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COVENANT STUDY

KI LI HA-ARETZ — ANI CHELKECHA

"FOR MINE IS THE LAND" — "I AM YOUR PORTION"

A Two-Law Covenant Study: Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:23 and Bemidbar (Numbers) 18:20

Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution | May 2026

COURSE FRAMEWORK

This study examines two foundational laws that, read together, form the complete covenant theology of land and possession. **Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:23** establishes the universal principle: the land belongs to **Yahweh (יהוה)** alone, and all human beings are sojourners upon it. **Bemidbar (Numbers) 18:20** applies that principle to its highest human expression: the priest holds no land because **Yahweh** is his portion and inheritance.

These two laws are not isolated statutes. They are the two pillars of a covenant economic vision that runs from Sinai through the Nevi'im and into the prophetic word of **Yechezkel (Ezekiel)**. This study examines both laws lexically, traces their full Tanakh witness network, applies them across four spheres of life, and renders a three-religion audit.

A personal covenant witness from Elder Kepha Arcemont closes the study — documenting how these two laws have been walked out in covenant institutional life over decades, and what that structure looks like in practice.

PART I: THE FOUNDATION LAW

VAYIKRA (LEVITICUS) 25:23 — KI LI HA-ARETZ

I-A. Hebrew Text

וְהָאָרֶץ לֹא תִמְכַּר לְצִמְתָּהּ כִּי־לִי הָאָרֶץ כִּי־גֵרִים וְתוֹשָׁבִים אַתֶּם עִמָּדִי:

Transliteration: *Ve-ha-aretz lo timmacher litzmiut ki-li ha-aretz ki-gerim ve-toshavim attem immadi.*

JPS 1985 Translation: "But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me."

Robert Alter Translation: "And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is Mine, for you are sojourners and residents with Me."

I-B. Lexical Analysis Table

HEBREW	TRANSLITERATION	STRONG'S	LEXICAL MEANING
וְהָאָרֶץ	ha-aretz	H776 — אָרֶץ	The land, the earth, the ground. BDB: "earth, land, ground, country." Used here with the definite article — <i>the</i> land specifically, the land of covenant. First use Bereishit 1:1.
לֹא תִמְכַּר	lo timmacher	H4376 — מָכַר	Shall not be sold. Niphal (passive) imperfect — an ongoing, perpetual prohibition: <i>it shall never be the case that it is sold</i> . BDB: makar — "to sell, to give over". The passive voice is deliberate: the land cannot be submitted to this action.
לְצִמְתָּהּ	litzmiut	H6783 — צָמִיתָהּ	Permanently / in perpetuity. From root <i>tzamat</i> (H6789) meaning <i>to annihilate, to cut off, to destroy entirely</i> . As Aben Ezra observed: the word signifies <i>cutting off</i> . A <i>litzmiut</i> sale is one in which the original family is <i>cut off entirely</i> from their inheritance. The law forbids this severing.
כִּי־לִי הָאָרֶץ	ki-li ha-aretz	H3588 + H776	For Mine is the land. A divine ownership declaration: <i>because the land belongs to Me</i> . The Yahweh of Sinai is the actual, legal owner (<i>baal</i>) of the land. This is not

			metaphor. It is a title claim. Human possession is tenancy at divine will.
גֵּרִים	gerim	H1616 — גֵּר	Strangers, sojourners, resident aliens. BDB: ger — <i>a sojourner, an alien, one who dwells with another in a land that is not his own.</i> The same word used for Israel's status in Egypt (Shemot 22:21). Yahweh reverses the condition: in Egypt Israel were <i>gerim</i> in slavery; in the covenant they are <i>gerim</i> with freedom, WITH Yahweh.
תּוֹשָׁבִים	toshavim	H8453 — תּוֹשָׁב	Settlers, temporary residents. BDB: toshav — <i>sojourner, settler, one who sits/dwells temporarily.</i> Paired with <i>gerim</i> for a dual-term emphasis: both words together convey complete non-ownership. No human being, regardless of national status, permanently owns land.
עִמָּדִי	immadi	H5973 — עִמָּ	With Me. The most quietly powerful phrase in the verse. The sojourners are not abandoned — they dwell <i>WITH Yahweh.</i> This is covenant relationship. The rancher owns the ranch; the covenant people are the family that tends it, under His protection, at His table.

I-C. The Key Word: Litzmiut — The Forbidden Permanent Cut

The crucial word is **litzmiut** (H6783, לִצְמִיּוּת). The root *tzamat* (H6789) appears in **Tehillim (Psalms) 94:23**: "*Yahweh our Elobim will cut them off*" — complete destruction, total severing. The land law uses this same root to describe what is forbidden in land transactions: you cannot *litzmiut*-sell a piece of the covenant inheritance. You cannot permanently sever a family from their ground.

The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan render the word "*absolutely*" — meaning no absolute, final, complete transfer of title is permitted. Every land sale in the covenant economy is therefore, by definition, a *lease* — a temporary arrangement with a built-in expiration. The buyer purchases harvests, not earth.

