

Supplemental Notes:

*The Book
of
Leviticus*

*Compiled by
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Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant endnotes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

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Leviticus Review

Ten Basic Lessons from Leviticus. One-Word Summary: Holiness.

The Book of Leviticus

Session 1

Introduction

Here is a book that is ostensibly of special interest only to the religious antiquarian. Most regard it with indifference or doubt, and it certainly seems distant from any relevance to our current horizon for most of us. So it may come as a surprise to discover that there are a number of Biblical experts who regard the Book of Leviticus as *the most important book of the Bible!* Dr. Samuel H. Kellogg, Dr. Albert C. Dudley, J. Vernon McGee, et al.

If it were possible to get the message of this book into the hearts of all people who are trying to be religious, all cults and 'isms' would end.

J. Vernon McGee

What is the most important thing in the world? **Holiness.**

He that sees the beauty of holiness, or true moral good, sees the greatest and most important thing in the world.

Jonathan Edwards

Holiness vs. Happiness: True happiness begins with holiness.

*Follow peace with all men, and **holiness**, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

Hebrews 12:14

*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after **righteousness**: for they shall be filled.*

Matthew 5:6

*If I had my choice of all the blessings I can conceive of I would choose perfect conformity to the Lord Jesus, or, in one word, **holiness**.*

Charles Spurgeon

[Would you make that choice?]

We want Jesus to solve our problems and carry our burdens, but we don't want Him to control our lives and change our character. Eight times God said to His people, "Be Holy, for I am Holy."

Key Verse(s): *Be Holy, for I am holy.*

Leviticus 11:44, 45

Applied to the New Testament Church:

*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; **Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.***

1 Peter 1:15, 16

Holiness isn't a luxury: it's a necessity. It is not "limited to the Jews in ancient Israel": Leviticus instructs New Testament Christians how to appreciate holiness and appropriate it into their everyday lives.

Most frequent words:

Holy	94X in 77 verses
Uncleanness	129X in 96 verses

Five Basic Themes:¹

1. A Holy God

What is "holiness"? It is the primary emphasis in the Bible. This word occurs 87 times in this book.

And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

Leviticus 20:26

The Hebrew word for "holy" used in Leviticus, קֹדֶשׁ *qodesh*, means "that which is set apart and marked off; that which is different; separateness; apartness; sacredness."

The *Sabbath* was holy because God set it apart for His people (Ex 16:23). The priests were holy because they were set apart to minister to the Lord (Lev 21:7-8). Their garments were holy and could not be duplicated for common use (Ex 28:2). The tithe was holy (Lev 27:30). Anything that God said was holy had to be treated differently from the common things of life.

The English word "holy" comes from the Old English word *halig*, which means "to be whole, to be healthy." The related word "sanctify" comes from the Latin *sanctis*, which means "consecrated, sacred, blameless."

How did a Holy God reveal Himself and His Holiness? The religions of the nations of Canaan (and the other regions as well) were notoriously immoral and involved occultic idols, temple prostitution, and the like. (The religions of Greece and Rome weren't much better.) For this reason, God commanded His people to stay away from their altars and shrines and to refuse to learn their ways.

You never call any of the heathen deities "holy." But the "Holy One of Israel" is one of the most oft-repeated names of YHWH in Scripture (30X in Isaiah alone).

He also gave them a Holy Law that contained both promises and penalties, of which the Ten Commandments are the essence (Ex 20:1-17). It taught them right from wrong, defined things both clean and unclean, and outlined the penalties of disobedience.

In both declaration and demonstration, YHWH made it clear to the people of Israel that He is a holy God, righteous in all His works and just in all His judgments.

The requirements of holiness is uncompromising. Near misses don't count. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23), and "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek 18:4).

Even Socrates recognized the paradox of a holy God:

It may be that Deity can forgive sins, but I don't see how.
Socrates, 500 B.C.

The Predicament of Man

"In his fallen, degenerate condition, man is *lost*.
Darkness, which he cannot dissipate, is all around him.
Stains of guilt, which he cannot wash out, are upon him.
The curse of condemnation stands written against him, beyond his
power to expunge it, or check it off.
A foul disease is fretting through all his nature, against which there is
no earthly antidote or remedy.
Death and decay are on him, and cling to him as part of himself, and he
cannot cut loose from them.
Eternity itself, so far as his own strength goes, can bring him only sorrow
and despair.
*But God come to us in this desperate estate, and proffers, through
Christ, an eternal deliverance.*

For darkness, He proposes to give us light.
For sin, He holds out to us the means of an effectual cleansing.
For condemnation, He tenders to us a present and full reprieve.
For all our ailments, He engages to work for us an abiding cure.
And for our corruption and death, He offers us glory and immortality.
In one word, He proposes to *save* us.
Restoration—complete restoration—is now proclaimed from the
heavens as the portion of those who will receive it through Jesus Christ.
It is a blessed proclamation.
It is, indeed, *Good News—glad tidings of great joy*.
And this proclamation is the Gospel."

Joseph A. Seiss

God's Predicament

God hates sin, but He loves sinners. And because He loves sinners and wants to forgive them, He provided a substitute to die in the sinner's place. The whole sacrificial system declared to Israel that a substitutionary death would be required in the sinner's place. All this was a prefiguring of a promised Savior who would lay down His life for the sins of the world.

What is the "Gospel"? *It is God's proclamation of a plan of mercy to sinners.*

The very definition of the "Gospel" is built on these very specifications:

That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried, *and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

1 Corinthians 15:3, 4

The death of Jesus Christ was not a tragedy; it was an achievement. He didn't just die: He fulfilled the myriads of precise specifications detailed in the Scriptures. The entire sacrificial system pointed toward this most significant event in the universe.

Science can tell of God, see His fingerprints throughout the Creation, and trace His footsteps everywhere; but it cannot tell of any remedy for sin, any Savior of the soul, nor any peace for the guilty. It is more important for us to understand the laws of grace than the laws of nature.

[God has devoted only two chapters to the one, and over 500 to the other.]

2. A Holy Priesthood

The Jewish priesthood belonged only to the tribe of Levi, the third son of Jacob and Leah (Gen 29:34; 35:23). Levi was the father of Gershom, Kohath, and Merari (Gen 46:11). Kohath's son Amram was the father of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam (Num 26:58-59).

Aaron was the first high priest and his male descendants became priests, with the firstborn son in each generation inheriting the high priesthood. (You couldn't be a priest unless you had Levi genes!) Every priest was a Levite, but not every Levite was a priest. The rest of the men in the tribe of Levi were assigned to serve as assistants to the priests.

The Levites were substitutes for the firstborn males in Israel, all of whom had to be dedicated to the Lord (Ex 13:11-6; Num 3:12-13, 44-51).

David divided the thousands of Levites into 24 courses (this is a key to understanding the 24 Elders in the Book of Revelation). The title of the book, "Leviticus," derives from "Levi" and means "pertaining to the Levites." They are only mentioned once (Lev 25:32).

The **priests** had to not only come from the tribe of Levi, but they also had to be free of any physical defects, and not marry women whom God disapproved (Lev 21, 22). They were subject to many special laws for bathing, garments, and other details that did not apply to the common people. In every way they were set apart and, therefore, holy to the Lord.

The **Levites** were in charge of the sanctuary, and during the wilderness wanderings they carried the tent and its furnishings from place to place (Num 1:47-54). They were responsible to *guard* the sanctuary (1 Chr 9:19); to *teach* the people the Law (Deut 33:8-11; Neh 8:7-9); and, to *lead* the worshipers in praising God (1 Chr 28:28-32).

Under penalty of death: Only a holy priesthood could approach God's altar and be acceptable to serve God. If they weren't dressed properly (Ex 28:39-43); if they didn't wash properly (30:20-21); if they tried to serve while unclean (Lev 22:9); if they were careless with the Tabernacle furnishings (Num 4:14, 20) ...they were in danger of death.

Jesus is, of course, our High Priest (Heb 9:25-26). And every true believer in Jesus Christ is a priest of God, with the privilege of offering spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5, 9).

In the OT, God's people *had* a priesthood; in the NT, God's people *are* a priesthood (Rev 1:6).

Through faith in Christ, we've been

- *washed* (1 Cor 6:9-11);
- *clothed* in His righteousness (2 Cor 5:21);
- *anointed* by the Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27); and
- *given access* into His presence (Heb 10:19-20).

3. A Holy People

God's purpose for Israel was that the nation be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:6). Everything was either "holy" (set apart for God's exclusive use) or "common." "Common" things were either "clean" (the people could use them) or "unclean" (it was forbidden to use them).

The laws governing marriage, birth, diets, personal cleanliness, the quarantine of diseased persons, and the burial of the dead—while they certainly involved hygienic benefits—were all reminders that *God's people couldn't live any way they pleased*.

They had to learn to "put a difference between unclean and clean" (Lev 10:10). And there were ceremonial provisions for cleansing and repair of failures...

When Israel started to live like pagans, they robbed God of His glory; and the Lord had to chasten them.

The frailties of our own genetic defects are provided for *if* we, too, comply with His provision for our inadequacies.

4. A Holy Land

A holy God wants His people to live in a holy land. In Leviticus 18-27, the word "land" is used 68 times. The sins that defile the land invite divine judgment: immorality (Chapter 18); idolatry (Chapter 19); capital crimes (Chapter 20); blasphemy (Chapter 23); and, refusing to give the land its rest (Chapter 25).

When the people of Israel committed these sins, God had to chasten them by allowing Babylon to destroy Jerusalem and take the people captive (2 Chr 34:14-21).

The nations of the world don't have the same covenant relationship to God that Israel has—not even the United States. But all are still responsible to obey His moral law and to use His gifts wisely (Amos 1-2). And with our unique heritage we need to realize that to whom much is given, much will be required. For a long list of reasons, the United States is overdue for judgment.

Rise and Fall of Nations

The rise and fall of empires can be mapped by their treatment of God's chosen people. After the Spanish Inquisition tortured the Jews, the Great Armada of Spain was destroyed by the British; from that point on Britannia, not Spain, ruled the waves.

When Great Britain abrogated the Balfour Declaration, causing Jews to go to concentration camps instead of to the land promised to them, the sun began to set on the British empire.

During WWII, the Germans built walls around the Jewish ghettos of Europe; any Jew climbing over the wall to escape was machine-gunned to death. Within a few years a wall was built around Berlin; any German climbing over it was machine-gunned to death.

The Berlin Wall remained standing until the last leader of the generation of Germans responsible for the Holocaust was dead. Immediately after the death of Rudolf Hess in Spandau Prison, the Berlin Wall came down.

[The judgment overdue on America is possibly being deferred because of Gen 12:2, 3...]

I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.

Thomas Jefferson

5. A Holy Savior

Every detail in the Scriptures points toward Christ:

For the law having a shadow of good things to come...

Hebrews 10:1

Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,

Psalm 40:7 (also quoted in Heb 10:7)

Jesus emphasized that on the Emmaus Road:

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:27

And again that evening in the upper room:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Luke 24:44

And none are more fundamental than those that deal with His substitutionary performance on our behalf. No amount of good works or religious efforts can make a sinner holy. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse us from our sins (1 Jn 1:7).

And only a risen, glorified Savior can intercede for us at the throne of God as our Advocate (1 Jn 2:1) and high priest (Heb 8:1; Rom 8:34). Just as the nation of Israel had to beware of that which was unclean and defiling, so also must believers today

...cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 7:1

The Occasion of the Book

The book begins with a *Vav* connective, ו ("And"), which connects it with the preceding book of Exodus.

In Genesis we see man ruined.

In Exodus we see man redeemed by God.

In Leviticus we see man worshipping God.

The Kingdom of God, rejected by corporate humanity in the founding of the Babel world power, continued on the earth in a few still-loyal souls in the line of Abraham and his seed. Now, at last, according to promise, it had been formally and visibly reestablished on earth at Mt. Sinai.

