

December 2017

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WILL PEOPLE BUY AND SELL DURING THE MILLENNIUM?

There seem to be conflicting statements about conditions during the millennium, as far as buying and selling is concerned. On the one hand, God tells us through the prophet Isaiah:

Ho, every one that thirsts, come you to the waters, and he that has no money; come you, buy, and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk **without money** and **without price**. (Isaiah 55:1)

On the other hand, more than 100 years after the time of Isaiah, God tells us through the prophet Jeremiah:

And **fields shall be bought in this land**, whereof you say, *It is* desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. (Jeremiah 32:43)

And in the next verse:

Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal *them*, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 32:44)

Both passages are speaking about conditions during the millennium. So how are we to understand these Scriptures? Is food going to be free, but real estate is going to be bought and sold? Is that what will happen during Jesus Christ's millennial rule? Or is there another explanation?

Let's take a closer look at these Scriptures.

ISAIAH 55

This passage is speaking about the millennium, when Jesus Christ will make "an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Isaiah 55:3). In my recent article titled "The Millennium" I pointed out that the Hebrew verb translated as "buy" in Isaiah 55:1 is there better translated as "receive". And a better way to translate Isaiah 55:1 into English is as follows:

Ho, every one that thirsts, come you to the waters, and he that has **no money**; come you, **receive food** and eat; yes, come, **receive** wine and milk **without money** and **without price**. (Isaiah 55:1)

During the millennium some people will have to plant grains and then reap their crops, in order for other people to be able to receive free food. And somebody has to have a cow and then milk it, in order for milk to be available for other people to receive the milk free of charge. Similarly, the production of wine is a lengthy process, where people first have to grow the grapes, reap them, press out the juice and then let it ferment into wine over a period of time, before it can be available for other people to drink.

These food items (grains, milk, wine, etc.) are the fruits of the labor of certain people, though it is obviously God who gives the increase. The point is that when God says that food and wine and milk will

be available to people free of charge, then **the production of that "free food" required many hours of work from some people**. And those people do not receive any money for all the hours they spent producing the food that other people can receive free of charge. So the people who worked to produce the food are not paid any money for the work they did. That is the conclusion we need to draw from this verse.

As far as the translation of this verse is concerned:

When money doesn't change hands in these transactions, then the verb "buy" does not really convey the intended meaning of the Hebrew text. In the text of Isaiah 55:1 the correct meaning is "receive" food and drink. No buying is involved.

Now notice two specific expressions in this verse. Not only does God tell us that receiving food and drink will be "**without money**", but God also tells us that this is going to be "**without price**". It is not just a case of giving free food to those people who are poor and who don't have any money. It is really a case of there being **no price** attached to any food items during the millennium for anyone, rich or poor. The inclusion of the expression "without price" is extremely significant.

So to be quite clear: during Jesus Christ's millennial rule there will be no monetary value attached to any food items, to anything that human beings will consume. That's what the expression "no price" tells us.

However, many people will be spending a lot of time and effort to grow and to produce food and drink during the millennium. Now **if** other people, who do different work, are somehow "paid money" for the work they do, **then** the people who spend all their time producing free food without being paid for such work, will obviously be greatly disadvantaged, as far as the theoretical acquisition of money is concerned.

The point is:

If the people who produce food for others are not paid for the work they do in producing that food, then anyone else who does any other kind of work can also obviously not be paid for whatever work they may do. It cannot be that some people are paid for the work they do, while other people are not paid for the work they do. That's not how God will deal with people.

Add into this mix the fact that during the millennium God will reward man's work on the land with bumper crops on a scale that human beings have never before experienced. Those bumper crops will require a lot of additional work to reap and to process. People will work hard, but their hard work will be immensely blessed by God.

Now the only logical conclusion we can draw from Isaiah 55:1 is that during the millennium **nobody will be paid any money for the work they will do**. So if people do not receive any money for work that they do, then how can people possibly acquire any money, money which they could theoretically spend on buying lands or houses?

So without the existence of Jeremiah 32 we would be forced to conclude that during Jesus Christ's rule money will simply not exist. Can you see that?