PART II: THE PRIESTLY DECLARATION

BEMIDBAR (NUMBERS) 18:20 — ANI CHELKECHA VE-NACHALATECHA

II-A. Hebrew Text

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַהֲרֹן בְּאַרְצָם לֹא תִנְחַל וְחֵלֶק לֹא־יִהְיֶה לָּךְ בְּתוֹכָם אֲנִי חֵלֶקְךָ וְנַחֲלָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Transliteration: *Vayomer Yahweh el-Aharon: be-artzam lo tinhal ve-chelek lo-yihyeh lecha be-tocham; ani chelkecha ve-nachalatecha be-toch benei Yisrael.*

JPS 1985: "And the LORD said to Aaron: You shall, however, have no territorial share among them or own any portion in their midst; I am your portion and your share among the Israelites."

Robert Alter: "And the LORD said to Aaron, 'In their land you shall have no share, and a portion you shall not have in their midst. I am your share and your portion in the midst of the Israelites.'"

II-B. Lexical Analysis Table

HEBREW	TRANSLITERATION	STRONG'S	LEXICAL MEANING
לֹא תִנְחַל	lo tinhal	H5157 — נָחַל	You shall not inherit. The verb <i>nachal</i> means to take possession by hereditary succession — to receive what is passed down through bloodline and family covenant. This is the root of <i>nachalah</i> . The prohibition is direct and unconditional: the priest does not receive this kind of possession. His identity is not built on land.
חֵלֶק	chelek	H2506 — חֵלֶק	Portion, share, lot. BDB: <i>portion, share, part of an estate, plunder</i> . Used 67 times in the Tanakh. In context: the portion allotted to each tribe/family by covenant assignment. The priest has no <i>chelek</i> — no allotted share of ground. But Yahweh

			declares: <i>Ani chelkecha</i> — I am your chelek. The infinite, divine Person replaces the finite, earthly plot.
נַחְלָה	nachalah	H5159 — נַחְלָה	Inheritance, heritage, estate. BDB/HALOT: <i>something inherited, an heirloom, an estate, patrimony</i> . Derived from <i>nachal</i> (H5157). Used 222 times in the Tanakh — one of its most significant land-covenant terms. Yahweh declares: <i>ve-nachalatecha</i> — I am your <i>nachalah</i> . Yahweh is the priest's estate. The priest's 'net worth' is Yahweh Himself.
בְּתוֹכְכֶם / בְּתוֹךְ	be-tocham	H8432 — תָּוֹךְ	In the midst of them / in the midst of. The priest lives <i>in the midst</i> of the people without owning ground <i>among</i> them. This is a precise positioning: he is embedded in the community, serving and ministering, while holding a categorically different relationship to the land than every other Israelite around him.
אֲנִי חֶלְקֶךָ	ani chelkecha	Divine Self-Declaration	I am your portion. The first-person declaration by Yahweh is striking: He places Himself in the position that land occupies for every other Israelite. Where the farmer's security is his fields, the Levite/priest's security is Yahweh Himself. This is not poverty — it is the highest possible form of covenant wealth: the Owner Himself is the inheritance.

II-C. The Two-Word Formula: Chelek and Nachalah

The law uses *both* key terms — **chelek** (H2506) and **nachalah** (H5159) — in a single verse, and applies both to **Yahweh** as the priest's possession. This is not accidental. The two terms cover different dimensions of land-holding in covenant law:

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE PRIEST
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chelek	The <i>allotted share</i> — the portion assigned by covenant decision. In the tribal land assignments, each tribe received its <i>chelek</i> . The priest's <i>chelek</i> is not ground. It is Yahweh .
nachalah	The <i>hereditary estate</i> — the patrimony passed down through generations. This is the family inheritance, the legacy, the ground that says <i>this is who we are</i> . The priest's <i>nachalah</i> is not land passed down through ancestors. It is Yahweh — who <i>is</i> before all ancestors.

PART III: THE FULL TANAKH WITNESS NETWORK

SIX WITNESSES — DEVARIM 19:15 STANDARD

The two-witness standard of **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15** requires at least two independent witnesses to establish any matter. The covenant teaching in **Vayikra 25:23** and **Bemidbar 18:20** is not an isolated case. Six independent witnesses from across the Tanakh confirm and extend the teaching.

