



# ***A JUBILEE of ACTIONS!***

## **50 Ways into Sabbath-Jubilee Economics**

**and Why Going There Sustains Life**

- **for Us,**
- **for Mother Earth, and**
- **for All Living Things**

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## *Welcome . . .*

. . . . to a process for taking response-ability in our current life context to live so that all may live. Our framework is the biblical Sabbath-Jubilee. If we proceed through this “Jubilee of Actions” as it is written, we will ...

- act our way into new places,
- reflect together on the actions taken,
- analyze our socio-politico-economic context from the new places,
- engage in spiritual activities (especially prayer) that acknowledge the new places and empower further actions,
- think theologically and biblically about where we have come to and where we are being led to go, and then
- repeat this process as we step our way through the various themes.

These 50 ways give us months of activities for group and personal action and reflection. So, let’s give the process the time it needs. Grace-filled change can take time, very good time.

## Preparing for Action

Sabbath-Jubilee invites us to act and think our way into an alternative economics that is lived out in a community where each does a part and benefits from the whole. Not that it can't be used individually. It can guide all of us who desire to shape a lifestyle friendlier to the earth, her people, and our Creator than prevails all around us. But as we read through these 50 actions, we quickly see that Sabbath-Jubilee is too big, systemic, and challenging to be only an individual discipline. It is nothing less than an alternative to the ways of living that have risen to dominance in the world, so living it takes some doing. It also takes personal and group reflection, bonding together in solidarity, insightful analysis, and a recurring hunger and thirst for the Life it offers.

Given time and mindfulness, Sabbath-Jubilee draws us into a wholly/holy interdependence. The more we get to know Sabbath-Jubilee, the more we see how her ways of interdependent being grow from roots deep in Mother Earth herself. We come to see that, rooted in creation, she is a Tree of Life – not the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil that feeds our pride and tempts us to the idolatry of deities who subvert us to do economics in ways that dominate others. But rather, she is an amazing, organic, life-system webbed into the cosmic system of God-created Life (compare Genesis 3 and Rev. 22:2). A “Jubilee of Actions” is an invitation to come to this Tree through a variety of paths.

Many of us are already walking some of the paths in this “Jubilee of Actions.” By choosing to go further, we will hug this Tree of Life a little tighter. She, in turn, will help us move away from privatization and individualism, two trademarks

of the Dominant System, into community and networks of civil societies. The more those of us drawn to the Sabbath-Jubilee alternative find each other, the more the vision of Sabbath-Jubilee will become reality. It doesn't take a majority; just a critical mass. We will grow toward that critical mass as we do these 50 actions, because in doing them we find so many others who are fired by the same vision. By contrast, the world's current apocalyptic realities are the result of anti-Jubilee practices and systems that are bringing death to our planet. The Sabbath-Jubilee alternative brings life, sustainable life. Life, as it was gifted to us by our Creator.

Before proceeding, a personal word to all who work in global corporations and international financial institutions. We've often heard, “Don't take it personally.” That's very important in this invitation to live out a different economic system. Living out a different system necessarily urges non-cooperation with and resistance to the current Dominant System which is acutely anti-Jubilee. That System is currently shaped by global corporations and international financial institutions and must change. Yet, many of us make our living with them, or have retired from them and count on their success for our retirement benefits. None of us can live without being engaged by their pervasive presence and power. So, for many reasons, the Sabbath-Jubilee can be an unwelcome gospel. It is important, therefore, to remember that we are not these structures. We created them and we can deconstruct them to create others that are more life-sustaining. To identify too closely with them is to be re-made in their image, when what we want is to be an expression of the image of God. So “A Jubilee of Actions” is not an attack on people hard at work in various arenas of the Dominant System. Rather, it addresses the structures

of those arenas and invites all of us to be released from captivity to them, even as we use our imagination and energy to create new-old structures that sustain Life.

## **How to Get the Most Out of What Follows**

*Column 1* gives the action. *Column 2* gives a reason for it, makes the connection to sustainability, or adds other information. The actions are clustered according to seven Sabbath-Jubilee themes.

1. Spirituality of Sabbath-Jubilee
2. Deconstructing the Rich-Poor Hierarchies via Sabbath-Jubilee
3. Awakening New Consciousness through Sabbath-Jubilee
4. Labor and the Well-being of Workers in Sabbath-Jubilee
5. Ecology and Property in Sabbath-Jubilee

6. Crime and Restorative Justice in Sabbath-Jubilee

7. Debt and Interest in Sabbath-Jubilee

Start with any action. It is not important to begin with number one. Find the ones that speak to you, that draw you toward them. Those are the ones for you. If you are in a group, others will be drawn to different actions. Great! Share together and you're on your way.

It is also possible to use "A Jubilee of Actions" as a syllabus, using it in a repeating cycle of action-reflection-analysis-prayer-study. Pick any segment and follow this repeating cycle. Live and learn. Reflect and pray, personally and together. Work your way through each segment. Follow a dynamic rhythm of doing and being, acting and reflecting, analyzing and ritualizing, praying and practicing.