The fundamental law of the kingdom contained in the Ten Commandments, and certain applications of the same, was received and solemnly covenanted to by Israel with the sprinkling of blood (Ex 24:3-7).

YHWH then issued the specifications for the building of the Tabernacle (“tent of meeting”), and the Shekinah cloud covered the Tabernacle, manifesting the presence of the King of Israel.

Out of the Tabernacle, YHWH now called unto Moses and delivered the law as we have it in this book.

About 10 weeks after their deliverance from Egypt, the Israelites arrived at Mt. Sinai (Ex 19:1). Moses erected the Tabernacle on the 1st day of the 1st month of the 2nd year of liberation (Ex 40:17); Ex 16-40 covers about 9 months (Num 9:1-5). The Book of Numbers opens with a census being taken on the 1st day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year (Num 1:1). Thus, Leviticus covers only about a month of Israel’s history.

Exodus Contrasted with Leviticus:

In Exodus we see an offer of pardon;

Leviticus offers purity.

In Exodus we have God’s approach to man;

Leviticus describe man’s approach to God.

In Exodus Christ is the Savior;

In Leviticus Christ is the Sanctifier.

In Exodus man’s guilt is prominent;

In Leviticus man’s defilement is prominent.

In Exodus God speaks out of Mt. Sinai;

In Leviticus He speaks out of the Tabernacle.

In Exodus man is made nigh unto God;

In Leviticus man is kept nigh unto God.

Leviticus 1

- 1] And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

The book opens with the Hebrew word, *וַיִּקְרָא* *vayiqara*, which means “and He called...” (This is the title of the book in the Hebrew text. The Greek translators of the *Septuagint* devised the title *Leviticus* as it deals

with institutions committed to the priests, who were of the tribe of Levi. The *Talmud*, for similar reasons, calls it “the law of the priests.”)

The Church is the *eklesia*, the “called out ones.” This is a book for those who are called out: saved. Thus, *it is message for us*.

It is God that is the direct speaker on almost every page. “The Lord spake unto Moses” directly. This is asserted 56 times in the 27 chapters. It is more entirely made up of the very words of the Lord than any other book of the Bible. [Moses: About 1/3 of the OT was written by this remarkable man. He was, and remains, the great Lawgiver and Historian of the world.]

Authority

We won’t trouble ourselves with the various theories and conjectures of “higher criticism” (an oxymoron from the liberal seminaries). There are those that quibble about possible redactory alterations during the days of Ezra, etc. (We’ll take up some of these later as we get to them.) We will simply take the most authoritative authentication possible: That of Jesus Christ Himself. He has spoken on this matter.

As to the Torah in general, He called it “the Law of Moses” (Lk 24:44); and He declared it to be such that “till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Mt 5:18). [Could this somehow *exclude* the book of Leviticus? Was it a forgery, with 56 affirmations of its Mosaic origin and inspired authority, and thus somehow excluded?]

Jesus said that if the Jews had believed Moses they would also have believed Him (Jn 5:46, 47). Was He including Leviticus as a forgery? More specifically, when Jesus healed the lepers (Mt 8:4) He sent them to the priests on the ground that Moses had commanded this in such cases. Such a command is only in Leviticus (Lev 14:3-10).

In justifying His disciples for plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, He alludes to the example of David, who ate the shew-bread when he was in flight from Saul, “which was not lawful for him to eat, but only for the priests” (Mt 12:4); thus, referring to a law found only in Leviticus (Lev 24:9). *This citation was only pertinent on the ground that the prohibition of the shew-bread had the same inspired authority as the obligation of the Sabbath.*

Jesus refers to Moses as having renewed the ordinance of circumcision (Jn 7:22, 23), having been first given to Abraham; but this renewal is recorded only in Leviticus (Lev 12:3). Our Lord Himself rests the obligation of certain duties upon the fact that this law of Leviticus was a revelation from God to Moses for the children of Israel.

Jesus declared “that Moses wrote of Him” (Jn 5:46), and, as He highlighted on the Emmaus Road, “the things concerning Himself” (Lk 24:27).

The defense rests...on the testimony of the Messiah Himself.

Leviticus is quoted over 100 times in the NT.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now these things were our examples...

1 Corinthians 10:6

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’

2 Tim 3:16,17

Cf. 1 Pet 1:10-12; Heb 11:13

It is a book of worship. Sacrifices, ceremony, ritual, liturgy, instructions, washings, convocations, holy days, observances, conditions, and warnings comprise this book. Worship today is no longer by ritual or in a specific place (Jn 4:21-24).

The laws of Leviticus constantly held before the Israelite the absolute holiness of God as the only standard of perfection.

There are three key emphases in the Book of Leviticus:

1) The Awfulness of Sin.

Blood is mentioned over 88 times.

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

Hebrews 9:22

2) The Graciousness of God.

With equal clearness it also proclaims that *with* the shedding of blood there *can* be remission of sin to every believing penitent. In God’s grace, He also provided for the remedies for their inevitable failures and restoration.

3) The Sacrifice of Christ.

Apart from any relation to the New Testament, the prescriptions given in Leviticus dwindle down to a burdensome round of uninviting and meaningless ceremonies, seemingly unworthy of so high an origin, or so solemn a method of inculcation.

Joseph A. Seiss

Without the New Testament, the Old Testament closes with:

- Unexplained ceremonies (sacrificial rituals);
- Unachieved purposes (the covenants);
- Unappeased longings (poetical books);
- Unfulfilled prophecies.

*The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed;
The Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.*

Augustine

Relevance of this Book to Us Today

- A revelation of the character of God. And God has not changed.
- A revelation of the fundamental conditions of true religion. The spiritual truths still abide: there is for sinful man no citizenship in the kingdom of God apart from a High Priest and Mediator with a propitiatory sacrifice for sin.
- Beyond the self-offering of the worshiper of God stands the constant testimony that it is only through the shedding of blood *not*

his own that man can have remission of sin. We can't appreciate Christ as the solution until we understand the requirements which had to be met.

The Sacrifices

“Atonement” occurs 45X in this book. It means to “cover up.” One of the key verses in Leviticus is:

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Leviticus 17:11

While the sacrifices were codified in the Levitical system of the Torah, the sacrifices were instituted as early as the Garden of Eden when God taught Adam and Eve that only by the shedding of innocent blood would they be covered (Gen 3:21).

(It was through the failure to properly offer a blood sacrifice of faith, rather than that of his own works from a cursed ground, that Cain murdered his younger brother Abel.)

The shedding of animal blood couldn't change a person's heart or take away sin (Heb 10:1-4). However, God did state that the sins of the worshiper were forgiven (Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7). He did this on the basis of, and in anticipation of, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (Heb 10:5-14). [Like some people in churches today, Jewish worshipers could merely go through the motions at the altar, without putting their heart into it; but this meant that God had not truly forgiven them (Ps 50:8-14; 61:16-17; Isa 1:10-20; Micah 6:6-8). God doesn't want our sacrifices: He wants obedience from our hearts (1 Sam 15:22).]

Six basic offerings could be brought to the Tabernacle altar. They can be classified in three categories:

The Commitment to God

These three speak of total dedication to the Lord.

The Burnt Offering

The Grain or Meal (“meat,” KJV) Offering

The Drink Offering (Num 15:1-10)

The other three met specific needs in the life of the worshiper and also expressed some truth about the person and work of Jesus Christ, God's perfect sacrifice:

The Communion with God

The Fellowship (“Peace,” KJV) Offering

The Cleansing from God

The Sin Offering

The Guilt (“Trespass,” KJV) Offering

These offerings are detailed in the first seven chapters.

The consecration of the priests, detailed in Chapters 8, 9, and 10, will reveal how shallow and inadequate is our thinking on Christian consecration. The diet God provided for His people in Chapter 11 was hygienic and therapeutic, and contains much spiritual food for our souls.

God's attitudes toward motherhood—and womanhood—are profiled in Chapter 12.

The prominence given to leprosy and its treatment—as a type of sin—is detailed in Chapters 13-15. The cleansing of the leper finds its fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Christ as typified in the unusual sacrifice of the two birds. If we are to escape the defilement of sin in this world we need to now a great deal about the death and resurrection of Christ and the application of it to our own lives.

The Day of Atonement—*Yom Kippur*—is a complete portrait of the sacrifice of Christ in Chapter 16.

The role of the Brazen Altar highlights the essential characteristics of the Cross in Chapter 17.

Chapters 18-22 reveals how the minute details of the daily lives of the human family are to be involved with Him. God wants to be involved in your business, your family life, and your social life. We must beware lest we shut Him out of our lives.

They say that a Jew's catechism is his calendar, and the feasts detailed in Chapter 23 furnishes the prophetic program of God's agenda for all time.

Chapters 24-27 furnish an interpretation of the Promised Land, its checkered history, and an insight into its future prominence in God's program. It is especially timely in view of the international meddling and controversies over Israel's right to the land which dominates global politics today.

Our Hermeneutics

The Epistle to the Hebrews lays down the principles upon which we are to interpret Leviticus. The examples of types there furnish a model for our guidance to other cases. (Allegories, types, etc. *prove* nothing, but they do declare and open a text that it may be better perceived and understood.)

The typical character of the ordinances is affirmed that the Tabernacle was an "example and shadow of the heavenly things" (Heb 8:5); and the sacrifices prefigured "better sacrifices than these," even the one offering of Him who "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb 9:23, 26); and that the holy times and sabbatic seasons of the law were "a shadow of things to come" (Col 2:16, 17).

And yet there's still more to be fulfilled: We have seen the "type" of the day of atonement fulfilled in the entering into heaven of our great High Priest; but in the type He came out again to bless the people. Has *that* been fulfilled? Has He *yet* proclaimed absolution of sin to guilty Israel? How about the Feast of Trumpets and that of the ingathering at full harvest? How about that consummate type of all, the year of Jubilee?

Leviticus looks forward to a glorious future yet to come, with the requirements of holiness fully met in Him.

Fasten your seat belts! It's going to be an exciting and highly privileged excursion!

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Why do some scholars hold Leviticus as one of the most important in the Bible?
- 2) What is meant by "holiness"?

- 3) Charles Spurgeon claimed: *If I had my choice of all the blessings I can conceive of I would choose perfect conformity to the Lord Jesus, or, in one word, holiness.* Have you made that choice? How are you implementing that decision?
- 4) Summarize the five basic themes in Leviticus in your own words.
- 5) Explain the basic paradox of God's predicament.
- 6) Define the "Gospel." How is it distinctive from all other religious declarations?
- 7) Explain the various ways that Leviticus is a follow-up to the Book of Exodus.
- 8) Explain how the Hebrew name for the book includes the Church today.
- 9) List the six basic types of sacrifices and explain their principal role.

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What is the most important thing in the universe? Explain why.
- 2) Why is the Book of Leviticus important to us today? If the ordinances don't apply to us, why is the book relevant to us?
- 3) Discuss the various ways that the Old Testament is incomplete without the New Testament as part of the "package."
- 4) Discuss the various ways that Levitical concepts appear in Genesis. What do these indications imply?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Compile a list of infractions that carried the death penalty in Israel.
- 2) Compile a list of authentications of the Torah by Jesus Christ.
- 3) Compile a list of references that indicate that the Levitical concepts were in place in Genesis.

- 4) Explore the evidences that the Sabbath day was instituted *prior* to the giving of the Law to Israel. What does that imply for today, in anything?

Preparation for Next Session:

Study Leviticus 1-7. Read Genesis 4:1-13.

Session 2 Leviticus 1 (cont.) וַיִּקְרָא *vayiqara* “and He called...”

It may be that Deity can forgive sins, but I don't see how.

Socrates, 500 B.C.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:29

Here, in this book entitled, “The Called,” we will discover, encased in these ancient rituals, the most fundamental and essential truth in God’s program. Widely ignored, even by diligent students of God’s Word, this profound book was included in Paul’s observation:

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4

It was also included by the Lord Himself when He pointed out:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 4:4

And it deals with very core of God’s plan of redemption for each one of us.