TEXT	LOCATION	WITNESS CONTENT
Devarim 10:9	Torah	<i>"Therefore Levi has no portion or inheritance with his brothers; Yahweh is his inheritance, as Yahweh your Elohim spoke to him."</i> — The same chelek/nachalah formula confirmed by Moshe in the covenant address. The Torah restates it in Devarim to bind it into the final covenant instruction to the nation before entry into the land.
Devarim 18:1–2	Torah	<i>"The priests the Levites, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no portion or inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of Yahweh made by fire, and his inheritance. They shall have no inheritance among their brothers; Yahweh is their inheritance."</i> —

		Extends the law from Aaron alone to the entire priestly tribe. The principle is nationwide and generational.
Yehoshua 13:14	Nevi'im	<i>"To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance; the offerings by fire to Yabweh Elohim of Israel are their inheritance, as He said to him."</i> — The third witness: the actual <i>implementation</i> of the law at the point of land distribution under Yehoshua. When land was divided among all twelve tribes, Levi received none. The law operated.
Yehoshua 13:33	Nevi'im	<i>"But to the tribe of Levi, Moses gave no inheritance; Yabweh, the Elohim of Israel, is their inheritance, as He said to them."</i> — The text repeats itself. The repetition is a legal emphasis — twice in the same chapter to lock in the covenant record.
Yechezkel 44:28	Nevi'im — Future Witness	<i>"It shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no possession in Israel — I am their possession."</i> — The prophetic word of Yechezkel to the <i>future</i> covenant priesthood confirms the law is not temporary. Not a Mosaic accommodation. A permanent covenant identity.
Tehillim 16:5	Ketuvim	<i>"Yabweh is my chelek and my cup; You hold my lot."</i> — The Psalmist — almost certainly Dawid — appropriates the priestly formula as a personal covenant confession. What was statuted for the priest becomes the aspiration of every covenant soul: <i>Yabweh is my portion.</i>

PART IV: WHAT THESE TWO LAWS TEACH TOGETHER

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COVENANT STEWARDSHIP

IV-A. The Two Laws Form a Single Covenant Statement

Read in isolation, **Vayikra 25:23** is an economic law about land transactions. **Bemidbar 18:20** is an institutional law about the priesthood. But read together, they form a single, complete covenant statement about what it means for any human being — and especially any covenant servant — to relate to property:

VAYIKRA 25:23 ESTABLISHES	BEMIDBAR 18:20 MODELS
Vayikra 25:23	Bemidbar 18:20
All people are <i>gerim</i> — sojourners on Yahweh's land	The priest is the <i>concentrated expression</i> of what all people are
No land sale is permanent — Yahweh retains title	The priest has <i>no</i> title — not even temporarily by covenant gift
The buyer gets harvests; the land returns in Yovel	The priest gets Yahweh Himself — permanently
Every person is a manager of what belongs to Another	The priest <i>embodies</i> this truth before all the people

The priest is the *walking sermon* on land theology. Every Israelite farmer who saw the Levite living in covenant service without a field was looking at a living icon of **Vayikra 25:23**: *ki-li ha-aretz* — for Mine is the land. The priest's landlessness preaches the sermon that every other person is supposed to have written on their hearts.

IV-B. What the Covenant Calls All People To

The two laws together establish a graduated calling for all covenant people:

1. **Everyone** is a sojourner — no person permanently owns any land. The Yovel (Jubilee) enforces this institutionally every 50 years.
2. **The covenant community** holds land as *nachalah* — family inheritance in trust — accountable to Yahweh, not freely transferable forever.
3. **The covenant institution** (in every generation) holds land in trust for covenant purposes, not personal wealth.
4. **The priest/elder** holds no personal land at all — **Yahweh** is his portion and inheritance. His security is in his covenant standing, not in his balance sheet.

IV-C. The Yovel Connection — Vayikra 25:8–55

The Jubilee law (**Vayikra 25:8–55**) is the enforcement mechanism for **Vayikra 25:23**. In the Yovel year, all land returns to its original family (v.10, 13), all debt-servitude ends (v.40-41), and the land rests (v.11-12). The Jubilee is the national reset — the moment when **Yahweh** exercises His property rights over the entire covenant economy and re-levels what human greed and misfortune have distorted.

The word **Yovel** (יובל, **H3104**) is connected to *yaval* — *to bring, to carry, to conduct*. The Jubilee *brings* the land back. It is an active, directed return, initiated by the ram's horn blast on the Day of Atonement — the holiest day of the covenant calendar. Land and atonement are inseparable in the covenant economy.

PART V: FOUR-SPHERE APPLICATION

The covenant teaching in these two laws applies across every dimension of life. The four spheres below show how **Vayikra 25:23** and **Bemidbar 18:20** speak to the individual, the family, the institution, and the nation.