JEM (Jubilee Economics Ministries) can resource your group/community in practicing this "Jubilee of Actions." We will respond joyfully and, we hope, helpfully to your inquiries.

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## **Theme 1 Spirituality of Sabbath-Jubilee**

Sabbath-Jubilee only catches fire in us when we quench the flames of the spirit of this age and stoke the fire of the Divine Spirit.

Always, the Sacred Presence factors in. The whole cosmos is smeared with it, glued together with it, scented with it. Some important and underused verses in the New Testament, Colossians 1:15-17, name this Sacred Presence "Christ," and explain that it is Christ who holds all the systems of the cosmos together like cosmic glue. It's a neglected meaning of divine incarnation that is very important to grounding Sabbath-Jubilee economics in the cosmos even before we discover its use in the bible.

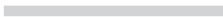
Our expression of the Sabbath-Jubilee remains shallow except as we yield to and cooperate with this Sacred Presence in all and beyond all. But the more we seek this personal-cosmic spirituality or are grasped by it, the more we are drawn into the challenge and joy of Sabbath-Jubilee. Without this cosmic and personal sense of the Divine Spirit, Sabbath-Jubilee will strike us as an impossible economics, quaint but irrelevant.

The rhythm of Sabbath, both personal and communal, stokes the fire of the Spirit in our lives. By it we interrupt the daily patterns of producing and consuming to give more attention to reflection and relationships. By contrast, the economic drivers of the Dominant System go 24/7, that is, twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week. Sabbath-keeping, keeping one day holy from such idolatry, is an essential act of resistance in the spirituality that stokes Sabbath-Jubilee.

Within the weekly structure of work and rest that the Sabbath provides, we further kindle the desire to live this economic alternative through various spiritual practices: meditation, prayer, contemplative and prophetic actions, journaling, dream-work, singing, chanting, dancing, ritualizing, worshiping, taking nature walks, practicing generosity, connecting across the poor-rich divide – all activities to continually see the face of God in the face of everyone, and to know the Presence in every moment and deed.

The desire to live Sabbath-Jubilee needs to burn in us with persistence. Otherwise, the spirit of this age regains its hold on us. Only God’s power can release us from the domination Powers that hold us captive.

It burned in Isaiah! So he introduced his proclamations about Jubilee by acknowledging that he was under its spell! “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (Isa. 61:1).” Other spirits will demean it as madness or utopian; not as useful and transforming.



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| 1. Practice weekly Sabbath rest from work and other activities in order to hear inner guidance and tune into the mighty, though quiet, movements of the Spirit. | Interrupt the rhythm of producing and consuming by resting from both. Focus attention in other life-sustaining ways of being                     |
| 2. Read <i>The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life</i> by Ross and Gloria Kinsler  | We need to constantly grow in our understanding of a Sabbath-Jubilee alternative, given the overpowering persistence of the Dominant Culture.    |
| 3. Lead a study-action-reflection group on living Sabbath-Jubilee using <i>The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life</i> .                                 | The book’s threefold focus on transformation of one’s own lifestyle, churches, and society keeps us acting wholistically. The sections on Jesus’ |

practice of Sabbath-Jubilee give us a Jesus radically engaged in the economic-political-social system of domination.

4. Practice personally and communally some historic spiritual exercises: meditative prayer, living contemplatively, journaling, dreamwork, generosity, meeting with a spiritual director, reading Scriptures and sacred writings, praying in groups, singing, chanting, dancing, walking in nature, ritualizing, relating across the poor-rich division.

Different exercises become important to us at different times in our lives. We need to use the ones that move us into greater God-consciousness. Without that, culture-consciousness will easily overtake us. It is unrelenting.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18 – The opening phrase, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,” may be the most overlooked in these verses. Meditate on it. In mantra style, welcome the Spirit of the Lord. How is the Spirit stirring you regarding Sabbath-Jubilee?*
- *Matthew 6:9-13 — The prayer Jesus taught puts prayer front and center in Sabbath-Jubilee practice when understood according to Ross & Gloria Kinsler, The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life, pp. 100-101.*

***Questions for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

- *What are the benefits and obstacles in my/our practice of Sabbath?*
- *What spiritual practices has been the best way for me/us to stoke the fire of the Spirit of God and quench the flames of the spirit of this age?*

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**Theme 2**

**Deconstructing the Rich-Poor Hierarchies via Sabbath-Jubilee**

Sabbath-Jubilee releases us from captivity to the Dominant Culture and brings good news to the poor

Both those of us with more and those of us with less need to be released from our captivity and addiction to the Dominant Culture which systematically keeps in place a rich-poor gap in various forms. In Sabbath-Jubilee we reshape our lifestyles in a community of God’s sufficiency for all.

Let us practice mindfulness in our communities as ...

- We work for transformation of the structures and systems that shape the current Dominant Culture into hierarchies of resource distribution, a ladder from starvation at the bottom to opu-

lence at the top, from poverty to plutocracy. We prayerfully work to incline unfair structures toward Sabbath-Jubilee practice.