The Sacrifices

While the sacrifices were codified in the Levitical system of the Torah, the sacrifices were *instituted* as early as the Garden of Eden when God

taught Adam and Eve that only by the shedding of innocent blood would they be covered (Gen 3:21).

It was through his failure to properly offer a blood sacrifice of faith, rather than that of his own works from a cursed ground, that Cain murdered his younger brother Abel (Gen 4).

One of the key verses in Leviticus is,

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Leviticus 17:11

“Atonement” occurs 45X in Leviticus; it means “to cover,” not remove. Blood is the substance of life; as sin is the forfeiture of life.

...without shedding of blood is no remission.

Hebrews 9:22

The shedding of animal blood couldn’t change a person’s heart or take away sin (Heb 10:1-4). However, God did state that the sins of the worshiper were forgiven (Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7). He did this on the basis of, and in anticipation of, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (Heb 10:5-14).

Six basic offerings could be brought to the Tabernacle altar. They each teach us something essential about Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf. They can be classified in 3 categories:

The Commitment to God

The Burnt Offering

The Grain or Meal (“meat,” KJV) Offering

The Drink Offering (Num 15:1-10)

These three speak of total dedication to the Lord. The other three met specific needs in the life of the worshiper and also expressed some truth about our relationship with Him.

The Communion with God

The Fellowship (“Peace,” KJV) Offering

The Cleansing from God

The Sin Offering

The Guilt (“Trespass,” KJV) Offering

These offerings are detailed in the first seven chapters; we will begin with the most basic:

The Burnt Offering

This is the oldest offering known to man. It was the offering of Abel, Noah, and Abraham. It is mentioned first because of its prominence and priority.

The burnt offering is the offering mentioned up to the time of Leviticus; it was the only offering made by those who wanted an approach to God. The burnt sacrifice, called *עֹלָה olah* in Hebrew, means “that which ascends.” It literally went up in smoke—it was totally consumed on the altar; nothing remained but ashes. This reveals that the burnt offering is what God sees in Christ: in Leviticus 1:9, 13, & 17, the sacrifice is a “sweet savour unto the Lord.”

“Sweet-smelling savour”: Literally, *רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ reyach niychoach*, “savour of rest,” a soothing, quieting, tranquillizing scent, fragrance, aroma, odour, staying His wrath and calming His soul.

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Ephesians 5:2

Cf. The rest after the Flood: Genesis 8:21. [Our new beginning in Christ was on the anniversary of the new world (Gen 8:4), which also began on the 17th day of Nisan, three days after our Passover was offered!]

God is saying that He is satisfied with what Jesus did for your sins and mine. Jesus has paid it all for you and that He can save you to the uttermost if you will put your trust in Him. The question is, Are *you* satisfied with that?

It had to involve *death*. It is *not* the spotless life of Christ and our approval of Him that saves us. Only His death can save the sinner: This is the very definition of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:1-4).

Leviticus 1

- 1] And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

The book opens with the Hebrew word, *וַיִּקְרָא vayiqara*, which means “and He called....” This is the title of the book in the Hebrew text. The Greek translators of the *Septuagint* devised the title *Leviticus* as it deals with institutions committed to the priests, who were of the tribe of Levi. The *Talmud*, for similar reasons, calls it “the law of the priests.”

The Church is the *eklesia*, the “called-out ones.” This is a book for those who are called out—saved: Thus, *it is a message for us*.

It is God that is the direct speaker on almost every page. “The Lord spake unto Moses” directly. This is asserted 56 times in the 27 chapters. This book is more entirely made up of the very words of the Lord than any other book of the Bible.

“Out of the Tabernacle”: God is no longer speaking from the top of Mount Sinai in thunder and lightning. As soon as the Tabernacle was set up, He called to Moses from the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies.

- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, *even* of the herd, and of the flock.

“If any man...” means “whosoever will may come.”

Two types of animals were used in the burnt offering: Animals of the herd are cattle; of the flock are sheep. Excluded were animals of prey and carnivorous animals. *Animals that live by the death of others could never typify Christ*, who came to give His life a ransom for many. A further restriction was that the animal must be a clean animal and it must be domesticated. It could not be taken in the hunt. Only that which was valuable and dear to the owner could be offered because it prefigures Christ. God spared not His own Son.

Each of these were *horned* animals, which traditionally symbolized power, honor and authority. Christ suffered on the Cross, but the Father suffered in heaven.

The final restriction was that the animal was one that was obedient to man: Christ was the obedient servant. He came to minister and He was obedient unto death.

There are six parts to the blood ritual:

- 1) The Presentation;
- 2) The Laying on of the Hand;
- 3) The Killing of the Victim;
- 4) The Sprinkling of the Blood;
- 5) The Burning;
- 6) [The Sacrificial Meal (omitted in this one).]

(Each offering type will have distinctives in each of these that relate to its particular signification.)

- 3] If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.

The sacrifice is to be a male, and without blemish. This, too, speaks of the Second Adam, Christ (1 Jn 3:5; 1 Pet 2:22; 2 Cor 5:2; Heb 7:26; Mt 3:17). It must be without blemish; the most perfect of its kind. God claims the best that we have. It is impossible to induce purity by anything impure.

[This will be different in the peace offerings, which typify the *effects* of Christ's sacrifice on the receiver, which may be imperfectly experienced by the sinner, even though the work itself is perfect.]

“He shall offer it of his own voluntary will”: The offeror would bring the victim *himself*. The Hebrew phrase rendered “of his voluntary will” is better rendered “that he may be accepted before the Lord.”¹ By doing so he signified his acceptance of God's gracious arrangements on his behalf. No one can do for another.

Also, this was free will with a vengeance: this is equivalent to “If any man thirst, let him come...” (Jn 7:37). Anyone can come to Christ if he chooses to come. You don't have to come to Christ. But if you want to be saved, then you will have to come to Christ; there's no other way (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12).

[You may think that is dogmatic and narrow. It is. But it works; nothing else will.]

The door of the Tabernacle was the only way in. If you want to come to God, then you must come this one way because God has established this as the only way! He made the place; He writes the rules.

You cannot come to God on the basis of your own “righteousness” (Isa 64:6; Tit 3:5). You must come to Him on *His* terms, not ours. You can't work for it. You can't buy it. But it is free for the receiving—through faith in Christ.

- 4] And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

This was an act of designation:

This symbolized a transfer, according to God's merciful provision, of an obligation to suffer for sin, from the offeror to the innocent victim. Henceforth, the victim stood in the offeror's place, and was dealt with accordingly.

S. H. Kellogg

The offeror was confessing that he deserved to die. The little animal was dying a substitutionary death in the place of the offeror. That's what Christ did for us. When you designate Him as your Savior, He takes your place in your stead (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 4:25). The Hebrew word here, סמך *samak*, means to lean heavily or rest upon another (Cf. Ps 88:7).

Atonement simply means to cover, not to remove; it occurs 45X in this book.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Hebrews 10:4

Only the Lamb of God can remove sin.

The offeror, having left his sins, conveyed to the victim, now steps aside. This is all of his part. The treatment of the victim is God's part.

This offering was done publicly. He went down to the tabernacle, and the animal was slain in a public act.

The sinner needs to confess Christ publicly. This is the primary meaning of baptism today. Baptism means “to be identified with.” It symbolizes an identity with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor 15:1-4).

The Ritual

Like some people in churches today, Jewish worshipers could merely go through the motions at the altar, without putting their heart into it; but this meant that God had not truly forgiven them (Ps 50:8-14; 61:16-17; Isa 1:10-20; Micah 6:6-8). God doesn't want our sacrifices: He wants obedience from our hearts (1 Sam 15:22). But there is much to learn from the details here (Rom 15:4).

- 5] And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that *is* by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Having "transferred" his obligation to suffer for his sins, the sinner would bring his offering to the entrance of the tabernacle where he would be met by a priest. The sinner himself would slay the victim. (There is an exception in vv. 14, 15).

For the wages of sin is death...

Romans 6:23

The innocent died for the guilty. The model is quite clear:

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 Peter 3:18

There has been much discussion about just who is responsible for the death of Christ. They typically indict the religious leaders, the Jews, the Romans, etc. If you want to blame someone, blame *me!* It was my fault. And yours. It was our sins which put Him on that Cross. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse us from all sin.

After the slaying of the victim, the priest took over by sprinkling the blood about the altar. The blood represented life and the sprinkling presented it to God. (The term for sprinkling is *זָרַק* *zaraq*, to scatter abundantly in large quantities.)

[We, too, leave it to our heavenly Priest to act in our behalf with God.]

God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor 14:33): all had to be done decently and in order.

The offering was to be cut into pieces so that it might be exposed and more easily consumed by fire.

- 6] And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces.

Flayed: totally uncovered; a complete undoing; with no protection from God's view.

The inner life of the Lord Jesus has been open for inspection for almost 2,000 years; He has been examined more than any other person. And still the question continues: "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?"

"Into his pieces": a deliberate and systematic procedure; each stroke relentless, determined.

- 7] And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire:
8] And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that *is* on the fire which *is* upon the altar:

The head and the fat: one *inward*; the other *outward*.

But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

Psalms 37:20

- 9] But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, *to be* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Again, "inwards" and "legs": the *inward* and *outward*. We cannot give our bodies to God and reserve our hearts. The whole man must go, or nothing.

Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

"Washed"? Prefiguring *the just for the unjust*: Christ taking our place.

"All" burnt: Here in the burnt offering, everything was consumed: the sinews, horns, bones, hoof, the wool on the sheep's head, the hair on the goat's beard, etc.

- 10] And if his offering *be* of the flocks, *namely*, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish.

Here a lamb is specifically included.

...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:7

- 11] And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.

(The Cross, and the garden tomb, was on the *north* side of the city. See our notes appended to Session 5.)

- 12] And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that *is* on the fire which *is* upon the altar:

The defenseless victim left without a covering...

- 13] But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring *it* all, and burn *it* upon the altar: *it is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Cut in pieces and totally exposed. The sacrifice is now totally disfigured; a mass of disjointed bones and mangled flesh.

...His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations...

Isaiah 52:14, 15

Fire represents the resistless power of God, which:

sometimes destroys (Deut 9:3),
sometimes cleanses,
sometimes purifies (Mal 3:3), and
sometimes consumes (Deut 4:24; Heb 12:29).

This sacrifice speaks to the total commitment of Christ to God. Absolute consecration.

The reason there is so much that is phony in Christian service is that we are not serving God unless we are letting Him cleanse and purify our life. *We have forgotten this matter of holiness today.*

Of Fowls

- 14] And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD *be* of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons.

Poverty was no excuse for not bringing an offering to God. A bird could be substituted for the more expensive animal. (Joseph and Mary did.)

The Hebrew word is בני־יונה, *ben yonah*, “sons of the dove.” This, too, had to be a male. (The dove after the Flood brought the olive branch, the message of peace...)

- 15] And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn *it* on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar:

...Awful violence done to one so pure, so tender, and so lovely.

...He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Isaiah 53:9

- 16] And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes:

The crop, containing the food, seems to be considered unclean because it is an emblem of appetites. The feathers are removed because they are a covering to the dove.

- 17] And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, *but* shall not divide *it* asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that *is* upon the fire: *it is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The cleaving, שָׁצַע *shaca*, implies a separation that is not complete; a dislocation, not a disruption of the parts; as is explained in the clause, “but shall not divide it asunder.”

For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

John 19:36

Cf. Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 22:14; 34:20. The sweet savor was the reason for the sacrifice. And this is what God sees in Christ.

The Whole of it Was Burned

This ritual was an outward rite corresponding to an inward experience: it was an act of *worship*.

It is not so much Christ representing His people in atoning death—that will come later—as it is Christ representing His people in perfect consecration and entire self-surrender to God. In a word, perfect *obedience*.