SPHERE	PRIMARY TEXT	APPLICATION
PERSONAL	Vayikra 25:23	Every individual who holds land holds it in trust. The question is not <i>what can I buy?</i> but <i>what has Yahweh entrusted to me, and how do I manage it?</i> The accumulation of private land beyond what is needed for covenant life is a violation of the <i>gerim/toshavim</i> identity — it treats oneself as an owner when the law declares one a sojourner.
PERSONAL	Bemidbar 18:20	For the priest/elder, the question is starker: <i>Is Yahweh actually my chelek and nachalah?</i> Is my security, my identity, and my future grounded in Him — or in the land I accumulate? The priestly law requires that this not be theoretical. It must be reflected in the legal structure of one's life.
FAMILY	Vayikra 25:23	The covenant family holds its nachalah — its generational heritage — as a stewardship

		responsibility, not a speculative asset. The redemption laws (Vayikra 25:25–28) assign the nearest kinsman the responsibility to buy back family land if a member falls into poverty. Land is not an investment vehicle. It is family covenant ground.
FAMILY	Bemidbar 18:20	Priestly families raised their children with no land expectation. The children's inheritance was the covenant, the service, and Yahweh Himself. This is a radical formation: instead of leaving property, the priestly parent leaves relationship with Yahweh as the family treasure.
INSTITUTIONAL	Vayikra 25:23	Covenant institutions that hold land are trustees, not owners. They manage on behalf of Yahweh and for covenant purposes. The moment an institution begins accumulating land for institutional wealth or power rather than covenant service, it has violated the foundational premise: ki-li ha-aretz .
INSTITUTIONAL	Bemidbar 18:20	A covenant institution led by a priest/elder should reflect the priestly identity in its legal structure: land held in trust, in the institution's name, for covenant purposes — not in the personal name of the leader. The institution is the steward. The leader is the manager. Yahweh is the Owner.
NATIONAL	Vayikra 25:23	No nation permanently owns its territory. This is the most politically explosive application. Every nation that treats its land as absolute sovereign territory without acknowledgment of divine ownership has departed from covenant reality. The covenant nation uniquely knew: <i>this land is on loan. We are here at Yahweh's will.</i>
NATIONAL	Bemidbar 18:20	When national leaders — whether kings, presidents, or prime ministers — accumulate personal land while the covenant community is displaced, they have inverted the priestly

		<p>principle. The leader's call is to serve, not to own. Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21 — Naboth's Vineyard — is the catastrophic national example of what happens when this principle is violated at the highest level.</p>
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PART VI: THREE-RELIGION AUDIT

WHERE EACH TRADITION UPHOLDS AND DEPARTS

Judaism

The priestly non-inheritance is fully documented in halakhic literature. *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Shemitah ve-Yovel*, codifies the Jubilee in detail. The Babylonian Talmud (tractate *Bava Batra*) extensively addresses land law and redemption rights. Maimonides lists the Jubilee-land complex as positive and negative commandments (his Positive Law #136 — proclaim the Jubilee; Negative Law #227 — do not sell the land permanently).

However, the dominant rabbinical ruling holds that the Jubilee is not operative today because the ten tribes are not all gathered in the land (*Bava Batra* 122a; *Hilchot Shemitah ve-Yovel* 12:1-2). The principle is acknowledged, codified, and — deferred indefinitely. The land, meanwhile, is treated in modern Israel as state property subject to standard market economics. The covenant principle of **ki-li ha-aretz** is preserved theologically; it is not operative economically.

The concept of **Yahweh** as nachalah is strongly present in Jewish mystical tradition — *Yahweh chelki* as a devotional expression. But its structural, legal application — that the priest/elder should hold no personal land — is not widely applied in modern rabbinical or institutional Jewish life.

Christianity

The early covenant community described in **Ma'asei HaShlichim (Acts) 2:44–45** and **4:32–35** practiced a communal sharing of property — a functional echo of Jubilee principles. This lasted for a generation before dissipating entirely.

By the medieval period, the Church had become one of the largest landholding institutions in the world — owning at various points an estimated 30–40% of all land in Western Europe. The institutional Church inverted the priestly law completely: the institution claiming to represent the priesthood of Yeshua became the greatest land accumulator in Christendom. **Bemidbar 18:20** — *I*

am your portion, give them no possession — was functionally overridden by twelve centuries of ecclesiastical real estate acquisition.

Protestant theology recovered some language of "God as portion" in devotional contexts (e.g., the hymn tradition), but structurally continued land-owning ecclesiastical institutions. The legal accountability structure of **Bemidbar 18:20** — no personal land for the covenant servant — was not recovered.

Islam

Islamic economics comes closest to the structural intent of the two laws. The *waqf* (وقف) — Islamic charitable endowment — is a legal mechanism by which property is permanently dedicated to Yahweh's/Allah's purposes and removed from private sale. A waqf is irrevocable: once dedicated, the property cannot be bought, sold, inherited, or mortgaged. It is managed by a trustee for covenant/charitable purposes in perpetuity.

This is structurally very close to what **Vayikra 25:23** and the Jubilee system envision for covenant institutions. The waqf tradition also aligns remarkably well with **Bemidbar 18:20**: the mutawalli (trustee) manages the waqf but does not own it. He is a steward. Allah is the ultimate proprietor.

The difference is that the waqf is a voluntary, specific dedication — not a national covenant structure enforced by Jubilee reset. Islam carries the principle; the full *ki-li ha-aretz* architecture — where ALL land belongs to **Yahweh** and all sales expire — is unique to the Tanakh covenant system.