But Jeremiah 32 does exist. And so we need to now look at it. We need to examine Jeremiah 32 on the foundation established by Isaiah 55, because Isaiah 55 was revealed by God more than 100 years before God worked with Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH 32

This chapter was revealed to Jeremiah in the middle of the Babylonian siege against Jerusalem. At that point in time virtually all the people in Jerusalem understood that it was only a question of time before the Babylonians would conquer Jerusalem and then burn it to the ground.

The people had no hope for the future. Everything looked grim. For them it was like the end of their world was about to take place. And Jeremiah had been telling them for years that Babylon would destroy Jerusalem.

That is the setting for the revelation God gave to Jeremiah in chapter 32.

So there was a very specific purpose for the message that God gave to Jeremiah. While God was going to have the Babylonians destroy the city of Jerusalem because "this city has been to Me **a provocation of My anger** and of My fury ... that I should remove it from before My face" (Jeremiah 32:31), God also wanted the people to know that at a future date God would have the city of Jerusalem restored.

That is the message of this chapter. So God had Jeremiah act out this message before the people of Jerusalem. Everything in this chapter is focused on making this point: destruction in the immediate future, but thereafter restoration at some future time.

Here is how this message in chapter 32 is presented:

Jeremiah 32:1-5 = King Zedekiah was highly upset with Jeremiah for the blunt message Jeremiah had delivered to the king.

Jeremiah 32:6-7 = God told Jeremiah in advance that his uncle's son would come and offer Jeremiah the opportunity to redeem a field that belonged to the family. God told Jeremiah what would happen, thereby implying that Jeremiah should take up this offer to redeem the field and keep it in the family. But it was a decision that Jeremiah would have to make.

Jeremiah 32:8 = So then his uncle's son comes to him with this exact offer. Then Jeremiah said "I knew that this was the word of the Eternal".

Jeremiah 32:9-12 = So Jeremiah decides to accept this offer and to redeem the field, so that it would stay in the family. Jeremiah saw to it that everything was duly witnessed, and he then committed "the title deed", as it were, to his scribe Baruch.

Now this was **a highly unlikely financial investment** on the part of Jeremiah. Because Jerusalem was about to fall any day to the Babylonians, especially since Jeremiah himself was the strongest voice for a Babylonian victory, this duly witnessed transaction was considered to be extremely foolish. Who on earth would possibly pay good money for a property that was about to be taken over by the Babylonians? Nobody else in Jerusalem at that point in time was prepared to buy real estate, no matter what the bargain price might have been. So everybody paid attention when Jeremiah made this seemingly foolish investment.

Without God's preemptive message Jeremiah himself would very likely also not have bought this property. But God wanted to make an important point in a very emphatic way. And so God wanted Jeremiah to make this seemingly foolish financial investment when Jerusalem itself stood on the brink of defeat.

Jeremiah 32:13-15 = Jeremiah bought the land because Jeremiah had come to understand the

message that God wanted to convey. That message was: there is tremendous hope for the future. Jeremiah understood:

For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; **Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.** (Jeremiah 32:15)

Note that Jeremiah said that these things would be "possessed". He didn't say that these things would be "bought". "Possessed", while not ruling out any buying, does not necessarily involve any "buying". We should take note of this word "possessed" in God's message.

The message was: Jeremiah, you go ahead and redeem that field to retain ownership of the land within the family, because in the future everything is going to be restored.

Can you understand the reason why God instructed Jeremiah to buy this land in such unlikely circumstances? **God wanted to send a message of hope.**

Everything that happens in this chapter is focused on this specific message. What Jeremiah did (buy a piece of land in a very publicly witnessed context) acted out **what God will do for Israel in the future.**

So God has told Jeremiah to buy a field. But during the days of Moses within the context of explaining the jubilee year, God had given a law that goes as follows:

The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land *is* mine; for ye *are* strangers and sojourners with me. (Leviticus 25:23)

This is a very emphatic statement from God. The premise is: **no man can sell something that belongs to God!** God never relinquishes ownership of any part of this planet Earth. So even when human beings claim to own certain pieces of land, that land still belongs to God, and God can take it away at any time, should God decide to do so.

