

Torah Tidbits from Rabbi Larry Moldo

"Proclaim liberty throughout the land."

At least, that's what the English usually says. It's hard to know if that's what it means, though.

The word Dror, according to the Lexicon put together long ago by Brown, Driver and Briggs (more commonly known as BDB), is related to a free-flowing state. So in a way it is liberty, but it is the liberty of water to flow downhill - not the liberty of doing whatever one wants, but the liberty of being in accord with the ideal.

Every fifty years all of the Israelites were supposed to get the opportunity to reconfigure where they lived on the land, and revert to living on the amount of land originally designed to be under the stewardship of a single family/individual. This was probably not equally well received, yet everyone was required to live by the announcement.

So what is the "dror-like" way to live, outside of Israel? The Torah text doesn't directly tell us. The prophetic selection is from Jeremiah, and one of the options discusses a land purchase. Despite the almost immediate destruction of the Kingdom and dispersion of the people, God tells Jeremiah to redeem a familial part of Israel in front of witnesses, and place the documents in a clay container which will be buried for retrieval when the people return, so they will remember which family is to take care of that section.

At first glance, that might not seem to help much. What I find from the prophetic text is that the way we can act "dror-like" is to always retain hope. Remembering that there will be a future is an act of hope. Anticipating that the future will be better because of our actions, is an act of hope. So I invite you, through your actions and intentions, to proclaim "Dror" throughout all lands, to all who live upon the land, for the intended natural flow of human interaction is towards cooperation and peace.