PART VII: COVENANT WITNESS

A LIVING TESTIMONY — HOW THESE LAWS HAVE BEEN WALKED OUT

Covenant studies are not complete without a living witness. The laws of **Vayikra 25:23** and **Bemidbar 18:20** have been walked out in practical, legal, institutional form at Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution — not as theory but as covenant practice over decades.

The Decision — Decades Ago

Elder Kepha Arcemont received the priestly inheritance law — **Bemidbar 18:20** — and understood it not as a historical statute but as a living covenant obligation binding on the Elder and priest in every generation. The decision was made: no personal land. No property in Kepha Arcemont's personal name held as personal wealth. **Yahweh** is the inheritance. The estate is Him.

The Legal Structure — Trust First, Institution Through Trust

When the time came to establish a formal covenant institution, the structure was built to reflect the covenant reality in legal form:

5. **A trust was established first.** The trust is the legal holding entity. It operates under covenant mandate: it holds assets for covenant purposes, not for personal enrichment of any beneficiary.
6. **Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution was created through the trust.** The institution exists inside the trust structure. This is the legal expression of *ki-li ha-aretz*: the institution — not the individual — holds the land. The individual manages.
7. **All land purchases go into Miqdash Bethel — not into Kepha Arcemont.** Every property transaction is made through the institution. The personal name of the Elder does not appear on land titles as a personal owner.

This structure is not a legal technicality. It is a covenant confession enacted in the language that the civil law understands: deed, title, trust instrument, institutional charter. The structure says, before any court that might ever examine it: *this belongs to Yahweh, managed through His covenant institution, by His servant.*

The Return — Who Owns What

When Elder Kepha says *"I return the land to its original owner,"* this is the Yovel principle made personal. The land was never his. It was placed in his trust for covenant purposes. What he manages, he manages for **Yahweh**. What he releases, he releases back to the One from whom all things come.

This is the *living economy* of the covenant — an economy in which the priest is the wealthiest man in the community (because **Yahweh** is his portion) and simultaneously the one with the least personal accumulation (because he owns nothing). These two facts are not in tension. They are the same fact.

What This Witness Declares to the Nations

The three-religion world needs to see covenant economics walked out in human life. Islam has the waqf principle but lacks the Jubilee architecture. Christianity has the devotional language of God as portion but has never structurally applied the priestly non-inheritance law. Judaism has the halakhic codification but has deferred the operative law indefinitely.

The covenant Elder who says — *"I have no land in my name. Yahweh is my nachalah. All I manage is held in trust for His covenant purposes"* — is speaking a language all three traditions recognize but none has fully embodied. This is the witness that Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution carries into the world.

PART VIII: THE ANCIENT MECHANICS OF THE YOVEL

HOW THE JUBILEE WAS ACTUALLY DONE

VIII-A. The Initial Land Allotment — Division by Lot

Before the Jubilee could function, the land had to be properly distributed. The covenant distribution of the land of Kena'an (Canaan) among the twelve tribes is recorded across **Yehoshua (Joshua) 13–21**. The method of distribution is critical: each tribe and extended family received its portion through the casting of lots — **goral** (גֹּרָל, H1486). This was not a market transaction. It was not determined by wealth, military strength, or political influence. It was a covenant assignment, governed by **Yahweh** through the lot.

The lot ensured that no family's inheritance was the result of human calculation. As **Yehoshua 18:6** records: *"You shall describe the land in seven portions and bring the description here to me. And I will cast lots for you here before Yahweh our Elohim."* Every family's nachalah was a gift, not an achievement — which is precisely why no one could permanently alienate it.

VIII-B. The Go'el — The Kinsman Redeemer System

The first line of defense against permanent land loss was the **go'el** (גֹּאֵל, H1350) — the kinsman redeemer. The term derives from the root *ga'al* (to redeem, to reclaim, to restore). In the covenant economy, the *go'el* was the nearest qualified male relative who carried the legal responsibility to buy back land that a family member had been forced to sell in poverty.

Vayikra 25:25: *"If your brother becomes poor and sells part of his property, then his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his brother has sold."*

The mechanics of the *go'el* system were precise:

- **The land was never permanently sold.** What was sold was the number of harvests remaining between the sale and the next Jubilee year. The price was calculated accordingly (**Vayikra 25:15-16**).
- **The nearest kinsman had first right to redeem.** The *go'el* paid the remaining market value of those harvests and took possession of the land — not to give it back immediately to the original family, but to hold and administer it within the family unit.
- **The purpose was tribal retention.** As the Jewish Encyclopedia (1906) documents: the redemption was not a sentimental gesture. The redeemer took the land into his own possession and used it — the purpose served was the retention of the land within the tribe and family.
- **The seller could also self-redeem.** If the original seller later prospered enough, he could buy his way back at the adjusted market value before the Jubilee (**Vayikra 25:26-27**).