I believe most emphatically that Leviticus 25:23 will surely be applied by Jesus Christ during the millennium. So land can never be sold when Jesus Christ is ruling.

And if nobody is allowed to sell any land, then there will also be no land for anyone else to buy. You cannot possibly buy any land, if there is no seller.

So we now have two opposing statements for the millennium:

Leviticus 25:23 tells us that all the land belongs to God, and that it may never be sold. And Jeremiah 32:43-44 tells us that in the millennium men will buy land and fields for money. So let's ask:

Which of these two statements is a part of the section of the Old Testament known as "the law"? Leviticus 25:23 is a part of "the law"! And which of these two statements is a part of the section of the Old Testament known as "the prophets"? Jeremiah 32:43-44 is a part of "the prophets"! So do we get God's laws from "the law" or do we get God's laws from "the prophets"? The answer is obvious, isn't it? If we want to know God's laws, then we need to look to the section of the Bible that is identified as "the law".

Leviticus 25 deals with the jubilee year. That is something God introduced as **a buffer to man's greedy ways!** In the 50th year all lands that had changed ownership were to go back to their original owners. That's something that is needed for our present evil age. But when Jesus Christ will be ruling during the millennium, then there will be no need for any "year of release", because no land will ever change

ownership, and no individual will ever become the slave or the employee of another human being.

Unfortunately there is no indication that the jubilee year was ever observed by the people of Israel, let alone observed for two or more successive cycles. So this law of the jubilee has never been practiced since it was given in the days of Moses. And when Jesus Christ returns, I suspect that it will not be practiced either, because **the conditions which the jubilee law was intended to regulate will no longer exist.**

It is far better and far more desirable to never let human society develop the ways of greed and selfishness that necessitate a law like this, than to let humanity be controlled by greed and covetousness, and then "pull things back" every 50 years, to start the greed and selfishness cycles all over again from square one.

The jubilee year was not to be a ritual. It was to serve a purpose, that purpose being to regulate greed and covetousness and selfishness. And if there is never a need to release people from slavery; if there is never a need to forgive debts; if there is never a need to restore houses and lands to their original owners, then there is also no need for a law to regulate these things.

But now we need to examine the following question.

DOES JEREMIAH 32 BREAK THE LAW OF LEVITICUS 25:23?

The law states: the land shall not be sold for ever! That is unambiguous. So how can Jeremiah 32:43-44 be correct without breaking the law of Leviticus 25:23?

There are **three distinct sets of circumstances** when land could be "sold" without breaking the law of Leviticus 25:23. Here is how that works.

We need to establish **the obvious intent underlying the law** of Leviticus 25:23. That obvious intent was that the land belonging to a specific family line should never be taken away from that family. Once a specific area of land had been given to a specific family, the intent was that this specific piece of land would belong to that family in perpetuity. That is the intent for legislating that the land shall never be sold.

That intent is the key!

So when unusual circumstances arise that might lead to the ownership of that land leaving that family, then certain "buying actions" could be taken, **for the explicit purpose of retaining ownership of that land within the family.**

Here are the three sets of circumstances which apply to this law:

1) **The example of Naomi and Ruth.** You know the story. Boaz said: "Naomi ... **sells a parcel of land** which was our brother Elimelech's" (Ruth 4:3). The point was: Elimelech had no male descendants to inherit his land. Therefore, in order to retain the land within the family, it became a duty for a family member "to buy it". The purpose underlying such a "sale" was not to change ownership of the land. No, the explicit purpose of such a sale was to retain ownership of the land within the extended family of the original owners.

This purpose in fact fulfills the spirit of the law of Leviticus 25:23 in unexpected circumstances. Those "unexpected circumstances" are that there is no male heir to continue the line of the

original owners. To deal with these unexpected circumstances the land is sold to a close relative, with the intent of retaining ownership within the family. Can we understand this?

As Boaz continued to explain:

Then said Boaz, What day you buy the field of the hand of Naomi, you must buy *it* also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, **to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.** (Ruth 4:5)

This was a responsibility attached to such a sale. When you "raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance", then the sale of that field hasn't really removed ownership of the field from the family of the original owner. Can we see this intention underlying such sales?