- We daily practice lifestyles that minimize the economic hierarchy practiced in the Dominant Culture even as we become more aware of how our thinking and acting are impacted by it. So we dance with it.

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5. Form a group in which all help each other decide “How much is Enough?” How do we say “Enough” in a land shouting “More”?

The Dominant Culture teaches what it is built on: the concept of “More”. When we determine what is “Enough,” we can then develop an action-reflection process that moves away from domination and toward freedom by countering accumulation and the assumptions that economic growth is automatically better.

6. Become a member in the Alternatives organization. Visit [www.SimpleLiving.org](http://www.SimpleLiving.org). Then bring a group of people together to be members in Alternatives; meet around the Alternatives’ resources.

True to their name, Alternatives offers great resources to challenge consumerism, live justly, and do festivals/celebrations in alternative ways. Encourage each other to take next steps in lifestyles of Enough. Create new celebrative rituals together. Play some of the cooperative games they offer.

7. Be in relationship with people in poverty by living there or going there through regular activities. Actions 14-17 and 39 in this “Jubilee of Actions” may bring about such relationships if pursued.

This is not about “doing for,” but focuses, rather, on “learning from” and “solidarity with.” (See also Steps 7-9 in JEM’s guide to investing in a Jubilee economy, *Portfolio Prophets*)

8. Become a member in Coop America and receive their quarterly. See website [www.coopamerica.org](http://www.coopamerica.org). Get a group of people together interested in being members in Coop America; discuss how what is learned can be translated into living.

This quarterly update offers us news on the behavior of the Dominant System and suggests better choices for living as dissidents who have a vision for a healthier planet and a more just world. Coop America has a resource also on “green” businesses, *The National Green Pages*, and another on investing with greater social consciousness, *Consumer Guide to Responsible Lending and Investing*.

9. Read *When Corporations Rule the World* by David Korten to see how corporations currently counter community and common-wealth; also why organizing ourselves into non-government organizations (NGOs) offers hope for a different configuration. In his sequel, *The Post-Corporate World*, he points the way to life after capitalism – how we can shape and live that life now.

The author, a person with conservative credentials, explains why corporations are not the right vehicle to create economic systems to share the earth’s resources, protect Mother Earth, or to foster life-sustaining practices. NGOs (non-government organizations) organize people to participate; governments and corporations today systemically collude to exclude peoples.

10. Commit to community with others – one spiritually anchored, economically diverse, resisting the domination of the Dominant Culture, economically diverse, and living a contemporary expression of Sabbath-Jubilee.

The culture of wealth and domination is far too strong to resist alone. If Sabbath-Jubilee is to be a true alternative, it is lived communally. Otherwise it remains the symbolic acts of individuals.

11. Consider how charitable contributions and services – our church’s, our own, or that of any organization to which we belong – may unwittingly be an ally with unjust business or government practices. We need to ask, “Why are these services needed in the first place? Why is the need growing? How can we create a more just economy?”

Humanitarian services are needed. But to provide services without a deepening understanding of why they are needed can serve unjust practices. Sabbath-Jubilee “binds the brokenhearted” (Isa. 61:1) and also implements revised structures that are more just. By searching out a more holistic picture we see what before we could not.

12. Learn about excessive militarization by dominating Powers and resist it through acts of protest, be they quiet, vocal, or direct action.

Most military actions are connected to cycles of escalating violence, insufficient actions of nonviolence, and the desire by some to control resources which are in the hands of others. Many military actions, whatever reasons are given, serve the underlying purpose of making a region accessible to global corporations for the mining and transportation of natural resources at lower costs, benefiting the privileged and powerful.

13. Commit ourselves to nonviolence, learn about its economic links, and talk with others about living nonviolently. Christian Peacemaker Teams

Nonviolent practice, contrary to what many think, grew rapidly during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps as a counterpoint to the unprecedented warring and violence among nations. (See Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, chap. 13, and Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*)

14. Maintain a database of addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of kindred souls in economic alternatives.

We need the support we can give one another through solidarity in action. By communicating, we educate each other. The database can help us be intentional about community.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *Isaiah 58:1-12 and 61:1, Luke 4:18 – see Kinsler, pp. 104-105 for useful pointers regarding release from captivity; also pp. 60-66 in The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics by Ched Myers.*
- *Luke 16:19-31—see Kinsler, pp. 122-123 and JEM booklet “The Rich-Poor Gap Turned Upside Down” for socioeconomic readings of this rich man and Lazarus story.*

***Questions for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

- *What amount of money is Enough annual income for me/us? What amount of savings/investments is Enough for me/us?*
- *How do I/we feel about David Korten’s perception that we need now to be giving shape to life after capitalism? How does my/our practice of Sabbath-Jubilee dissent from capitalism and how do I/we describe our alternative?*

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### Theme 3

## **Awakening New Consciousness through Sabbath-Jubilee**

### **Sabbath-Jubilee opens our eyes**

Sabbath-Jubilee has an amazing capacity to help us see what we don’t want to see. Isaiah and Jesus both used the image of moving from blindness to sight in order to describe this increased awareness (Psalm 115:1-8, Luke 4:18, Matthew 6:22-23, 13:14-16). Though any of these “50 Ways into Jubilee” may open our eyes to greater consciousness, well-constructed immersions in different cultures and neighborhoods are especially effective in bringing us to see what before we couldn’t or wouldn’t.