- **If no one redeemed it — the Jubilee covered it.** If neither the seller nor the *go'el* redeemed the land, the Jubilee year served as the final guarantee: the land automatically reverted to the original family with no compensation required (**Vayikra 25:28**)

The case study of **Boaz in Rut (Ruth) 4** is the most detailed recorded application of the *go'el* law in the Tanakh. Boaz acted as the kinsman redeemer for Naomi and Rut — publicly, at the city gate, before witnesses — redeeming not only the land of **Elimelech** but the full covenantal obligation of the house. The declaration before witnesses was the legal transaction. The public acknowledgement was the covenant seal.

The prophet **Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah)** executed the *go'el* law under siege conditions. In **Yirmeyahu 32:6-15**, while Babylon was at the gates, **Yahweh** commanded **Yirmeyahu** to purchase his cousin Hanamel's field in Anathoth — a calculated act of covenant faith. The land was about to be occupied by a foreign empire. **Yirmeyahu** bought it anyway, sealed the deed with witnesses, and placed the documents in a clay jar for safekeeping — a prophetic declaration that **Yahweh** would restore the covenant land to its people.

VIII-C. The Jubilee Year — Step by Step

The Jubilee (**Yovel**, יוֹבֵל, **H3104**) was not merely a legal adjustment. It was a sacred, national covenant event — structured, sequential, and initiated from the holiest point on the covenant calendar.

JUBILEE STEP	WHAT HAPPENED
STEP 1 — Count the Years	Seven cycles of seven sabbatical years were counted: $7 \times 7 = 49$ years. The count was the community's responsibility. The Sanhedrin maintained the official calendar. Every seventh year itself was a Shemithah (sabbatical year) — the land rested, debts were released. The forty-ninth year was the final sabbatical before the Jubilee.
STEP 2 — The Shofar on Yom Kippur	On the tenth day of the seventh month — Yom Kippur , the Day of Atonement — the ram's horn (shofar) was sounded throughout the entire land. Vayikra 25:9 : " <i>You shall sound the horn of jubilee... throughout all your land.</i> " The sound was the announcement. The moment the shofar blew, the Jubilee began. The covenant people heard it simultaneously, wherever they were.
STEP 3 — Proclamation of Freedom	Vayikra 25:10 : " <i>You shall proclaim liberty throughout the land for all its inhabitants.</i> " The Hebrew word is deror (דֶּרוֹר, H1865) — complete liberation, unrestricted movement. This is the word that would later be translated on the Liberty Bell.

	It meant not just freedom from debt, but freedom of return — every man could go back to his people and his possession.
STEP 4 — Land Returns to Families	Every field, vineyard, and agricultural property that had been sold or leased in the previous fifty years reverted automatically to the original family without compensation to the buyer. The buyer had always known this was coming — the purchase price had been calculated to account for it.
STEP 5 — All Debt Servitude Ends	Every Hebrew who had entered debt-servitude to pay debts was released. They went out free, with their children, with no outstanding obligation. Vayikra 25:40-41 : the term of their service was over.
STEP 6 — The Land Rests	The Jubilee year itself was also a sabbatical: no sowing, no commercial harvest, no pruning. The land rested. Yahweh had promised provision through what grew on its own (Vayikra 25:20-22). The economic reset was enforced by a season of trust — the community lived on what the land provided without being worked.

VIII-D. No Permanent Underclass — The Social Covenant

The Jewish Encyclopedia (1906) and the academic literature on ancient Israelite economics confirm what the Tanakh describes: the covenant land system deliberately prevented the formation of a permanent landless underclass. **Unlike surrounding empires** — Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, where vast estates were controlled by kings and nobles while peasants worked the land as tenant-serfs — the covenant nation was structured around *every family having its own means of agricultural production*.

The property belonged to the extended family group (the **beit av**, the father's house) — not to an individual speculator. This meant that even catastrophic misfortune — drought, debt, illness, bad harvests — could not permanently dispossess a family from the covenant ground that **Yahweh** had assigned to them. The *go'el* stood ready before the Jubilee. The Jubilee stood ready if the *go'el* did not. And behind both was **Yahweh** — the Great Kinsman — who owns the land and guarantees its return.

PART IX: COVENANT PROTECTION TODAY

MANAGING WITHOUT OWNING — THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The covenant principle of **ki-li ha-aretz** — *the land is Mine, you are stewards* — is not only a theological truth. In the American legal system, it can be structurally enacted through a properly established religious institution and trust framework. This is not a theory. It is a living model, walked out at Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution.

The question the people need answered today is practical: **if a person manages land through a covenant religious institution rather than owning it personally, what protections does that structure provide?** The answer reaches across five major threats to personal land security.