By the way: while Boaz emphatically states that he has "bought" all that was Elimelech's, including Ruth to be his wife (see Ruth 4:9-10), there is never any reference to Naomi receiving any money from Boaz. The price is never mentioned. And neither had Naomi said that she was selling the field. And Naomi had certainly not mentioned any price. So perhaps Boaz gave Naomi some money, or perhaps Naomi just became a part of Boaz's family? Maybe some money changed hands, and maybe it didn't? I suspect that Boaz never actually paid any money at all. And Naomi was extremely happy to have found a husband for Ruth.

Anyway, circumstances #1 for "selling" a piece of land are when there is no male heir to inherit the land in question.

2) **Circumstances #2** for "selling" a piece of land are when there are not even any female heirs for a piece of land. This would have been the case if Naomi and Ruth had both died within a week of returning to the ancestral area. This situation applies when there is no direct heir at all available to claim a property.

In this situation the land would likewise be available for "purchase" by a close relative of the deceased owners. This wouldn't really constitute "a purchase" because there would not be anybody to receive the purchase price. So it would be more like an inheritance bestowed on the nearest relative of the original owners. And once again, the intent is to retain the land within the family of the original owners. That's the spirit of the Leviticus 25:23 law.

3) **Circumstances #3** for "selling" a piece of land are when the owners have become so poor that they need some money to avoid starvation. In this situation the owners are still alive, but unable to provide their own food needs without some outside help. Thus their dire circumstances lead them to "sell" the land to close family members, but on the understanding that the land will revert to them in the jubilee year.

It is "circumstances #3" that applied in Jeremiah's situation in Jeremiah 32. When Jeremiah bought the land, he too realized that the land would revert to his uncle and to his cousin in the year of the jubilee.

When any of these three circumstances apply, then such a "sale" does not break the law of Leviticus 25:23, because the intent is always to retain the land in the family of the original owners.

So as far as Jeremiah 32:43-44 is concerned:

At the start of the story the premise is that the land Jeremiah buys is from a close relative. Therefore the land would belong to Jeremiah until the jubilee year. At the end of this story we have a reference to some people "buying" lands and fields (verses 43-44). The implied assumption is that this "buying" is from close family, the same as at the start of this story. The implication is that in verses 43-44 people will

be "redeeming" whatever land their families had lost at some point in the past.

And even as in the case of Boaz and Naomi, where money was referred to, but very likely without in actual practice being involved, so also at Christ's second coming, money is referred to in the context of redeeming the land, but in actual practice money will not be involved. Jesus Christ will give the land without cost to the families that return to Palestine at the start of the millennium.

Now let consider a principle that we see throughout the Bible.

A PRINCIPLE

Jeremiah chapter 32 was written so that the people of Israel at Jeremiah's time would have understood the point being made. This consideration is something that God has always applied throughout the whole Bible: **present concepts, that apply to God's actions or that apply in God's presence, in terms of things that human beings are already familiar with.**

This is the principle underlying Jesus Christ's approach of explaining the things of God by saying: "the kingdom of heaven **is like unto** ...". And as Jesus Christ also said:

If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, **how shall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?** (John 3:12)

Sometimes in using "earthly things" to describe "heavenly things" Christ actually used "earthly things" that are unacceptable by God's standards. When Christ referred to some "earthly things" that are contrary to "heavenly things", we should never assume that those "earthly things" are therefore somehow acceptable before God. They are not!

Here are some examples:

- 1) In the parable of the talents Jesus Christ said to the "wicked and slothful" one-talent servant: **"you ought therefore to have put My money to the exchangers,** and then at My coming I should have received My own with usury" (Matthew 25:27). Was Jesus Christ therefore approving usury? No, of course not! Jesus Christ was simply making a point in terms that people back then could understand. It would be a serious mistake, as well as an obvious lack of understanding, to seek approval for usury by appealing to Matthew 25:27.
- 2) How about the crooked, unjust steward? He deliberately defrauded his master, just to buy favors from his master's debtors. This steward was guilty of defrauding his master. And Jesus Christ said: **"And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely"** (see Luke 16:8). What do you mean ... done wisely? The steward was a crook! And here God is actually "commending" this crook. Do you understand what Christ was saying?