He has become our perfect Example *of what consecration to God really is*. Later, in Chapter 6, we'll also review some special offering requirements for the priests. We will discover that the burnt offering was not occasional, *it was continuous!*

“Each morning we should imitate the priest of old in putting away all that might dull the flame of our devotion, and, morning by morning, when we arise, and evening by evening, when we retire, by a solemn act of self-consecration give ourselves anew unto the Lord.”²

We need to understand God's heart; Leviticus gives an essential glimpse. He changes not.

Conclusion

We find the distinctions between clean and unclean in Noah's day (Gen 7:2ff; 8:20). We find, in Abraham's day, the heifer, the goat, the turtle and the pigeon (Gen 15:9), and the mention of “commandments, statutes, and laws” (Gen 26:5), parallel to Lev 26:46. *We then begin to recognize that these fuller instructions in Leviticus are simply the expansion of what Adam first received when he had to leave Eden.*

Some think that sin is nothing; that God is too good and merciful to punish it. Why has God chosen such awful illustrations of His consuming wrath upon it? Why has He Himself ordained so much blood, death-agony, and burning, as the only means of covering it? Why did He leave His own Son to such unspeakable suffering when found among the guilty? Did God fail to love his Son in that dreadful extremity?

If the stroke invoked by sin so overwhelmed the soul of Him whose voice could hush the storm and stop the ocean's billows, yea drive out devils and raise the putrid dead; what shall be thy portion, helpless mortal, when that stroke comes to be visited on thee? If God did not spare His own Son from

an immolation like this, how can He spare you in your impenitence and unbelief?

J.A. Seiss

There yet remains one other particular to be noticed with regard to this atoning offering: the perfect freedom with which any and everyone might avail himself of its benefits. It was not confined to any special time, and demanded no specific precedent events or the like: the notion of “his own voluntary will” (v.3) was paramount.

So now, let's get personal:

God sees Christ as the only One who can satisfy Him for your sins. Have you seen Him like that? Do *you* have the sacrifice of Christ between you and your sins? Has His blood been shed that *you* might live? Have you trusted Him *today*? Are you still trying to bring your little puny self and your trite goodness to offer to a truly holy God?

God won't take that. He only accepts what Christ has done for you and He counts the righteousness of Christ as your righteousness. He made this place; He writes the rules.

This book of Leviticus *is for the people of God*. Those that *are* saved.

You are only a heartbeat from eternity. Trust Him right now and live!

* * *

In the next session, we'll take up the grain or meal (“meat,” KJV) offerings.

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Why was the offeror the one who slew the animal?
- 2) Why did he lay on his hands first?
- 3) Describe the significance of each of the five steps in the ritual of the burnt offering *from both an Old Testament and a New Testament perspective*.

Session 3 Leviticus 2 & 3 Meal and Peace Offerings

- 4) What did John the Baptist mean when he introduced Jesus as “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29)?
- 5) What is the *definition* of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:1-4)?

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) Why is death necessary in dealing with sin?
- 2) Why will there be sacrifices during the Millennium? Wasn't Christ's sacrifice once-and-for-all and thus sufficient?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Sketch an annotated diagram of the Tabernacle, detailing the role and nature of each of the elements.
- 2) List the various evidences that seem to support the recent discovery that the real Mt. Sinai is in Arabia, rather than the traditional location.
- 3) Explain the relationship between Genesis 8:4 and the resurrection which occurred on the 3rd day after Passover (the 14th of Nisan). Note Exodus 12:2 establishes a second calendar, making Nisan the 1st rather than the 7th month.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Leviticus Chapters 2 - 7. Review Hebrews.

Notes:

1. Kellogg, p.49.
2. Kellogg, p.71.

Review

Six basic offerings could be brought to the Tabernacle altar. They each teach us something essential about Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf. They can be classified in three categories:

1) The *Commitment to God*

The Burnt Offering

The Grain or Meal (“meat,” KJV) Offering
[The Drink Offering (Num 15:1-10)]

These three speak of total dedication to the Lord. The other three met specific needs in the life of the worshiper and also expressed some truth about our relationship with Him.

2) The *Communion with God*

The Fellowship (“Peace,” KJV) Offering

3) The *Cleansing from God*

The Sin Offering

The Guilt (“Trespass,” KJV) Offering

In this session we will explore the Grain or Meal Offering and the Fellowship (or “Peace”) Offering in Leviticus Chapters 2 & 3.

Introduction

In the Book of Daniel we find an interesting division in terminology:

...He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease...

Daniel 9:27

Here reference is made to *two* great divisions: Sacrifices with, and without, blood.

The words are more exactly, “He shall cause the sacrifices and the [מִנְחָה] [הַאֲדָמָה] meat [or meal] offering to cease.” (Also so in 1 Sam 3:14; Psalm 40:6.)

“Meat offering”: so called by the KJV translators because the greater part of it was used for food; the term today would be better “meal offering.” It represents the offeror’s person and property, his body and his possessions.

When he had, by the burnt offering obtained full acceptance for his soul, he comes next to give up *his whole substance* to the Lord who has redeemed him.

The meal offering was generally presented along with some animal sacrifice to demonstrate the connection between the pardon of sin and devotion to the Lord. According to Exodus 29, during the ordination of the priests, it was not allowable to present a burnt offering without accompanying it with a meal offering.

The moment we are pardoned, all that we are and all that we have, become the property of Christ.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price...

1 Corinthians 6:19

Our Kinsman-Redeemer first buys Ruth, the Moabitess herself, and **next** He claims also the field and inheritance. The type which was to represent this dedication of body and property was one that had **no blood** involved: for blood is the life or soul, which has already been offered.

This fundamental distinction seems to have existed as early as the days of Adam. Cain’s offering of **first fruits** might have been acceptable as a “meal offering” if it had been founded upon a slain lamb and had followed as a consequence from that sacrifice.¹

Cain did not have faith in the Seed of the Woman, therefore his offering was hateful to God. He attempted to present himself and his property to God as if they had been under no curse and needed to blood first to wash them. He sought to be accepted by his own holiness and was thus sidestepping the provision of salvation by Christ!

Sanctification Before Justification?

Acts of charity, substituted for Christ’s completed work, as a means of pacifying the conscience, make up precisely this sin of Cain! (Cf. Heb 11:4).

Nor are they less mistaken who think that by self-denial, and by doing good to others in their life and conduct, to obtain favor and acceptance before God. This is equivalent to offering the meal offering before being cleansed by the burnt offering. This, tragically, is attempting to sidestep the blood of the Lamb!

The meal offering was presented *daily*, along with the morning and evening sacrifice, teaching us to give all that we have—not by irregular impulse on scattered interrupted occasions—but *daily*.

The chief application, of course, is to Christ Himself: in all His work of obedience: soul and body.

Take eat, this is my body...

Mt 26:26; 1 Cor 11:24

Fine wheat, pure, unspotted; baked in suffering... He, too, is the Ultimate Example: offering all His possessions in heaven and earth, all presented to, and accepted by the Father.

Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. (But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him.) And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Leviticus 2 The Meal Offering

- 1] And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon:

Fine flour: סֹלֶת *soleth*, not the coarser קֶמַח *qemach*; sifted well. Not less than 1/10th of an ephah (5:11); in most cases much more (Num 7:13). It was taken from the best of their fields, and cleansed from the bran by passing through the sieve. The rich seem to have offered it in the form of fine flour, white as snow, heaping it up on a silver bowl in a princely manner.

It thus formed a type of man's self and substance, dedicated to God, when made pure by the blood of sacrifice that had removed his sin.

The oil: denoted setting it apart. Jacob used oil at Bethel in setting apart his stone pillow to commemorate his vision (Gen 28:18); every priest and king was thus set apart for his office. Oil also speaks of the Holy Spirit as He sets apart as He pleases for any office.

This was not common oil, but the *oil of unction*, or holy oil. It was made to specific directions: of pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and olive oil (Ex 30:23-25).

Frankincense: (was made with a special formula (Ex 30:34)). It denotes the acceptableness of the offering. As a flower or plant—the rose of Sharon or the balm of Gilead—it would induce any passing traveler to stoop down and regale himself with their fragrance; so the testimony of Christ's work to the character of the Godhead. Cf. Song 4:6; Est 2:12. Also, cf. Isa 61:1; Ps 45:7; Heb 9:14. One of the prophetic gifts of the Magi, speaking to His office as Priest.

[Satan desired Peter to be sifted as wheat (Luke 22:31)...]

- 2] And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take thereof a handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD:

“All the Frankincense thereof” = to express complete acceptance.

“The memorial of it” = the part for the whole, as if bringing the offeror into God's remembrance; we need not detail the dedication of our body and property, but a part is an earnest of the whole. Cf. Acts 10:4, Cornelius' “prayers and alms” are called a “memorial”; a specimen of the whole man's dedication. He was already accepted; his meal offering was the dedication of his self and substance, acknowledged by God by the gift of more light and opportunity.

- 3] And the remnant of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.

It is declared “most holy;” we are assured of the true and thorough acceptance of dedicated things, when once we are forgiven. We should regard every member of our body, and everything we possess, as belonging to God “Ye are not your own.”

- 4] And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering baked in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.

Just as there were alternatives in regards the burnt offerings (fouls as well as other animals), there were also diversities of form here: For the rich, fine flour from the finest of the wheat; otherwise, a meal offering baked in the oven; larger cakes had oil mingled through them; smaller wafers had oil on them. The oil that sets apart must not be omitted.

Always unleavened. Leaven symbolized sin: corruption at work; it corrupts by puffing up! [Grudgingly, restlessness, impatience, et al., are offerings with leaven...]

- 5] And if thy oblation be a meat offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.

Having no oven, baked in the fire-plate, or pan; or, at least, prepared in a frying pan (Cf. 1 Chr 23:29). God excuses none, of whatever rank, from dedicating themselves and their substance to Him. The widow cast her last two mites (Mk 12:42-44).

- 6] Thou shalt part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: it is a meat offering.

The division into pieces suggest that every part of our substance is to be given up. We must allow God to divide and appropriate as He pleases. Each part must be anointed with oil.

- 7] And if thy oblation be a meat offering baked in the fryingpan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

The frying pan (Arabic: *Tagen*) indicated poverty.

- 8] And thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.

The priest will not despise the lesser offerings.

- 9] And the priest shall take from the meat offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

The “memorial” (v.2) is to be done as much in the poorer as with the fine flour. There is no virtue in size or in quality of the thing.

Cf. Paul’s “sweet smell” of the poor Philippians’ generous gifts (Phil 4:18).

- 10] And that which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron’s and his sons’: it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.

Cf. v.3. We cannot say “I give myself to the Lord,” and then do as we please. The Lord takes us at our word. We are no more our own.

- 11] No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

Leaven indicates the corruption of sin; it is the opposite of salt. Honey was forbidden because it turns to sourness and leads to fermentation.

- 12] As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

They are not burnt. Christ, the firstfruits, is now glorified; His suffering is done.

- 13] And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

Salt purifies, preserves, and keeps wholesome. It indicates corruption has been removed and prevented. Salt was also an emblem of abiding friendship. Nearly every important contract was ratified by the eating together of the parties. “The covenant of salt” (Num 18:9; 2 Chr 13:5; cf. Mk 9:43-50). [vs. Lot’s wife turning away?]

- 14] And if thou offer a meat offering of thy firstfruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy firstfruits green ears of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears.

Ears of corn: a figure of Christ (John 12:24). (The Hebrew כַּרְמֶל *karmel* intimates ears of the best kind.)

Dried by fire: Cf. Ps 22:14; 102:4.

- 15] And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon: it is a meat offering.
16] And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

The smoke and fragrance ascend to heaven; all is accepted: Christ first, and then each of His people.

[**The Drink Offering.** Numbers 15:1-11. Not offered by itself alone. It was “strong wine poured unto the Lord” (Num 28:7). It was not observed until they came to Canaan. And in the Millennium. Cf. Ezek 45:17.]