15. Go on a 1-week immersion trip to a “3<sup>rd</sup> world” country. Include people from that country in your delegation. Intently analyze economic realities and rich-poor interplay; connect with people; pray and reflect.

JEM’s Eye-Opening delegations don’t go to build a home or “do” missions (good as that might be); we go to immerse ourselves, to listen, to interact, to absorb; upon our return we seek opportunities to be a voice in the Dominant Culture for those currently voiceless there. Our eyes are opened to see the same global dynamics where we live that we saw where we visited. Connections are made.

16. Go on a 3-5 day immersion into neighborhoods of a city. Include people from that neighborhood in your delegation. Observe the economic dynamics at work between privileged and marginalized peoples; connect with people; pray and reflect.

JEM's Eye-Opening delegations come to know how rich and poor are in *causal*, not *casual*, relationships. We see first hand how the elements of economic globalization are operating everywhere, local and global. We give voice in the Dominant Culture for those currently voiceless there. Our eyes are opened to see the same global dynamics where we live that we saw where we visited. Connections are made

17. Go on a 3-5 day immersion into rural culture. Include people from rural life. Learn how small growers are displaced from the land by an economic system hostile to them; connect with people; pray and reflect.

JEM's Eye-Opening delegations reconnect with people of the land; we see the difference between people who love the land and those who use it (abuse it?); we learn which global corporations control the markets and the agricultural processes of production. We see globalization's impact on rural culture. We return to give voice and to make connections like we do in actions #15 and #16.

18. Strengthen our relationship with indigenous peoples, especially ones nearest us, and respectfully learn their "traditional ways." Such relationships are a significant anti-racist, anti-genocidal, life-sustaining choice.

"Traditional ways" usually embody practices of Sabbath-Jubilee that are centuries and millennia old. We learn from this ancient wisdom in ways that convert us on our path. We may be able to forge contemporary practices in partnership with indigenous people. Especially valuable is their knowledge of living in harmony with creation.

19. Read *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of Indian Nations* by Jerry Mander. He opens our eyes to how partnerships with indigenous peoples open the way to living Sabbath-Jubilee in solidarity with them.

The author, an advertising person, shows why the sacred is essential for life-sustaining practices, how technologies commonly ignore it, and how Indian Nations need to be players in shaping our world because of an ancient wisdom they bring forward that addresses today's crises.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *Psalm 115:1-8 – A penetrating poem describing our idols of silver and gold which don't see. Note especially verse 8 which states that we who make them are like them. How are we blinded by the idols of the Dominant Culture and prevented from seeing reality?*
- *Matthew 6:22-23, 13:14-16 – In the bible, the most common mention of blindness and open-*

*ing eyes is not regarding physical blindness, but coming to awareness, to a consciousness resulting in justice.*

**Questions for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:**

- *How, when my/our eyes have been opened, have I/we become a voice for the voiceless?*
- *Jerry Mander's excellent book counters the common notion that the culture and wisdom of indigenous people has been surpassed by more modern and advanced civilizations. Is this social Darwinism functioning in my/our understanding? And, if so, how can I/we be in solidarity with indigenous people in ways that allow God's new humanity to emerge?*

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#### **Theme 4**

### **Labor and the Well-being of Workers in Sabbath-Jubilee**

#### **Sabbath-Jubilee seeks the wellbeing of workers**

Rest and restoration are built into the Sabbath-Jubilee patterns of communal life for all. Today, trade agreements are a primary instrument being used by global corporations and governments to promote globalization in a way that undermines local community, fair labor practices, and protection of workers. Fair Trade, a new movement, is an alternative action to what is happening in “Free” Trade. The “free” applies only to transnational corporations who with every Free Trade agreement operate more and more free of government regulation. The result? During the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continuing into the 21<sup>st</sup>, “Free” Trade agreements between rich and poor nations have been bad for workers, the environment, indigenous peoples, rural culture, small farmers, local economies, and small businesses. They have produced a “race to the bottom” for wages, meaning that corporations roam the world looking for the cheapest labor and thus pressure nations to offer up their people for poverty wages in exchange for foreign investments. These investments promise to develop the country, but, in truth, only the elite in the country are “developed.” Nations are pitted against each other to offer “the best deal” to global corporations, some of whom have larger budgets than the nations with whom they are dealing.

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20. Initiate a group study of Fair Trade. Compare the impacts of Fair Trade vs. “Free” Trade on workers and the environment. Use the resources provided by Global Exchange and Transfair USA.