Understand that nothing this unjust steward had done is acceptable before God. We are not to apply Jesus Christ's statement to the man's literal actions. We are to get the message that Jesus Christ wanted to get across, without us taking this parable at face value. Unjust actions and conduct are never acceptable before God, and God expects us to figure that out on our own.

The lesson Jesus Christ wanted to teach was: the man used his mind to try and solve a very difficult situation. What the man literally did is not acceptable in any way. But we need to learn the principle of doing something when faced with difficult situations, rather than being paralyzed into inactivity by fear or

by ignorance. And we most certainly need to be sure that what we do is not "unjust".

Jesus Christ told this parable in terms that worldly people could understand, but without Jesus Christ actually approving the man's dishonest conduct.

3) When God told the Apostle Peter to "rise, kill and eat" a whole bunch of unclean animals (see Acts 10:13), God expected Peter to have enough understanding to know that he should not eat unclean animals. And Peter did indeed understand that; and so he refused to "kill and eat".

Here is a principle:

When God has people act out something, then the instructions are not always to be taken as statements of what represents God's way of life. **The instructions are aimed at getting a message across.**

4) When God told the pagan priest Balaam "if the men come to call you, rise up and go with them" (see Numbers 22:20), God expected Balaam to know better and to **not** go with the men! And so God nearly killed Balaam for then going with the men. You know the account. (This incident with Balaam is discussed at length in my 44-page article from 1994 entitled "Understanding the Mind of God".)

Getting back to Jeremiah chapter 32, the point is:

The way God describes what Jeremiah's action was to represent was guided by speaking "**in earthly terms**". God presents this information in terms which the people back then could understand. Christ's statement in John 3:12 also applies to Jeremiah 32.

So if God had told them "in heavenly terms" what things will be like in the millennium, how should they have understood the message God had for them?

Therefore God conveyed the message that in future Jerusalem would again be inhabited, and people would own land and build houses, in terms that people could understand. God presented it in terms of redeeming the land that had been sold to a close relative. Buying and selling land was imagery that people at Jeremiah's time readily understood. It was imagery that got the point across to the Jews back then.

Let's now continue with Jeremiah 32.

Jeremiah 32:16-25 = Jeremiah himself then prayed to God, seeking confirmation that he had done the right thing in redeeming this field from his cousin, because it seemed foolish to buy a field when the city was "given into the hand of the Chaldeans". This is the thought with which Jeremiah concludes his prayer.

And You have said unto me, O Lord GOD, **Buy you the field for money**, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. (Jeremiah 32:25)

Jeremiah 32:26-35 = God replies to Jeremiah's prayer by telling Jeremiah the reasons for why God wanted the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem had provoked God with perverse sins.

Jeremiah 32:36-44 = After discussing the reasons for Jerusalem's destruction, God then states that in the future (i.e. in the millennium) Jerusalem will be restored. That will be when God makes "an everlasting covenant" with Israel (see Jeremiah 32:40). God continued to say:

Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and **I will plant them in this land assuredly** with my whole heart and with my whole soul. (Jeremiah 32:41)

Note!

This verse provides the reason for why God wanted Jeremiah to buy that land from his cousin! The entire exercise of buying a field from a relative, for the purpose of keeping the land within the family, was to vividly illustrate that in the future God will plant Israel once again "in this land", keeping the land "in the family", as it were.

Let's continue with the last few verses.

For thus says the LORD ... so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And **fields shall be bought** in this land, whereof **you say, It is desolate** without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. **Men shall buy fields for money ... for I will cause their captivity to return**, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 32:42-44)

Can you see what God is doing in these verses? **God is presenting a contrast!**

The people say: The land is desolate, without inhabitants, and in Babylonian hands.

God replies: Fields are going to be bought in this land, so that houses can be built and the fields can again be cultivated.

The people say: We're going into captivity with no hope of ever returning.

God replies: Men will buy land with proper title deeds for those properties.

The people's perspective is: It's hopeless. We'll never be able to return.

God's perspective is: I am going to bring Israel back and then the land will again flourish and prosper.