Leviticus 3 The Peace Offerings (*Shalom*; Fellowship)

There will be striking similarities with the burnt offering, and also sharp contrasts as well. All bloody sacrifices represent Christ in his character of an expiation. The difference here is that this class of offerings focuses more on the results, and the reception of Christ’s sacrifice, rather than the manner of it.

The Hebrew word “peace” (שְׁלוֹמִים *shalom*) means more than commonly recognized: prosperity, welfare, joy, happiness. The old Greek version (LXX) renders it by terms (*quasi swthriou*) which signify a sacrificial feast of salvation. The term denote victims slain for banquets. This is intended to suggest gladness, not gloom.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 5:1

This offering will point to the peace which brings all believers into communion (*koinonia*) with the Father by the Holy Spirit, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:13-22

Any remarkable favor was a call for a peace offering. Any great deliverance; any remarkable preservation or prosperity, any noble achievement, was an appropriate occasion. But it always followed a burnt offering and its attendant meal offering...

- 1] And if his oblation be a sacrifice of peace offering, if he offer it of the herd; whether it be a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.

Here is a difference from the burnt offering: it can be male or female—but without blemish. The female offering as permitted because here it is the capacity of the offeror to enjoy Christ that is in view. The offeror will never find as much in Christ as God find in Him.

- 2] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

So far, it duplicates the burnt offering. There is no spiritual joy which the believer has which is not traced back to atonement by blood.

- 3] And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

The most inward, most tender parts were the Lord's part.

- 4] And the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

In the burnt offering, all was placed on the altar. In the peace offering, only a *portion* is specified. It was to be the choice portion: the fat and inward parts: the hidden riches. Paul cried out:

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings...

Philippians 3:10

- 5] And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Emphasis is still on the person of Christ and not His work: it is His perfect life that is in view, not His death for sin.

- 6] And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the LORD be of the flock; male or female, he shall offer it without blemish.
- 7] If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the LORD.

The bullock, or the heifer from the herd, typified the servant side of our Lord's ministry. However, the *lamb* sets forth Christ in His complete identification with man in life and in death (Jn 1:29, 36). Abel made the sacrifice of the lamb. Isaiah 53 makes it very clear that Jesus Christ was our substitute (Cf. 53:7, et al.). Also in His resurrection (Rev 5:6) and in His wrath (Rev 6:16-17).

- 8] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar.
- 9] And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat thereof, and the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the backbone; and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

“Whole rump”: In Syrian sheep, this was the part reckoned very valuable; the tail of this breed weighs as much as 15 lbs., and is very fatty.

- 10] And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

The ritual is similar: the fat was God's portion. It was considered the better part of the animal (Cf. Neh 8:10; Isa 25:6; Lk 15:23).

- 11] And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Instead of “a sweet savour,” it is “food by fire”; as a friend entertaining guests.

And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Deuteronomy 12:6, 7

The priest received the breast and the shoulder; the offeror ate the remainder *in God's house*. God was the host; the sinner was the guest.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Psalms 23:5

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

Psalms 36:8

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

John 6:51-57

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

Matthew 26:26

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, it is the father who kills the fatted calf when the son is restored to fellowship. Read 1 John 1 .

- 12] And if his offering be a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD.

Here is a final type for the peace offering: the identification of Christ as adequate to take away the sin of man. Heb 10:6-14.

- 13] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about.
14] And he shall offer thereof his offering, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,
15] And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.
16] And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour: all the fat is the LORD'S.
17] It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.

The fat is the Lords; He demands the best (Cf. Rom 12; Jn 15:14; Phil 3:10-14). The prohibition of eating blood will be taken up in Chapter 17 (vv. 10-14).

Just as in the Lord's Supper, ordinances are often turned to sin (Cf. the lascivious woman in Proverbs 7:14ff vs. the true worshipper in Psalm 66):

I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows (peace offerings), Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble. I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of frams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah. Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Psalms 66:13-20

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Describe the ostensible difference between sacrifices and oblations.
- 2) What did the meal offering signify?

- 3) What constituted the differences between the fine flour, oven or pan baked, etc.
- 4) What is the significance of the oil? Of leaven? Of honey?
- 5) How is leaven the opposite of salt?
- 6) Compare the peace offerings with the burnt offering: How are they similar? Different?

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) Discuss the differences between the offerings of Cain and Abel.
- 2) Discuss the necessary order between sanctification and justification. Give examples.
- 3) Discuss the three types of peace offerings: the bullock; the lamb; the goat. What did each signify?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Investigate the various references to incense, and frankincense in particular.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 1 - 7. Study Chapters 4 & 5.

Notes:

1. Bonar, p.33.

Session 4 Leviticus 4 - 5 The Sin and Trespass Offerings

Six basic offerings (including the "Drink Offering from Numbers 15) could be brought to the Tabernacle altar. They each teach us something essential about Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf. They can be classified in three categories:

1) The *Commitment to God*

The Burnt Offering

The Grain or Meal ("meat," KJV) Offering
[The Drink Offering (Num 15:1-10)]

These three speak of total dedication to the Lord. The other three met specific needs in the life of the worshiper and also expressed some truth about our relationship with Him.

2) The *Communion with God*

The Fellowship ("Peace," KJV) Offering

3) The *Cleansing from God*

The Sin Offering

The Guilt ("Trespass," KJV) Offering

This third category will be the subject of this session. These are the *non-sweet savor* offerings. The *sweet savor* offerings set forth the *person* of Christ in all of His glorious character. The two *non-sweet savor* offerings speak of the *work* of Christ on the cross for sin.

The Sin Offering speaks of the nature of sin. The Guilt (or Trespass) Offering speaks of sin as an act.

Man is a sinner because by nature, *and* he is a sinner because of what he does. He does what he does because he is a sinner by nature.

A man isn't a horse thief because he steals a horse. He steals a horse because he is a horse thief.

Leviticus 4 The Sin Offering

The Sin Offering is distinctive in several ways: It is the *longest* account: twice as long as the others.

Burnt offering:	17 verses;
The Meal offering:	16 verses;
The Peace offering:	17 verses;
The Trespass offering:	19 verses;
The Sin offering:	35 verses.

It must be important. It is an entirely *new* offering. There is no previous record anywhere recorded. No heathen nation apparently had anything even similar to it.

From the giving of the Law, it became the most important and significant offering. *The law revealed its necessity.* It was offered during most of the feasts: Passover, Pentecost, Trumpets, Tabernacles; it was not only offered on *Yom Kippur*: it was what brought the High Priest into the Holy of Holies.

It was in contrast to the burnt sacrifice although it was made in the same place. The burnt offering tells *who* Christ is. The sin offering tells *what* Christ *did*.

In the burnt offering Christ meets the demands of God's high and holy standard. In the sin offering Christ meets the deep and desperate needs of man. In the burnt offering we see the preciousness of Christ; in the sin offering we see the hatefulness of sin.

The burnt offering was a voluntary offering. The sin offering was commanded. The burnt offering ascended; the sin offering was poured out. One went up; the other went down.

1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

As characterizes this entire book, the Lord spoke to Moses *directly*...

12 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD *concerning things* which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them:

The emphasis is on a sin committed *in ignorance*. If a man sinned willfully and deliberately, this offering did *not* avail.

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Hebrews 10:28

There is no salvation for a person who rejects Jesus Christ.

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Hebrews 10:26, 27

Sins of ignorance reveal the underlying truth that man is *a sinner by nature*. And God's attitude against sin has never changed.

This conviction stands out in the entire literature of the human race. The deep guilt complex pervades our entire consciousness whether we admit it or not. And it must be diagnosed before a remedy can be prescribed.

We need to go to the couch of Jesus Christ—rather than the psychiatrist's—and cry out,

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 139:23-24; Cf. Psalm 19:12; 51:4

His Provision: The Cities of Refuge

If a man sinned through ignorance, rashness, or accident, God made provision for his deliverance. He established the six "cities of refuge" among the 48 cities of the Levites (Num 35:11-34).

Type of Christ? I believe that *everything*—even in the *Torah*—points to Jesus Christ. Every "jot and tittle." I've been challenged on this extreme view—particularly in regards to this quaint provision in the Law. Let's take a look.

Was the death of Jesus premeditated or manslaughter? From God's point of view: "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God..." (Acts 2:23). Premeditated; 1st degree.

However, from man's point of view (ours); "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk 23:34). Thus, it was for us, manslaughter.

And, thus, He, indeed, is our "city of refuge." No one can touch us as long as we abide in Him. This was to endure *until the High Priest died*. (What has *that* got to do with anything? Why should the death of an official in far off Jerusalem have any impact on a fugitive in one of the six designated cities?) Then, however, the accused was free, indeed.

And so are we. And our High Priest "*ever liveth to make intercession*" for us! (Heb 7:25).

And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

1 John 2:1

The sin offering teaches us that we must see ourselves as God sees us.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

Psalms 32:5

God will deal with man in equity. There will be degrees of punishment just as there will be degrees of rewards. Different classes of people are considered separately.

The Priests

The priests—and we, as children of God—sin through ignorance, and that is not excused.

We can be cherishing some idol;
Or be cherishing pride like Hezekiah (Isa 39);
Or exhibiting blind zeal like the sons of Zebedee (Lk 9:55);
Or substituting labor for fellowship with God;
Or suffering "that woman Jezebel to teach and seduce" (Rev 2:20)...

As could not be taken with an accursed thing in the camp; mariners could not navigate to Tarshish with Jonah on board. Constant reexamination for secret sins is required for all.

- 3] If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.

The sin of the priest is considered first: he was in a position of *leadership*. If he was wrong, the people were wrong. (The term "anointed" implies that the High Priest himself is in view.)

He was to bring a young bullock—the most valuable animal of all. His responsibility was the greatest. Privilege carries with it responsibility.

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

James 3:1

- 4] And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.

This part of the ritual is similar to the burnt offering.

- 5] And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation:
6] And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the veil of the sanctuary.

To secure God's relationship with the offender... "Seven" implies completeness.

- 7] And the priest shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which *is at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The place of prayer: to restore the privilege of worship to the offender.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

The Horn was a recognized symbol of power, authority. The remainder was poured out at the bottom of the brazen altar. This satisfied the conscience of the sinner and removed the guilt complex. This remedy for the conviction of sin was the only remedy that could satisfy the mind and heart.

When Christ forgives you your sin, *He also forgives you*. That is nothing more to be said about it. It is totally and forever settled. He is adequate.

At this point, the ritual follows that of the peace (or fellowship) offering:

- 8] And he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards,
- 9] And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,
- 10] As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering.

The sin has been forgiven and fellowship is restored. The fat is burned upon the altar: it represents the very best.

At this point, however, there is a radical departure from the other offerings: the remainder is taken *outside* the camp and burned *there*.

- 11] And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung,
- 12] Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he be burnt.

Unsparring justice. This is to emphasize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There is nothing that could be mistaken for consecration here. This points to Christ, the *sin-bearer*; one who was “made sin for us” (2 Cor 5:21).

Without the camp: Four miles from the Holy Place.

*We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest **for sin, are burned without the camp.** Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, **suffered without the gate.** Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*

Hebrews 13:10-14

Only Christ is adequate.

Now we turn from the priests to the congregation itself.

The Sins of the Congregation

- 13] And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *somewhat against* any of the commandments of the LORD *concerning things* which should not be done, and are guilty;
- 14] When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

The victim for the entire congregation is the same as for the priest: a young bullock, the most valuable animal available. The lesson: there is, in addition to individual responsibility, *corporate* responsibility.

God judges nations, and many people who didn't participate in the sin of the nation are judged along with it. [There are some people who say they are going to stay in a liberal church and try to witness to it. Where did they get that idea? It is not in the Word of God (Cf. Rev 18:4).]

- 15] And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.

It was the elders, in the name of the people, that conveyed the guilt of the people to the head of the victim. (It was the elders that put Jesus to death with the priests. Their act was a national rejection of Jesus.)