Global Exchange, [www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org), and Transfair USA, [www.transfairusa.org](http://www.transfairusa.org), are at the forefront of the Fair Trade movement in the US. They link to the international movement which began in Europe.

21. Buy Fair Trade coffee and tea. See the Transfair USA website for bulk suppliers. Increasingly, coffee shops and stores are offering coffee and tea with the Fair Trade certification label.
22. Buy clothing made only in shops free of sweatshop labor or from Fair Trade outlets.
23. Buy gifts, items for personal use, and furnishings for our homes from “green companies” and Fair Trade cooperatives or stores. “Green businesses” take great care to protect the environment, respect the rights and needs of workers, and assure those who produce the products sold life-sustaining compensation.
24. Participate in some activities to organize day laborers or others working for less than a living wage.
25. Invite day laborers to tell their stories to a group you bring together.
26. Plan some simple actions of communal support with day laborers whose stories you’ve heard.
27. Buy clothing and other items from resale shops whenever possible. Similarly, we can recycle our own clothing in this same way.
- Avoid coffee and tea marketed by global corporations whose “Free” Trade policies displace 1000s of small growers from their land, clear-cut trees, and pollute the land with pesticides. JEM distributes organically grown coffee from the Maya Vinic Cooperativa, owned and operated by indigenous people committed to nonviolence in the mountains of Chiapas, Mexico.
- The Bangor Clean Clothes Campaign offers a shopping guide. Contact them at 170 Park St., Bangor, ME 04401, 207-947-4203, [info@pica.ws](mailto:info@pica.ws).
- Minimize our dependence on global corporations to “deliver” bargains, convenience, and products. Coop America (see Action #8) gives examples of “green businesses.” Each dollar is a vote to support those who’ve made the effort to produce items justly and take the market risks to make them available to us. Ten Thousand Villages stores are currently the largest group of Fair Trade stores.
- See first hand the way a Dominant System designs itself to find cheap labor. Can it empower laborers and survive?
- Day laborers are not often listened to by middle class people. After listening, invite people to share feelings and thoughts.
- Acting *with* the day laborers rather than *for* them creates the best choices and results in the greatest solidarity with one another.
- Support the cause of the resale shop and avoid putting new money into corporations using sweatshops and cheap labor to assemble their garments.

28. Create a community Clean Clothes Campaign modeled on the one in effect in Bangor, ME. The model is available through Peace through Interamerican Community Action (PICA), 170 Park St, Bangor, ME 04401, [info@pica.ws](mailto:info@pica.ws).

This Campaign links communities in the garment industry and understands that if only 2% of U.S. consumers buy from non-sweat suppliers, producers will need to change their practices to stay competitive.

29. Let the United Students against Sweatshops (USAS) on the college campus nearest you know that you support them. Website: [www.umich.edu/~sole/usas/](http://www.umich.edu/~sole/usas/). If there isn't one, find students who would like to start one and link them to the national movement.

Student activism generates great energy and hope in all movements. Their work against sweatshops strikes at the heart of poverty wages worldwide and involves university campuses, a dynamic and intelligent energy needed in the Sabbath-Jubilee movement.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *Exodus 23:10-13 – what is the economic intent of Sabbath rest for laborers? see Kinsler, pp. 36-39*
- *Luke 14:7-24 – how can we counter economic hierarchies that put laborers at the bottom? see Kinsler, p. 107*

***Question for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

- *What guides my/our purchases most? Price? Convenience? Justice for all who bring the products to us?*
- *What keeps me/us from supporting laborers more vigorously and being in solidarity together?*

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## **Theme 5 Ecology and Property in Sabbath-Jubilee**

### **Sabbath-Jubilee seeks the wellbeing of the land**

As with workers, rest and restoration are built into the patterns of land use in Sabbath-Jubilee. Because so many of us have become disconnected from the land, we do not recognize that how we eat, use paper, and build homes supports either those who care for the land or those who treat it shabbily, those who preserve rainforests and old growth forests or cut them down. Likewise, our use of fossil energy, a nonrenewable resource, instead of alternative energies decides how the environment is treated. All of these daily acts are moral, not amoral, acts.

In today's non-agrarian economies many of us do not have land as one of our assets. Therefore, all assets need to be included in Sabbath-Jubilee practices regarding land. Any money we invest, any retirement funds, or any bank accounts vote for or against Sabbath-Jubilee according to where they

are invested. We need to ask, “How is the money we invest being used?” It may be contributing to what we say we oppose. So, in Sabbath-Jubilee, assets, whatever form and size they are in, seek the wellbeing of the Earth, support only governments with radically complete democratic participation, and buy from businesses in which *all stakeholders*, not just shareholders, determine actions.

Furthermore, Sabbath-Jubilee seeks ecological peace with Mother Earth and works for her wellbeing. Both the economy and the ecology of Sabbath-Jubilee are spiritual work. They are expressions of divine work within continuing creation.

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30. Recycle everything we can; encourage community structures and neighbors to recycle more and more items – glass, all numbers of plastics, newsprint, all paper, tin, aluminum, batteries, cardboard, brown paper. Compost food scraps, yard waste, and other compostables.

