

旧约中的禧年律法与约的责任

——经济伦理的一个进路

Jubilee Legislation and Covenant Duty: An Approach to Economic Ethics

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[英文提要]

To help myself to apply the Jubilee legislation, I am proposing a construct that I shall refer to as “the Jubilee ideal.” It is composed of three aspects. The first is a concern for the environment. This is based upon the stipulation to let the land rest one year in seven. The second is to promote economic self-sufficiency among the poor. This aspect of the ideal is based upon the stipulations to cancel debts and redistribute land. The third aspect of the Jubilee ideal is a balance between equality and freedom in economic structure. The Jubilee legislation allowed for material incentives and private ownership. This meant freedom to compete. The legislation also prescribed equality of land ownership in rural areas and redistribution of land periodically. This meant freedom was balanced by equality.

How does the Jubilee legislation speak to someone like this author, who is a Christian living in a capitalist society at the beginning of the 21st century? The economic system of the World Trade Organization (WTO) promotes competition but neglects equality. Those who compete unsuccessfully I shall refer to as “the poor.” What is my Christian duty in such a context? First, it is my covenant duty, in ways that I am capable of, to

empower the poor so that they either compete more successfully within the WTO system, or become more nearly self-sufficient outside the system. Second, I need to consider how someone living in a democratic capitalist society can best pursue the Jubilee ideal. Third, in an information society, education is becoming the principle form of economic resource, so equal access to quality education would be crucial in empowering the poor. A non-profit organization, seeking to bring good education to the poor would, in the 21st century, be paradigmatic in terms of the Jubilee ideal.

1. 解释禧年法

安息年和禧年的立法出现在利未记二十五章,安息年法还出现在出埃及记 21:2-6 和申命记 15:1-18 当中,在以上提到的最后段落里,安息年又被称为“豁免年”(申 15:9)。

1.1 禧年法的背景和先决条件

我采用 Dillard 和 Longman^①的传统批评方法,确认摩西是五经的真实作者,但同时也承认其中包含了摩西之前的素材和摩西之后的各种解释。根据摩西五经,土地按照每个支派的人数分配给了除利未以外的以色列所有支派,较大的支派得了较大的产业,小支派得了较小的产业(民 26:52-56)。

1.2 乡村法

禧年法主要是为农业经济而制定的,记住这一点非常重要。住在乡村的以色列家庭可以通过摩西或者约书亚得到一份土地。

1.21 安息年条例

^① Raymond B. Dillard & Tremper Longman III, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1994), pp.40-48, 74, 92-97.