The rest (through v.21) is the same as for the priest.

- 16] And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation:
- 17] And the priest shall dip his finger *in some* of the blood, and sprinkle *it* seven times before the LORD, *even* before the vail.
- 18] And he shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar which *is* before the LORD, that *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which *is* at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 19] And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn *it* upon the altar.
- 20] And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.
- 21] And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: *it is* a sin offering for the congregation.

The Ruler

All are guilty; but the responsibility is different. Here the reference is to a civil ruler.

- 22] When a ruler hath sinned, and done *somewhat* through ignorance *against* any of the commandments of the LORD his God *concerning things* which should not be done, and is guilty;

Rulers are ordained by God and thereby are directly responsible to God. He is their most important “constituency.”

- 23] Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish:

A kid of goats was not as valuable as the bullock. The rest is the same as for the priest or the private citizen.

- 24] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it *is* a sin offering.
25] And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering.
26] And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

The Common People

- 27] And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth *somewhat against* any of the commandments of the LORD *concerning things* which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

This is for the common person, the private citizen. The offering is for a sin through ignorance, but a sin against a commandment of God. His guilt cannot be just hearsay, but the guilt must be established.

[The failure to employ Matthew 18:15-18 is astonishingly widespread within the Body of Christ today! A shockingly widespread use of hearsay as the sole means for governance is appalling.]

- 28] Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.

A female was permitted; this was considered as less value than any previous offering. Yet an offering was required.

- 29] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.
30] And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.
31] And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn *it* upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

The important truth is that complete forgiveness was secured for the sinner. This is precisely what was accomplished for us when Christ died.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Ephesians 1:7

- 32] And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.
33] And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering.
34] And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar:
35] And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

Leviticus 5 The Guilt (“Trespass”) Offering

For specific acts of sin committed in ignorance or inadvertency.

There are many expositors that have not come to a conclusion as to the difference between the sin offering and the trespass offering. On the whole, the trespass offering was offered in cases where sin was more private and confined to the individual’s knowledge. Some expositors treat the first 13 verses of this chapter as part of the sin offering. The word “trespass” in vv.6 and 7 can be translated “guilt” and should be

“for his guilt.” In verses 6, 7, 9, and 11, the sin offering is required for the trespass because the act of sin is caused by the very nature of sin. However, we will treat the entire chapter as a trespass offering. “Trespass” is a specific *invasion of the rights of another*.

People like to talk about “liberty.” They go around parading, burning things, etc. They are free to swing their fists wherever they please, but their liberty ends where my nose begins.

Withholding tithes is robbing God (Mal 3:8). Partaking of something is a trespass: e.g., Achan, who took the accursed thing (Josh 7:1).

- 1] And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and *is* a witness, whether he hath seen or known *of it*; if he do not utter *it*, then he shall bear his iniquity.

This is but a representative listing. They are limitless.

“Swearing” here is that of adjuration: it has to do with the hearing of an oath and being a witness. One must tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. There are sins of omission:

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
James 4:17

Cf. Solomon’s prayer, 1 Kings 8:31-32. Gossip, I believe, is the most painful sin. One of the damaging aspects of gossip and hearsay is that it *is incomplete!* It omits any mitigating evidence or background; cf. the list in Proverbs 6:17. Jesus kept silent during His trial except when He was put under oath; then He spoke the whole truth (Mt 26:63-64).

- 2] Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether *it be* a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and *if* it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty.

This is the law concerning uncleanness. A dead body was a source of uncleanness. Their deadness was a fruit of sin. The sting of death was sunk into them; sin is proved to be there. We can’t be out in the world without becoming unclean.

Cleanse thou me from secret faults.
Proverbs 19:12

And yet we need to specific. That is what is in view here.

- 3] Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness *it be* that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth *of it*, then he shall be guilty.

This is similar to v.2, except God makes a distinction between man and beast: the penalty for this is more severe than for touching the beast (Lev 11:24; Num 19:11-16). The deceitfulness of sin: it might be discovered later: leprosy, or a running issue, et al.

- 4] Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with *his* lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever *it be* that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth *of it*, then he shall be guilty in one of these.

“Pronouncing with his lips”: literally, “babbling with his lips”; rashly uttering his vow. Careless commitments that aren’t kept.

Jephthah is a tragic example. After forty-five years of comparative quiet Israel again apostatized, and in “process of time the children of Ammon made war against Israel” (Judg 11:5). The “elders of Gilead” in their extremity summoned him to their aid, and he at once undertook the conduct of the war against Ammon and delivered Israel from the oppression of the Ammonites (Judg 11:1-33) and judged Israel six years (Judg 12:7). He has been described as “a wild, daring, Gilead mountaineer, a sort of warrior Elijah.” He made a tragic vow, sacrificing his only daughter (Judg 11:30ff).

- 5] And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these *things*, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that *thing*:

Confession is commanded for the first time. The other offerings were an open admission of guilt. This one has to do with *secret* sins.

- 6] And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

Confession comes first, then the offering. This may be what the Lord had in mind in the Sermon on the Mount:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Matthew 5:23, 24

The believer today is to confess his sin to God privately, but he is to make restitution to the injured party.

Since this offering is for a specific act of sin, one of the many facets of the sin nature, the value of the offering was not as great as the value of the sin offering in Chapter 4.

- 7] And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.

The focus is on the sacrifice itself, not the offeror. Two birds are required: one for the sin offering and one for the burnt offering. The person and work of Christ is represented in the poorest of offerings.

- 8] And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer *that* which *is* for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide *it* asunder:

No bone to be broken.

- 9] And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: *it is* a sin offering.
- 10] And he shall offer the second *for* a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.
- 11] But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put *any* frankincense thereon: for *it is* a sin offering.

The poorest of the poor was not left out. If not a bird, then he could bring what amounted to a piece of bread. No oil or frankincense, however, as in the jealousy offering (Num 5). The intention was to present to the Lord the very person and substance of the offeror, as defiled, a mass of sin..

The omer, 1/10 of ephah, = the very quantity of manna that sufficed for each day's support (Ex 16:33).

- 12] Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, *even* a memorial thereof, and burn *it* on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: *it is* a sin offering.
- 13] And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him: and *the remnant* shall be the priest's, as a meat offering.

Non-Specific Trespasses

These were invasions of the rights of both God and man for which reparations had to be performed. There are two kinds:

- 1) Fraud toward God, in respect to worship;
- 2) Fraud toward man.

- 14] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 15] If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering:
- 16] And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.

Restoration + 20%: a double tithe.

- 17] And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist *it* not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.

Ignorance was not an acceptable excuse. And it isn't today. Even in civil law. Paul was the supreme example:

Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Timothy 1:13

- 18] And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist *it* not, and it shall be forgiven him.

The ram was the earliest recorded offering pointing directly to Christ (Genesis 22).

- 19] *It is* a trespass offering: he hath certainly trespassed against the LORD.

The ritual is the same as for the sin offering except in the sprinkling of the blood, which followed the pattern of the burnt and peace offerings. We will explore this in more detail in Chapter 7.

Leviticus 6

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

Or keep in fellowship: *koinonia*. The word denotes a *fiduciary* relationship, a concept tragically absent throughout the “Christian” community.

- 3] Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:

This also points specifically to business transactions, careless custodianship, and common forms of defrauding others. Deceit has no place in serious (or any) business transactions. Even discoveries after the fact, as implied here.

- 4] Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found,
- 5] Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, *and* give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering.
- 6] And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest:
- 7] And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.

Many in Israel saw no significance of comfort in God’s appointments. Their want of true conviction of sin made them despise these types. None go to the hiding-place who fear no storm. This is the true sense of Proverbs 14:9: “Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.” The LXX comes closer: “Fools make a mock of the trespass offering, but with the righteous it is in esteem.”

Sense of sin is a measure of spiritual maturity, and renders Jesus ever more precious to the soul!

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Why is the Sin Offering the longest section?
- 2) Contrast the Burnt Offering and the Sin Offering.
- 3) Which feast was the Sin Offering *not* offered? Why?
- 4) How do the Cities of Refuge allude to Jesus Christ?
- 5) Why were the remains of the Sin Offering taken outside the camp?
- 6) Compare the Sin Offering and the Trespass Offering.

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) What does a sin through ignorance reveal about human nature?
- 2) What sins through ignorance are prevalent in *your* life?
- 3) Discuss the application of Matthew 18:15-18 today.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) What are the alternative explanations for the sacrifice of Jephthah’s daughter?
- 2) Summarize the use and role of vows in the Scripture and today.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 6 and 7.

Session 5

Laws of Offerings

Leviticus 6 & 7

Review

We have been reviewing the first major section of the Book of Leviticus, which deals with offerings. Six basic offerings (including the “Drink Offering from Numbers 15) could be brought to the Tabernacle altar. They each teach us something essential about Christ and His sacrifice on our behalf. They can be classified in three categories:

1) The *Commitment to God*

The Burnt Offering

The Grain or Meal (“meat,” KJV) Offering

[The Drink Offering (Num 15:1-10)]

These three speak of total dedication to the Lord. The other three met specific needs in the life of the worshiper and also expressed some truth about our relationship with Him.

2) The *Communion with God*

The Fellowship (“Peace,” KJV) Offering

3) The *Cleansing from God*

The Sin Offering

The Guilt (“Trespass,” KJV) Offering

The Sin Offering speaks of the *nature* of sin. The Guilt (or Trespass) Offering speaks of sin as a *specific act*.

In these next two chapters, the Law of Offerings, are supplemental rules for the priests who minister at the altar of God for their particular part in the offerings.

All of these are also a shadow of the reality in heaven where Christ, our great High Priest, serves (Cf. Heb 8:3-5). He, of course, is not only the priest, but He is also the sacrifice (Cf. Heb 10:5-12).

Leviticus 6

The conclusion of rules concerning the Trespass Offering. This seems to be a separate revelation from God, distinct from the preceding chapter. This lists examples of sins committed against one’s neighbor that are also sins against God.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Matthew 7:12.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Again, most of this book is a direct quote from YHWH Himself.

- 2] If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

The word “fellowship” refers to a business partnership. [Greek, *koinwnia* **koinonia**, also implies a fiduciary relationship, etc.]

“Taken by violence” would be a forced transaction, such as Ahab’s acquisition of Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kgs 21:2-16). (An example of this was the borrowed ax lost by the students of Elijah in 2 Kgs 6:5.)

- 3] Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein;
- 4] Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found,
- 5] Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, *and* give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering.

20% = a double tithe.

- 6] And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest:
- 7] And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.

A true sense of sin renders Jesus truly precious to the soul.

Law Concerning the Burnt Offering

8] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Again, a direct quote...

9] Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This *is* the law of the burnt offering: It *is* the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.

As long as the Tabernacle was set up, and not on a wilderness march, the fire on the altar was to burn *continually*. It would seem to exhibit several things:

- 1) Seeing the fire burn all night long, reminds them of God's eternal justice, flaming forth against all iniquity. It is never to be extinguished. There is no putting out of this fire. Jesus Himself so emphasized (Mk 9:43-49). Cf. Lev 2:13 and Mark 9:50.

For every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

Psalm 119:160

And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever...

Revelation 14:10 (Cf. v.18)

- 2) It also exhibited the way of escape. There was a substitutionary victim on the altar on which the flames feed!

Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice.

Psalm 20:3

“accept” = *דָּשַׁן* *dashen*, “to find fat”; “take away ashes.” (!)

[How did Abel know that God “had respect” for his offering, and Cain know that God didn't have respect for his (Gen 4:4,5; Heb 11:4)? There seems to be evidence that fire actually came down and consumed a “respected” offering in those days.]

His justice and His love are both evident. Eternally. So this also speaks of the continual consecration of Christ.

It also speaks to the fact that we also are to offer *ourselves* as a living sacrifice to God:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1, 2

God delights in the continual obedience of His children.