Follow the slogan “recycle, reuse, reduce.” Composting reduces landfills while restoring land with rich, composted nutrients.

31. Reduce use of fossil fuels – drive less, bicycle more, walk more, use public transit, energy-proof your home. Advocate in word and deed for alternative energies.

Oil is the #1 commodity of trade. The insatiable hunger for oil in the Dominant Culture drives it to repeated military interventions so that access to the world’s oil resources is gained and then maintained. Indigenous people, poor people, and the environment continue to be victims of this shameless, unbridled quest for our fossil fuel habit.

32. Become a member of the Organic Consumers Association; read their newsletter; visit their website [www.purefood.org](http://www.purefood.org). Meet with others to increase advocacy for organic production as well as buying and eating organic.

Eating organic supports farmers who do not want to pollute their land or workers with pesticides, nor serve us produce with pesticide residues. They also do not want to serve us genetically modified produce, so they do not grow it. They work against huge odds, including a US Dept. of Agriculture that favors conventional food and large, corporate farming.

33. Buy food from local producers. Farmers’ markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms need the purchases of buyers informed on food issues. For the farms nearest you search “community supported agriculture”

This supports regional economies and they, in turn, empower everyone in the region to make life-sustaining choices instead of becoming victims of far-off corporate decisions based on their profits and shareholders. CSAs (Community Supported

on the web or visit site [www.umass.edu](http://www.umass.edu).

34. Form a food-buying club that buys food in bulk (mostly organic) from wholesale distributors of natural foods. See website [www.bpcop.com](http://www.bpcop.com) for one example. Use the food-buying club to grow consciousness among all members about food security and the politics of food.

35. Eat low meat or no meat diets. Especially reduce use of fast-food meat and fatty foods. John Robbins (of Baskin-Robbins descent) writes authoritatively on this in *Diet for a New America* and elsewhere.

36. Drink filtered water from filters in your home, workplace, church; reduce or eliminate drinking sodas of all kinds.

37. Bring together a group who, upon determining what is Enough, will make a portion of their assets part of the common-wealth of the group and create Sabbath-Jubilee economic practice and structures; or work with JEM to hold a workshop on Sabbath-Jubilee investing.

38. Bank only in a locally owned bank, a community development bank, or a credit union as opposed to larger banks with headquarters far away. Ask organizations where you have membership or influence to do the same. The

Agriculture farms) are one creative alternative to the corporate farming favored by half a dozen agriculture corporations and reinforced by US Dept. of Agriculture policies.

Avoid the chain supermarkets until they offer food that labels genetically modified organisms, honor the land, give market to the small growers, make human health a high priority, and behave as more than distributors for a half-dozen corporate food giants.

Avoid non-organic meat because of growth hormones, irradiation, and other liabilities. Meat to feed 100 people requires far more land and water to produce than does grain to feed the same number. When meat is produced on factory-farms, antibiotics are used excessively because of diseases resulting from close confinement of animals. Also, fast food places do not pay living wages.

Water is rapidly moving from a public, natural resource to a private commodity. Meanwhile, soft drink companies are seeking to be our primary thirst quenchers even though they are much less healthy than filtered water.

Sabbath-Jubilee structures have been known for ages, but they need people who come with their financial assets to make them live. (See JEM's *Portfolio Prophets: Investing in a Jubilee Economy* for further explanation.)

Only local financial institutions truly respond to local needs and realities; int'l ones can withdraw money from a particular region with the stroke of a computer key. This makes communities vulnerable to world markets and thus destabilizes

moral issues speak especially eloquently to religious groups.

them. Economies with local control that network to other economies better meet the need for local economic security.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *I Kings 21:1-29 – The story of Naboth’s Sabbath-Jubilee effort to resist land takeover by government Powers.*
- *Matthew 25:14-30 – see Myers, pp. 38-45, for why the well-known parable of the talents does not support maximizing profits from investments – a frequent understanding – and the stark challenge of confronting economic domination.*

***Question for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

- *Who gets my/our dollar-votes in my/our purchases: global corporations? small growers? local economies?*
- *What part of my/our investments is in the Dominant System and what part is in a Sabbath-Jubilee economy?*

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## **Theme 6 Crime and Restorative Justice in Sabbath-Jubilee**

### **Sabbath-Jubilee frees prisoners**

“What?” we say in shock. “What did Isaiah and Jesus have in mind when they included ‘freeing the prisoner’ in Sabbath-Jubilee?” What they had in mind was how Dominant Cultures decide the rules of criminalization and in the process practice many excesses and abuses. Powers may behave civilly; but they also act with impunity. Sabbath-Jubilee focuses communities in restoration rather than retribution, on re-incorporation into community rather than on isolation from it. Hence, the dramatic phrase, “freeing the prisoner.”

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39. Get the name of a prisoner to write to and learn, from a first hand account, more about incarceration, prosecution, sentencing, and parole.

