palms facing down, in Warrior II (Virabhadrasana II).** Take a few breaths, eyes looking over your right hand. One person can say:

*"In Warrior II, we open our arms to make room for everyone and everything. We stretch to see what's beyond us."*

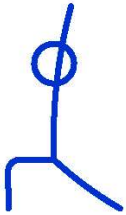
Take a big breath in. As you breathe out, circle your arms down to the floor, one on either side of your right foot, and step your right foot back to meet the left.



# ...Breathe out...



**Move into downward facing dog.** Repeat this same sequence on the left side.



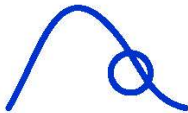
**Raise your left leg up, then step it forward into a lunge, foot between your hands. Raise your upper body, arms up to the sky, chest and face forward, into Warrior I on the other side.**



**Square your shoulders to the right and extend your arms out wide, parallel to the ground, palms facing down, in Warrior II.** Take a few breaths, eyes looking over your left hand. One person can say:

*"In Warrior II, we open our arms to make room for everyone and everything. We stretch to see what's beyond us."*

Take a big breath in. As you breathe out, circle your arms down to the floor, one on either side of your left foot. Step your left foot back to meet the right.



**Move into downward facing dog.**



**From downward facing dog, jump both feet forward (or step one foot, then the other) to meet your hands. Slowly roll your back up until you are standing straight and tall in mountain pose.**



**Standing in mountain pose, shift your weight to your left foot and bring your right foot to the inner side of your left leg (ankle, calf, or inner thigh - whatever feels comfortable), toes pointing to the ground.** Let yourself lengthen and feel your spine stretch upward. Press your right foot into your left leg, and bring your hands into prayer form by your heart.

# ...Rest.



**Focus your eyes on a still point, and balance now in tree pose (Vrikshasana).** Try and hold for three big breaths. One person can say:

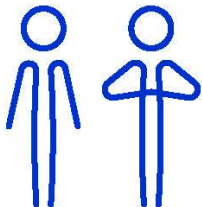
*"Tree pose teaches us to be patient, steady, and balanced. A tree lives in rhythm with the world and its cycles. It nourishes all living things."*



**Lower your right foot to the ground, then repeat on the other side. Shift your weight to your right foot, and bring your left foot to the inner side of your right leg (ankle, calf, or inner thigh - whatever feels comfortable), toes pointing to the ground.** Press your left foot into your right leg, and bring your hands into prayer form by your heart.

**Focus your eyes on a still point, and balance now in tree pose.** Try and hold for three big breaths. One person can say:

*"Tree pose teaches us to be patient, steady, and balanced. A tree lives in rhythm with the world and its cycles. It nourishes all living things."*



**Lower your left foot to the ground and stand in mountain pose. Reach your arms up to the sky, then draw them into prayer form, right by your heart.** End with a bow of your head and hands as you share the foundational yoga greeting - "Namaste" - a call to see one another the way God sees each of us. One interpretation of the phrase is "The Light in me sees the Light in you."

## COLORING







Your

LOVING HANDS <sup>are always</sup> CREATING

FREEDOM, RELEASE, and FRESH STARTS!

HELP US ~~DO THE~~ TODAY

by CARING for all LIVING THINGS

W-I-T-H Gentleness AND CARE.

OPEN US to <sup>humbly</sup> RECEIVE

that same CARE  
OURSELVES.

MAKE OUR HEARTS

SMILE

A-N-D <sup>OUR</sup> ACTIONS WITH YOUR PROMISE OF ABUNDANCE

TOWARD the WHOLE WORLD.

AMEN.

**the EXAMEN** The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. This is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience.

## Blessings

Where have you felt the presence of God?  
What brought you joy this day?  
Where have you found peace?

*Blessings & Bruises can be done daily or whenever you feel the urge. They are a great "around the campfire" conversation and way of connecting! You can even*



## Bruises

Where have you felt an absence of god?  
Have there been moments of unrest?

### Songs to Listen to:

We Are the World (USA for the world),  
Underdog (Alicia Keys), Rise Up (Andra Day),  
Imagine (The Beatles)