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

John 8:29

Christ can say that; but I can't. This was also the rebuke of Saul by Samuel:

To obey is better than sacrifice...

1 Samuel 15:22-23

What is it that God wants us to do?

This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

John 6:29

God now specifies, in detail, the garment that the priest was to wear:

- 10] And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

“Ashes which the fire consumed”: an ellipsis used for the material out of which the ashes came: the wood underneath the burnt offering. The were placed *beside* the altar before being carried out into a clean place. This was to show that the flame had not spared the victim. The doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed for their sin, is declared to come upon them “turning them to ashes” as an example (2 Pet 2:6).

- 11] And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place.

“Unto a clean place”: some spot beyond the camp, and later, beyond the walls of Jerusalem. Cf. “The Valley of the Ashes” (Jer 31:40). The location is not known. It wasn't necessarily Tophet, Hinom, which was south of Jerusalem as is often assumed. [See Addenda on the location of Golgotha.]

The priest removed the garments he wore when he removed the ashes, and he put on a fresh change. This was a continual reminder of the utter pollution of sin. The ashes spoke of the judgment of sin, and even the ashes were contaminated. The flesh was to be covered *totally*. God cannot accept the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21). The fruit of our lives is also listed (Gal 5:22-23).

- 12] And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings.
- 13] The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.

Again, the emphasis on the fire burning continually. The fire of God's justice burns continually.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 3:36

Concerning the Meal Offering

With every burnt offering, each evening and morning, a meal offering was made (Exodus 29:39-40).

- 14] And this *is* the law of the meat offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar.

The offeror stands before the altar rejoicing; the priest performs for him.

- 15] And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which *is* upon the meat offering, and shall burn *it* upon the altar *for* a sweet savour, *even* the memorial of it, unto the LORD.
- 16] And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.

LXX: "Unleavened it shall be eaten."

- 17] It shall not be baken with leaven. I have given it *unto them for* their portion of my offerings made by fire; *it is* most holy, as *is* the sin offering, and as the trespass offering.

It was holy because the Lord was there; Cf. Moses' shoes (Ex 3:5); Transfiguration (2 Pet 1:18).

- 18] All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it. *It shall be* a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD made by fire: every one that toucheth them shall be holy.
- 19] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 20] This *is* the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD in the day when he is anointed; the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meat offering perpetual, half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night.

The priests, too, were to tithe their receipts. An example for all of us in the ministry...

The omer, or tenth part of the ephah, would remind them of the omer of manna which they gathered daily, and the omer kept in the golden pot (Ex 16:33).

- 21] In a pan it shall be made with oil; *and when it is* baken, thou shalt bring it in: *and* the baken pieces of the meat offering shalt thou offer *for* a sweet savour unto the LORD.
- 22] And the priest of his sons that is anointed in his stead shall offer it: *it is* a statute for ever unto the LORD; it shall be wholly burnt.
- 23] For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt: it shall not be eaten.

Wholly burnt, not eaten (Cf. v.30 also). Christ gave Himself, entirely and completely, when He became the offering.

Concerning the Sin Offering

- 24] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 25] Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This *is* the law of the sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD: *it is* most holy.

It was offered in the same place as the burnt offering: on the north side (Lev 1:11). See addendum note. The burnt offering spoke of the *person* of Christ: holy, free from sin. Conceived by a the Holy Spirit in a virgin.

- 26] The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The sin offering was holy because Christ was free from sin—though He was *made sin for us* (2 Cor 5:21). And yet He was holy. Yet, sin is the opposite of holiness. This is, perhaps, the greatest mystery in the Bible. Cf. Psalm 22:1-3; Isaiah 55:7-9.

- 27] Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.
- 28] But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brasen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.

Dreadful sacredness of the atoning blood!

- 29] All the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it *is* most holy.
- 30] And no sin offering, whereof *any* of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile *withal* in the holy *place*, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire.

These sin offerings are the class of sacrifices that were *burned without the camp*:

For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

Hebrews 13:11

Leviticus 7

The instructions continue, with two that were more personal: the trespass offering, concerning the individual Israelite; and the peace offering, enjoyed by the individual within the body of believers.

The emphasis continues on the service of the priest, a picture of what the Lord Jesus has done and is doing for us, right now, at God's right hand; Cf. Heb 7:25; 1 Jn 1:9.

Concerning the Trespass Offering

- 1] Likewise this *is* the law of the trespass offering: it *is* most holy.

This ritual follows the same pattern as that of the sin offering. The offeror is reminded that the sacrifice is holy. The worth and merit of Christ cannot be overemphasized. Until we see our sin nature and our sinful acts in all their enormity and frightfulness, only then shall we see the wonder, greatness, and holiness of Christ.

[I'm not calling you a despicable sinner: that is what the Word of God calls each one of us!]

- 2] In the place where they kill the burnt offering shall they kill the trespass offering: and the blood thereof shall he sprinkle round about upon the altar.

Again, the shedding of blood essential. We must never allow that to be a casual thing...

- 3] And he shall offer of it all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,
- 4] And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* on them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul *that is* above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away:
- 5] And the priest shall burn them upon the altar *for* an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a trespass offering.
- 6] Every male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it *is* most holy.
- 7] As the sin offering *is*, so *is* the trespass offering: *there is* one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have *it*.

The Skin

There was one part of the animal that was not burned: the skin.

- 8] And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, *even* the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he hath offered.

This speaks of being covered or clothes in the righteousness of Christ. God is totally satisfied with Jesus and sees us as being in Christ.

God's first rebuttal of "religion" (man's attempts to "cover himself"): Gen 3:21; Cf. Rev 3:18. Also, the parable of the wedding feast: Mt 22:2-13. The absence of a suitable covering was worse than fatal.

- 9] And all the meat offering that is baked in the oven, and all that is dressed in the fryingpan, and in the pan, shall be the priest's that offereth it.
- 10] And every meat offering, mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one *as much* as another.

Concerning the Peace Offering

This is the most extensive of the instructions and it is the last. The other offerings had to *precede* these before we can enjoy the peace with God.

- 11] And this *is* the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he shall offer unto the LORD.

Includes sacrifices of thanksgiving (Ps 107:22ff, hazards of the sea, etc.; 116:17, where vows are paid by a sacrifice of thanksgiving). Cf. Rev 4:10, 11.

- 12] If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

The emphasis is on the fact that it is a freewill offering.

- 13] Besides the cakes, he shall offer *for* his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings.

Here is one of the relatively unique places that *leavened* bread is used! In v.12, it is showing Christ as our peace offering who is without sin, without leaven. [The Feast of Firstfruits (Lev23:9-14) was a meal offering as well as the Feast of Pentecost.]

In v.13, it is *the offeror* who gives thanks for his participation in the peace. Although his sins have been forgiven and he has peace with God, there is still evil in him; leaven is present. *Peace with God does not depend upon the believer attaining sinless perfection.*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

However, “sin aint gonna reign no more.”

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Romans 6:14

- 14] And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation *for* an heave offering unto the LORD, *and* it shall be the priest’s that sprinkleth the blood of the peace offerings.

The leavened bread was not placed on the altar! It was a “heave offering,” raised toward heaven, and then eaten by the priests.

- 15] And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning.

No delay; it was to be eaten at once.

We are to stay close—moment by moment—to Christ.

- 16] But if the sacrifice of his offering *be* a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten:
17] But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burnt with fire.

Here is that “third day” emphasis again! God completed His testimony to the acceptance of His Son’s work by raising Him from the dead on the third day. [On the anniversary of the “new beginning” following the judgment of the Flood of Noah (Gen 8:4). Cf. Calendar revision in Exodus 12:2.]

- 18] And if *any* of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.
19] And the flesh that toucheth any unclean *thing* shall not be eaten; it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

The flesh had to be clean, and also they that eat it (Cf. Jn 18:28).

- 20] But the soul that eateth *of* the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that *pertain* unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

An unclean person who ate of the peace offering was excommunicated. There must be confession of sin on the part of the believer if he is to enter into fellowship with God. Many emphasize this same issue with regards to the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:24-31).

- 21] Moreover the soul that shall touch any unclean *thing*, *as* the uncleanness of man, or *any* unclean beast, or any abominable unclean *thing*, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which *pertain* unto the LORD, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

No theories as to the origin of evil, nor apologies drawn from the manner in which we were led astray, can have any effect on disproving the sin itself.

Regarding Fat and Blood

- 22] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
23] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.
24] And the fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in no wise eat of it.

Nothing that dies of itself, or is a beast of prey, is acceptable.

- 25] For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the soul that eateth *it* shall be cut off from his people.

What we give the Lord must be entirely His. We cannot draw it back for our own use.

- 26] Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, *whether it be* of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.
27] Whatsoever soul *it be* that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.
28] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
29] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace offerings unto the LORD shall bring his oblation unto the LORD of the sacrifice of his peace offerings.
30] His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire, the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may be waved *for* a wave offering before the LORD.

With his own hands: in our own person, each of us for ourselves...

- 31] And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'.

Fat: every deep-seated desire, every inward affection. The breast speaks of love (Rom 5:8; Gal 2:20).

- 32] And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest *for* an heave offering of the sacrifices of your peace offerings.

The shoulder, power and strength (Jn 10:27-30). (On the high priest's shoulders, and on his breastplate, were emblazoned the names of the 12 tribes...)

- 33] He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for *his* part.
34] For the wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for ever from among the children of Israel.
35] This *is the portion* of the anointing of Aaron, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, in the day *when* he presented them to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office;

Literally, "This is the anointing of Aaron..."; this is what is involved in the anointing.

- 36] Which the LORD commanded to be given them of the children of Israel, in the day that he anointed them, *by* a statute for ever throughout their generations.

None of these sacrifices were an end in themselves. The OT saint was saved by faith just as we are (Cf. Ps 4:5; 50:12-15; 51:19). But never as a dull routine or polluted (Mal 1:7-14). All these rituals demanded a more perfect antitype: Christ (Heb 9:28).

- 37] This *is* the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings;
38] Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

* * *

Addenda:

The Location of Golgotha

And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.

Leviticus 1:11

He made his grave with the wicked [plural], and with the rich [singular] in his death;

Isaiah 53:9

"A rich man, one of the most honorable and esteemed in Jerusalem, a member of the Sanhedrin, and a disciple, unexpectedly appears at

Calvary. This was Joseph of Arimathea, without exception the most singularly noble character introduced to us in the Gospels. This rich man had been driven into concealment by the plots formed against him by the Jews, on account of his defending Jesus in the Sanhedrin openly (Luke 23:51).”

John 19:38: “...being a disciple”: “kekrummeņoj de. dia. ton fobon twħ vioudai,wn,” not “secretly,” for it is not kekrummenwĵ, but “secreted,” or forced to hide, by reason of their plots.

Where was the tomb?

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

John 19:41

“The very spot that criminals were put to death was the where Joseph’s new tomb was hewn out of a rock! The stony sides of the tomb—the new tomb—“the clean place,” where Jesus was laid—were part of the malefactor’s hill. His dead body is “*with the rich man and with the wicked*” in the hour of His death! His grave is the property of a rich man; and yet the rocks which form the partition between His tomb and that of the other Calvary malefactors, are themselves part of Golgotha.”

— notes excerpted from Andrew Bonar’s commentary on Leviticus published in 1846.¹

General Charles George Gordon, a distinguished British general, was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1852. He discovered the area, originally derisively called “Gordon’s Calvary,” is now known as “The Garden Tomb,” in 1883.

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) List and discuss the various categories of offerings, their function, and significations.
- 2) Which are the offerings offered *outside* the camp? Why?
- 3) Why was the fire in the brazen altar *continual*?

- 4) What are the potential implications of the burnt offering being *northward* of the camp? (Lev 1:11).
- 5) What are the rare occasions that *leavened* bread is used as an offering? What is the significance?
- 6) How was the “skin” a form of rebuttal against a works religion?