Sabbath-Jubilee understands that Dominant Systems make the rules and implement the processes of criminalization to serve their purposes. To punish is to control. True justice restores people to full participation in the human community.

40. Get on a prisoner’s visitor list and visit her/him. Become aware through personal visitation of the power of racism in the system of criminalization. Prison systems act with too much impunity because there is too little activism and advocacy by people with first-hand visitor experience. (See JEM’s *Women Voices from Prison: Uniting Us Through Stories that Seek Justice.*)
41. Participate at some level with your local or state or national group against the death penalty. Jesus’ teachings on prisons, prisoners, and executions lead us away from state-sponsored retribution and into restoration.
42. Support the family of a prisoner; listen to their story; watch hope be born as you offer love in the time of hurt. Family members feel like victims of the Dominant System, are disempowered and humiliated by it, and are pushed toward hatred. They can, however, become a great energy for changing people and systems toward restorative justice.
43. Learn how some police and some prosecutors abuse and how some judges permit it. Protest. Pay attention to racial and economic factors at work. In addition to abuses by some police, police groups, prosecutors, and judges, learn how enforcement systems build in abuses and/or protect abuses and abusers. Be alert to how judicial systems can “legalize” abuses.
44. Ask why US taxes pay for two million people (most are minorities) in correctional systems – more than any other country – and find out the answer. The prison industry is growing rapidly despite the price tag of \$800 million annually to operate a prison. This industry is not just about crime, but about domination and about controlling unemployed and oppressed minorities. Excessive criminalization of drugs and removal of all efforts to rehabilitate contributes mightily to this national disgrace.
45. Support restorative justice in its broad range of practices to restore people to communities in ways that make communities safer and more rehabilitating. Learn about Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation or local restorative justice programs. The prison industrial complex focuses in the retributive justice — punishment, domination, and control.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this segment:***

- *Matthew 25:31-46 (especially vs. 36) – The Son of Man (or Truly Human One) identifies fully with the prisoner. Why?*
- *Acts 5:17-26, 12:6-11, 16:25-26 – How are these manifestations of Sabbath-Jubilee in action?*

***Questions for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

1. *What has been my best source for learning about procedures of criminalization and restoration to community? What different choices have I made as a result?*
2. *What has been my best source for learning about military enforcement of what the Dominant System wants – called such things as “national interest”, “security”, “bringing democracy”, etc.? What forms of non-violent resistance and action am I most willing to practice?*

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**Theme 7**  
**Debt and Interest in Sabbath-Jubilee**

**Sabbath-Jubilee cancels debt every seven years**

Sabbath-Jubilee knows that debts enforced longer than seven years will undermine community because the creditor-debtor relationship will become one of superior and inferior, merit and demerit, worthy and unworthy. The economics between those with more and those with less will become part of the structure of life. Community will be lost to hierarchy. Sabbath-Jubilee recognizes that debt quickly becomes a tool in the hands of those with more to control those with less. As Dennis Brutus of South Africa has said repeatedly, “Debt is the new form of slavery.” Because debt is so effective in structuring economic inequality into societies, seven year structural adjustments to cancel debts are necessary to restore both debtor and creditor into full participation in communal democracy.

Today debt serves to arrange the world’s 200 countries into a rich-poor apartheid. Debtor countries, in their weakened position, have little ability to negotiate with international financial institutions. Those institutions dictate the economies of debtor countries, forcing them out of regional economies and into the global framework where the rich countries and global corporations continue to exploit the people and the earth. Sabbath-Jubilee levels this hierarchy among nations.

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46. Visit the websites of the Jubilee USA Network, [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org), or 50 Years Is Enough, [www.50years.org](http://www.50years.org), for the latest news, best resources, and prophetic actions about canceling the debt of the world’s poorest countries. About

See how debt is being used by 7 or 8 of the world’s countries with the biggest economies to control and dominate the other 190 or so. Learn how the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions vigorously and

imperial half (or about 100) the countries of the world will never be able to repay their debt. Learn the injustices involved in how the debts were negotiated in the first place and for what purposes. Advocate and lobby for debt cancellation.

47. Pay your own monthly credit card bills (if you use credit cards) in full each month so that you pay no interest.

48. Read *Economic Apartheid in America: A Primer on Economic Inequality and Insecurity* by Chuck Collins and Felice Yeskel who are with United for a Fair Economy (UFE). UFE has organized people with wealth who want to address the rich-poor gap. See [www.ufe.org](http://www.ufe.org) for more great resources.

49. Teach a group of youth and young adults (or any age) in a church, school, or other organization how to exercise their power against greed in the Dominant System. Include how consumerism is a culturally approved, not penalized, addiction.

override the economic priorities of countries through the vehicle of debt.

Recognize the role of interest in moving money from those with less to those with more. Learn why Sabbath-Jubilee dislikes interest.

Graphs and narrative show how the rules have changed during the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to favor wealth and privilege and to disadvantage others. The rules can be changed toward justice.