THREAT AREA	THREAT	COVENANT INSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION
1. PROPERTY TAXES	The Threat	Property taxes are assessed annually against the owner of record. Failure to pay results in a tax lien, then eventually tax forfeiture — the government seizes the property. Thousands of families have lost land this way, often without full understanding of the process.
Property Taxes	The Covenant Structure	In all 50 states, property owned by or held in trust for a religious organization and used for religious/covenant purposes is exempt from property tax assessment . Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) establishes federal tax exemption for religious organizations. State statutes in Louisiana, Texas, and across the country mirror this protection. A property held in the name of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution and used for covenant purposes does not receive a property tax bill. There is no bill to fail to pay. There is no lien. There is no forfeiture path.
2. BANK FORECLOSURE	The Threat	When an individual borrows against property and cannot repay, the lender forecloses — seizing the asset and auctioning it. This is how millions of families lost property in the 2008 crisis and continue to lose it today.
Bank Foreclosure	The Covenant Structure	A covenant institution operating debt-free holds land without a mortgage. There is no lender

		<p>holding a lien. There is no instrument by which a bank can foreclose. The institution does not borrow against the land because the institution's theology prohibits it — the land belongs to Yahweh and cannot be pledged as collateral for personal debt. This mirrors the covenant principle that land could not be litzmiut-sold: the institution's covenant charter itself becomes the structural protection.</p>
<p>3. ADVERSE POSSESSION / SQUATTERS</p>	<p>The Threat</p>	<p>Adverse possession ("squatters' rights") allows a trespasser who openly occupies land for a statutory period to claim legal title. In most states the period is 10–20 years. Individuals who do not actively monitor and assert their property rights can lose ground to adverse claimants without ever knowing it was happening.</p>
<p>Adverse Possession</p>	<p>The Covenant Structure</p>	<p>Institutional ownership provides stronger legal standing to assert property rights. Courts recognize that an institution — unlike an individual — has ongoing organizational continuity, clear charter documentation, and legal counsel. Several jurisdictions provide additional protection for religious and nonprofit organizations. Most importantly, a covenant institution by its nature is engaged with its land: worship, ministry, agricultural covenant use — these constitute clear, active occupancy that defeats any adverse possession claim.</p>
<p>4. TITLE FRAUD & DECEPTION</p>	<p>The Threat</p>	<p>Fraudulent deeds, forged signatures, and deceptive title transfers have stolen land from individuals — particularly in states with weak recording requirements. Heirs who inherit land without clear documentation are especially vulnerable.</p>
<p>Title Fraud</p>	<p>The Covenant Structure</p>	<p>Institutional title is harder to fraudulently transfer because it requires corporate authority — the institution's governing documents,</p>

		trustee signatures, institutional resolutions. A single forged individual signature is enough to steal personal property. Stealing institutional property requires defeating the entire institutional governance structure. The trust instrument, the charter, and the institutional records form a layered protection that individual deeds do not provide.
5. CREDITOR CLAIMS & JUDGMENTS	The Threat	A personal judgment against an individual — a lawsuit, a tax debt, a medical bill — can result in a lien against any property the individual owns. The creditor can eventually force a sale to collect.
Creditor Claims	The Covenant Structure	If the individual manages land through the institution but owns no personal property, a creditor judgment against the individual personally attaches to <i>nothing</i> . There is no personal real estate to lien. The institution's property belongs to the institution — a separate legal entity — and is protected from the personal creditor's reach so long as the institutional structure is properly maintained and the individual has not commingled personal and institutional assets.

IX-B. The Practical Steps — Building the Structure

The covenant protection described above does not come from simply declaring oneself a steward. It requires **proper legal structure**. The Miqdash Bethel model demonstrates the sequence:

8. **Establish the trust.** A religious trust is the foundational legal instrument. The trust document defines the covenant purpose, the trustee's authority, and the prohibition on personal enrichment. The trust is the legal container.
9. **Create the institution through the trust.** The covenant institution is established as the operational body within the trust framework. Articles of organization, a covenant charter, and stated religious purposes give the institution its legal identity.
10. **Apply for appropriate tax-exempt status.** State and federal applications for religious organization status establish the tax protection formally. A 508(c)1a is the proper law addressing a free religious institute.

11. **Hold all land purchases in the institution's name.** No personal ownership. Every property transaction goes through the institution. The individual's name does not appear as a personal owner of record.
12. **Document covenant use.** Maintain clear records of how the property is used for covenant/religious purposes. This documentation is the evidence that satisfies the use-requirement for ongoing tax exemption and defends against any challenge to the institutional nature of the holding.
13. **Keep institutional and personal finances completely separate.** This is the non-negotiable legal requirement. The moment an institution manager begins using institutional assets for personal benefit, the legal protections can be pierced. The covenant principle and the legal principle are identical: the manager does not own it.

This is not simply a legal strategy. It is a covenant confession with legal consequences. The person who walks into this structure is saying, in the language of both the Tanakh and the American legal system: *"The land is not mine. I manage it for a purpose greater than myself. I cannot be dispossessed because I never possessed it in the first place."*

That is **Vayikra 25:23** spoken in the vocabulary of trust law, tax code, and deed records.

PART X: THE COVENANT MANAGER'S PHILOSOPHY

"I DON'T OWN ANYTHING — I MANAGE IT"

The philosophy that Elder Kepha Arcemont has walked out for decades can be stated in one sentence:

YOU DON'T OWN ANYTHING. YOU MANAGE IT.