Now the contrast is not between buying the land or being given the land free of charge. That is not the focus here. The contrast here is between an empty desolate land and one that is fully inhabited and cultivated.

So why does it say that they will "buy fields for money"? Why doesn't it say that God gives them the land "without money"?

The reason is the same as with the parable of the talents.

If in God's society it is wrong to charge usury, then why did Christ tell the wicked servant that he should have invested the talent to at least receive usury? The parable was all about money. It had started with money (i.e. the servants receiving talents), and so the parable also finished in terms of dealing with money. However, the actual lesson of the parable is about making use of God's holy spirit, and thus has nothing to do with money. But in the context of the parable, when dealing with money in this present world, then investing for usury is one possible option. But this does not confer approval on the practice of charging usury, when evaluated in terms of a world ruled over by God.

Likewise:

The episode with Jeremiah revolved around buying and selling a piece of land. Jeremiah was the buyer and his cousin was the seller. That's how this episode starts, and so that is also how it finishes. The end of this story also talks about buying and selling land, and implied is land being redeemed by the original owners. The account is also told from the perspective that the land is in the hands of the Babylonians before God brings Israel back. So the land must pass from the Babylonians back to the people of Israel.

The whole incident is told in terms that Jews in the 580's B.C. could readily understand. This event was written down for the Jews back then to read ... and so later the prophet Daniel read the Book of Jeremiah, while Daniel was at the Medo-Persian court (see Daniel 9:1-2).

Now here is **an important key** to understanding Jeremiah 32:43-44. If you can understand this, then everything else should fall into place.

What point in time does Jeremiah 32:43-44 refer to?

Do these references to "buying fields for money" refer to the years 50 to 999 of the millennium? Do they refer to the year 40 or the year 30 or the year 20 or the year 10 of the millennium?

What year of Christ's rule do all the other references to the millennium in this chapter refer to? **They all refer to the start of the millennium.** They refer to what happens when Jesus Christ starts to rule. They all refer to when Israel first returns from captivity to again settle in the area of Jerusalem.

The references to buying lands and fields for money in verses 43-44 refer to **year 1 of the millennium.** They refer to when Israelite society is first reestablished after "their captivity". Those "evidences of ownership" are established when the people first return from captivity, not 300 years later, well into the millennium.

But at the start of the millennium other human beings will not be in a position "to sell" any land to the returning Israelites. It will be God who will give those returning Israelites land.

Leviticus 25:23 is a rigid clear-cut statement, which leaves no room for any land in Israel to ever be sold during Jesus Christ's millennial rule. Therefore our only option is to understand Jeremiah 32:43-44 in the same way we understand Christ's statement to the wicked servant that he should have invested the talent for usury, and Christ's praise for the unjust steward.

SOME ADDITIONAL POINTS

When God at the start of the millennium brings the people of Israel back to the land of Israel, then God will **give** the people land. They will not be buying the land. And there will be no sellers. Every family will feel a responsibility to keep the land that was entrusted to them in their families. They will heed God's instructions to never sell the land to anyone.

That's what the account with Jeremiah buying a field is all about. The field he was asked to buy belonged to someone in the family, and it was Jeremiah's right to redeem that land, so that it would not pass to any other family.

Now Isaiah 55:1 shows that all food items will be without any monetary value (i.e. "without price"). A ramification of this Scripture is that during the millennium there will not be any kind of work for which the worker will be paid some money. And Leviticus 25:23 shows no real estate is to ever be sold. So money could also not be used to buy houses or lands.

Then the Apostle Paul tells us that "the root for all evil is the love for money" (1 Timothy 6:10). (For a thorough discussion of this verse see my article "God Hates All Forms Of Pride".) That statement all by itself should make clear that during the millennium there cannot possibly be any money. There is no way that Jesus Christ would promote any "root of evil" during His millennial rule on this earth.

So the imagery of "buying lands and houses for money" at the start of the millennium was intended for Jews just before the fall of Jerusalem to understand that the area of Jerusalem will in the future once again be inhabited by Israelites, who have returned from a captivity. Leviticus 25:23 is the inflexible and non-negotiable base on which the prophecy of Jeremiah must be understood.

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