“You can have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, or democracy. But you cannot have both.”  
—Justice Lewis Brandeis

Examine the role of credit cards, teen magazines, cars; youth in advertising, the staging of TV in upper middle class settings, apartments in which luxuries are built in and thus exceed affordability, and many other ways youth are acculturated into Dominant System ways. Be sure to show youth the freedom of Sabbath-Jubilee alternatives. The activism of youth and young adults invigorates the alternatives of Sabbath-Jubilee.

***For biblical connection and reflection on this theme:***

- *Deuteronomy 15:1-11 – see Kinsler, pp. 72-74.*
- *Mark 2:1-12 – see Kinsler, pp. 93-94.*

***Questions for personal journaling and community interaction regarding this theme:***

- *How do I/we understand Dennis Brutus’ observation: “Debt is the new form of slavery”?*
- *How do I/we understand the relation between accumulated wealth and democracy as presented by the book *Economic Apartheid* and the Justice Lewis Brandeis quote: “You can have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, or democracy. But you cannot have both.”?*

## Number 50: Transformation of Society and Soul

Any group who will set about doing “A Jubilee of Actions” realizes after some months that they have gotten one another into living patterns that distance and distinguish themselves from the Dominant Culture. This shift can result in feelings of triumph, self-righteousness, and isolation in us. We will likely experience various forms of disapproval from others, as well as affirmation by some. All these feelings will become familiar and need attention. Supporting and affirming one another in community is vital. It is no accident that Jesus called people into a community of solidarity with him (Luke 8:1-3), nor that his followers, called followers of the Way (Acts 9:2), did the same (Acts 2:43-47).

The alternative that Sabbath-Jubilee seeks is not revolution, but transformation. To replace those currently in power with others who promise to be more benevolent does not result in real change unless the structures themselves are changed tilting toward benevolence instead of away from it. Different people may tweak the process, but the results stay essentially the same. Transformation happens when, along with the change in system, there is change in our hearts and minds – a conversion of our egos. Egos need to undergo spiritual metamorphosis. They need to move from wanting power in order to dominate to wanting power in order to foster community. Such is the transformation of Sabbath-Jubilee. Transformation of society *and* soul are two movements of one transforming process. In this way “A Jubilee of Actions” guides us to shape *now* life after capitalism. It is a Tree of Life that fosters communities which are vigorous, democratic, civil and faith-based societies with an active Presence of the sacred.

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### References and Additional Companions on the Way

The Economic Way of the Cross, prepared by The Religious Working Group on the World Bank and IMF, Ecumenical Program on Central America & the Caribbean (EPICA), and Witness for Peace. Order from EPICA, 1470 Irving Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20010, [www.igc.org/epica](http://www.igc.org/epica).

Kinsler, Ross and Gloria. The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1999). This book shows that the Jesus movement was a Jubilee movement. Available from JEM.

Myers, Ched. The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics. (2001). This booklet is available from JEM, also from Church of the Savior, 2025 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, or from the author at Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries, [www.bcm-net.org](http://www.bcm-net.org).

*Organic View* is the newsletter of the Organic Consumers Association, 6101 Cliff Estate Road, Little Marais, MN 55614, [www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org) – a great source for current information on organic agriculture and food.

## Glossary of Terms Used

**Civil Society** – A non-governmental organization (NGO) of people, or cluster of NGOs, committed to creative nonviolence as they practice an alternative to the ways of the Domination System. Often the Domination System is oppressing them or those with whom they are in relationship in such ways that practicing alternative ways risks reprisals.

**CSA (Community Supported Agriculture)** – A farm in which a community of people who will receive the crop pay up front for it (buying shares), thus joining the farmer(s) in the risks taken in producing food by following sustainable practices such as care of the soil, no genetically engineered seeds, no pesticides, etc.

**Green Business** – Businesses whose practices are “green” practice high standards of justice for workers and the environment. Here are just a few examples of green business practices: recycle everything possible, use recycled paper, be worker owned, be a cooperative, conserve energy and water, invest in socially responsible ways. See the Coop America *National Green Pages* for a listing of green businesses.

**Solidarity** – A kind of strong partnership between peoples whom the Dominant System keeps apart in order to maintain control. The helping that happens is not from the “privileged” to the “underprivileged”, but through group consensus on what will benefit all involved in a common, discerning struggle against domination, and for a strong, life-sustaining alternative.

**Stakeholders** – All the persons impacted by a decision and action of a corporation. Currently, the system measures only the impact on the shareholders. Sabbath-Jubilee considers the impact on all who have a stake in the decision and action.

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Jubilee Economics Ministries (JEM) is happy to supply additional copies of “A Jubilee of Actions” for \$3.00 each. Also available are additional written and video resources on these actions and the reasons for them. JEM’s Eye-Opening immersions to Chiapas, Mexico, urban neighborhoods, and rural culture facilitate what is described above in the segment entitled “Sabbath Jubilee opens eyes.” JEM gladly provides personal leadership to any group eager to delve more fully into the practice of Sabbath Jubilee in our time. Please contact us at:

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