This is not a personal invention. It is the direct application of the two primary texts of this study, lived out in legal and institutional form. It flows from both sides of the covenant equation:

COVENANT SOURCE	THE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE
From Vayikra 25:23	<i>"The land is Mine... you are strangers and sojourners with Me."</i> The ground beneath your feet belongs to Yahweh . Your relationship to it is that of a steward — faithful management of what Another owns. The ancient Israelite farmer was a tenant on Yahweh's land. So is every person who walks the earth today.

<p>From Bemidbar 18:20</p>	<p><i>"I am your portion and your inheritance."</i> The priest's security is not in acreage. It is in Yahweh. This removes the survival anxiety that drives wealth accumulation. The man whose inheritance is Yahweh does not need to hoard. He manages what is placed in his care and releases it as Yahweh directs.</p>
<p>The Ancient Model</p>	<p>The <i>go'el</i> did not own the land he redeemed for his kinsman. He administered it. He was a faithful manager holding it within the covenant family until restoration came. The Yovel enforced the return. The whole system was built on the recognition that human beings are temporary administrators of what Yahweh permanently owns.</p>
<p>The Living Application</p>	<p>Elder Kepha Arcemont has held land through Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution — not in his personal name. He has enjoyed the land, worked it, built on it, conducted covenant ministry from it. The enjoyment was real. The stewardship was real. The ownership was never claimed. This is what <i>gerim ve-toshavim</i> — sojourners WITH Yahweh — looks like in 21st-century legal practice.</p>

The covenant management philosophy answers a question the 3 of 7 Project raised: *is there a way to be free from the stress of someone taking your land for any reason?* The answer is: yes. Not by owning it more securely — but by releasing the claim of ownership entirely and placing the land in the hands of the One who cannot be dispossessed, **Yahweh** — administering it through His covenant institution, under His authority, for His covenant purposes.

The banks cannot foreclose on what does not belong to you personally. The tax collector cannot assess what is **Yahweh's** property. The squatter cannot claim adverse possession against an institution that never sleeps. The title fraudster cannot forge an institutional deed. The creditor cannot lien what you do not own. And when this life ends, the inheritance returns to the Owner — not to heirs fighting over a personal estate, but to the covenant institution continuing its purpose beyond any one generation.

This is the Yovel made personal. This is **ki-li ha-aretz** made legal. This is **ani chelkecha** made operational. And it is available to anyone — not just the ordained priest — who is willing to say, in faith and in deed: *"I manage all things for Yahweh, who has given them to me to enjoy and manage under the covenant."*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

14. What is the difference between *owning* land and *managing* land? How does the Hebrew word **litzmiut** help define that line?
15. The law says Israel are **gerim ve-toshavim** — *strangers and sojourners* — WITH Yahweh. How does the phrase "*with Me*" change the meaning of being a sojourner?
16. How does the priest's landlessness function as a public sermon? What does the community see in the priest who owns nothing but **Yahweh**?
17. The Islamic *waqf* parallels the covenant trust structure. What does this parallel suggest about the common ground between Torah and Islamic economic ethics?
18. If the Jubilee were operative today, what would it mean for modern real estate markets, corporate land acquisition, and the current housing crisis?
19. How does a covenant leader structure his personal financial life to reflect **Bemidbar 18:20** — not just theologically but legally?
20. The *go'el* did not return the redeemed land immediately to his kinsman — he administered it until the appointed time. How does this picture covenant institutional stewardship today?
21. Which of the five modern threats (property tax, foreclosure, adverse possession, title fraud, creditor judgment) does the covenant institutional structure address most powerfully? Why?
22. The Jubilee shofar was sounded on Yom Kippur — the Day of Atonement. What is the covenant connection between atonement and the return of the land? What does this say about the relationship between forgiveness and economic restoration?

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SCRIPTURE	TOPIC
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Vayikra 25:8–55	The full Yovel (Jubilee) law — enforcement mechanism for 25:23
Vayikra 25:25–28	The Go'el (kinsman redeemer) land redemption law
Vayikra 25:47–55	The Go'el redemption for persons in debt-servitude
Bemidbar (Numbers) 18:20	Primary text — Priestly declaration: <i>ani chelkecha ve-nachalatecha</i> (I am your portion and inheritance)

Bemidbar 18:21–24	The tithe as the Levitical provision — Yahweh's economic alternative to land
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Yehoshua (Joshua) 18:6	The casting of lots (goral) for covenant land distribution — divine assignment not market transaction
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Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 32:6–15	Jeremiah's land purchase under siege — the Go'el law enacted as prophetic covenant faith

KI LI HA-ARETZ — VE-ANI CHELKECHA

"For Mine Is the Land — And I Am Your Portion"

Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:23 | Bemidbar (Numbers) 18:20

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Authority: The Tanakh — The Word of Yabweb Alone | Standard: Devarim 19:15