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) “Fellowship” is actually a business partnership term. Discuss the role of a *fiduciary* in society in general, and among believers in particular.
- 2) The term “accept” = דָּשַׁן *dashen*, also means “take away ashes.” Discuss this apparent “pun” in terms of Levitical symbolism.
- 3) Discuss the various incidences of the “third day” in Scripture and their potential significance(s).
- 4) What are the *dangers* which can come from administering the Lord’s Supper?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

List 12 evidences from the Biblical text that seem to support the Garden Tomb as the actual tomb of Jesus. (Not a doctrinal issue, but impressive.)

Preparation for Next Session:

Study Chapters 8, 9 and 10 for next time.

Notes:

1. Bonar, footnote, p.116-117.

Session 6

Leviticus 8, 9, & 10

The Priesthood

Review

We begin a new section concerning the priests. A priest is one who represents man before God. He is the opposite of a prophet: A prophet speaks for God to man. *Jesus is, of course*, both.

We leave the brazen altar now and turn to the brazen laver. This section will yield a great deal of insight into what is called consecration in our churches.

We are judicially washed by His blood; but we are sanctified by the washing of the water (Eph 5:26).

The Book of Leviticus was really written for the Levites. It was God's intention to make the entire nation of Israel a kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6). The sin in the matter of the golden calf prevented this. Instead, only one tribe was taken, the tribe of Levi. (I believe the nation of Israel will achieve their destiny after the Church is gone.)

The Church today is a priesthood, and Christ is the great High Priest (Heb 8:1; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 5:10; 1:6).

We can't really appreciate the role of the priests until we understand the architecture of the Tabernacle and the Temple which was patterned after it (Cf. Heb 4:14; 8:1,2; 9:11, 23, 24).

Leviticus 8

The calling, cleansing, and clothing of the priests.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread;
- 3] And gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 4] And Moses did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

“Commanded”: 12X in this chapter. The clincher is v.36: “So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.”

- 5] And Moses said unto the congregation, This is the thing which the LORD commanded to be done.
- 6] And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.

The laver was for washing. It represents the Word of God (Cf. Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22; Jn 13:10; 1 Jn 1:9).

Now we wash in it. Later, in heaven, we will *stand* on it (the glassy sea, Rev 4:6, 10; 15:2)!

[I believe this is one of the deliberate “puns” by the Holy Spirit. There are *over 200 different kinds* of rhetorical devices used in the Bible; they are catalogued in Appendix A of *Cosmic Codes*.]

The Clothing of the High Priest

- 7] And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound it unto him therewith.

There were eight articles of clothing worn by the High Priest: four were worn by all the priests; four were unique to him. The common items were the coat, the girdle, the mitre, turban or bonnet; and the breeches. All were of white linen, speaking of righteousness. These are described in detail in Exodus 28.

All believers are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. (Remember the unwelcome wedding guest of Mt 22:1-14!)

- 8] And he put the breastplate upon him: also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.

The breastplate is also described in Exodus 28. The 12 precious stones echo the Eden (of Ezek 28:13), and will have a reprise in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:19, 20). Each of the 12 stones also had one of the 12 tribes engraved on them. He also wore onyx stone on his shoulders, each with six of the 12 tribes engraved on them. Thus, the High Priest carried the nation of Israel on his shoulder and his heart, speaking of strength and love. (Onyx is first mentioned in Gen 2:12; Cf. Ex 28:9.)

The Urim and the Thummim

These were placed “in,” or behind, the breastplate. The breastplate was so made as to form a pouch (Ex 28:16) and in it were placed the Urim and Thummim (Ex 28:30).

Urim: “lights”
Thummim: “perfections”

(Cf. Ex 28:30; Lev 8:8; Deut 33:8; Ezra 2:63; Neh 7:65.)

From Num 27:21; 1 Sam 14:41; 28:6; and Ezra 2:63, and parallels, it is clear that they were used for discovering God’s will. (1 Samuel 28:6 indicates that sometimes a definite answer was not always obtainable. Or perhaps Saul received a series of contradictory answers to his series of questions. Cf. 1 Sam 23:10-12.)

There are many conjectures in the literature, but no one really knows what these mysterious elements were. It is interesting that Moses apparently needed no description of them. In Exodus 28:30, *לְפָנָיו* is “on, unto, against” not “in” as is commonly translated.

There are some that infer that they were results of the refractions on the breastplate of the light(s) from the golden lampstand.¹

Psalm 19?

The law of the LORD is perfect [perfections?], converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening [lights?] the eyes.

Psalm 19:7, 8

They did not exist after the return from the Babylonian exile.

- 9] And he put the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, even upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

The golden crown to be worn on the mitre of the High Priest in the coming Temple can be seen when you visit the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.

The Consecration of the High Priest

- 10] And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them.

First they were sprinkled with blood (Heb 9:21); now they are sprinkled with oil (Holy Spirit). The oil speaks of sanctification.

- 11] And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.
12] And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.

He wasn’t sprinkled; he was anointed.

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

Psalm 133:2

So Christ, at His baptism, “without measure” (Jn 3:34).

Oil was poured on Aaron before the priests had the blood applied to them. Our High Priest needed no offering for sin. We do; He did not.

Hebrews 1:9

Clothing of the Priests

- 13] And Moses brought Aaron’s sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moses. {put bonnets: Heb. bound bonnets}

All done according to the *commandment* of the Lord; in detail.

Cleansing of the Priests and Aaron

- 14] And he brought the bullock for the sin offering; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering.

(Four sons; two will shortly get into serious trouble.)

- 15] And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.

- 16] And he took all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned it upon the altar.
- 17] But the bullock, and his hide, his flesh, and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp; as the LORD commanded Moses.

This ritual is meaningless until we understand the spiritual lesson. They follow the ritual of the sin offering with the exception that the blood is put on the horns of the brazen altar rather than on the golden altar. Even the altar which is used for bloody sacrifices must be dedicated with blood.

There is no merit to the wood of the cross. The merit is entirely in the One who shed His blood for us there.

- 18] And he brought the ram for the burnt offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.
- 19] And he killed it; and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.
- 20] And he cut the ram into pieces; and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat.
- 21] And he washed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it was a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

They now go through the ritual of the burnt offering, following the sin offering. The sin question must be dealt with first. The sin offering represents what Christ did for us on the cross. The burnt offering represents who He is. You can never really know Him until you first come to Him to save you and you accept Him as your substitute for sin.

- 22] And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.
- 23] And he slew it; and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.
- 24] And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

The ram of consecration was actually a trespass offering. No peace offerings were made: the priests were already in the sanctuary, the place of fellowship and communion (*koinonia*). The blood-tipped ear symbolizes the ear that will hear the voice of God; the hand, service; the foot, the walk. Each must be sanctified for service, totally presented to God.

- 25] And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that was upon the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder:
- 26] And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that was before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder:
- 27] And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons' hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the LORD.
- 28] And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
- 29] And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the LORD: for of the ram of consecration it was Moses' part; as the LORD commanded Moses.

They took parts from all the offerings and put them together into the hands of the priests. Total commitment.

- 30] And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

Blood is for the forgiveness of sins, the work of Christ. The oil is for the anointing of the Spirit of God. (The instructions for this were given in Exodus 29:21.)

- 31] And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons, Boil the flesh at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.
- 32] And that which remaineth of the flesh and of the bread shall ye burn with fire.
- 33] And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you.
- 34] As he hath done this day, so the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.
- 35] Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am commanded.
- 36] So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

This is the final clincher...

Leviticus 9

Aaron begins his service: the sin offering; the burnt offering; the meal and peace offerings. The glory of God appears.

The Hebrew word for “consecration” literally means, “to fill the hand.” We need to come with empty hands. He will determine what is needed...

In this chapter, it is the *office* of Jesus, not His character that is in view.

- 1] And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel;

8th = 1st day of the week. Four sons as witnesses (four Gospels?).

- 2] And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD.
- 3] And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering;
- 4] Also a bullock and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD; and a meat offering mingled with oil: for to day the LORD will appear unto you.
- 5] And they brought that which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation: and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD.
- 6] And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.
- 7] And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded.
- 8] Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself.
- 9] And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar:
- 10] But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin offering, he burnt upon the altar; as the LORD commanded Moses.
- 11] And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp.

The sin offering was made first. The sin question has to be settled first. Eph 1:7.

Aaron Offers the Burnt Offering

- 12] And he slew the burnt offering; and Aaron’s sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.
- 13] And they presented the burnt offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt them upon the altar.
- 14] And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt them upon the burnt offering on the altar.
- 15] And he brought the people’s offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.
- 16] And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner. {manner: or, ordinance}

The Meal and Peace Offerings

- 17] And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt it upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning. {took...: Heb. filled his hand out of it}
- 18] He slew also the bullock and the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings, which was for the people: and Aaron’s sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,
- 19] And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the inwards, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver:
- 20] And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar:
- 21] And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave offering before the LORD; as Moses commanded.

The Glory of God Appears

- 22] And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.
- 23] And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

All is complete now. And the *Shekinah* appears to all the people! Praise His Name. Christ, too, has now entered the Holy Place, in heaven itself, to appear there for you and me today...

- 24] And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Wow!

[This is apparently what happened with offerings in the days of Adam and Eve; that's how Cain and Abel could determine God's "respect" of their offerings (Gen 4:4, 5; Heb 11:4). The very Hebrew term "accept" = דָּשַׁן dashen, "take away ashes."]

Leviticus 10 Nadab and Abihu

A change of pace: a narrative.

- 1] And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.

The presumption of Nadab and Abihu is frightening in light of the teaching a Sinai:

And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them.

Exodus 19:22

The Lord was also very specific about the formula for the incense to be used:

And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight: And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy: {tempered...: Heb. salted} And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

Exodus 30:34-38

Our God is holy. He means what He says; and He says what He means. Here we have Nadab and Abihu. In the New Testament we have Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). There is a warning in Hebrews 12:25:

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

Hebrews 12:25

- 2] And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

Our God is a consuming fire (Heb 12:29; Cf. 2 Cor 5:11).

What had they specifically done? They probably did not light the censer of incense from the coals from off the altar, which had come down from heaven. This is what was specified (Lev 16:12).

They may have been out of step with God's timing. The ritual for the day had been completed. They should have consulted with Aaron on the matter. They may have intruded beyond the veil (Lev 16:1, 2). They may have been wrong in the manner, the time and place... God is specific. Cf. 1 Cor 11:30! I don't believe they lost their salvation; but they were taken out of the game.

- 3] Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

I imagine so!

- 4] And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

Cousins.

- 5] So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

I'm sure they had everyone's attention...

- 6] And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people; but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.
- 7] And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

A restriction is placed on Aaron and his two sons: they were to represent the people, and not to mourn outwardly... They were not to contradict the action of God in judging their loved ones.

- 8] And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,
9] Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:

(It may be that alcohol may also have been a factor with Nadab and Abihu; Cf. Eph 5:18.)

- 10] And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean;
11] And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.
12] And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar: for it is most holy:
13] And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it is thy due, and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for so I am commanded.
14] And the wave breast and heave shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place; thou, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee: for they be thy due, and thy sons' due, which are given out of the sacrifices of peace offerings of the children of Israel.
15] The heave shoulder and the wave breast shall they bring with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave it for a wave offering before the LORD; and it shall be thine, and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever; as the LORD hath commanded.
16] And Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt: and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron which were left alive, saying,
17] Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?
18] Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy place: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded.

Here is another tragic incident with action contrary to the will of God, but these are sins of omission; it was not a deliberate and willful sin as that of their two dead brothers.

- 19] And Aaron said unto Moses, Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin offering to day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?
20] And when Moses heard that, he was content.

Aaron probably felt like resigning... If God struck today as He struck Nadab and Abihu, or Ananias and Sapphira, many church members would be casualties!

When we come to God, we must come on His terms. We don't make the rules. He does. Jesus Christ says that no man come to the Father but by Him (John 14:6).

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) List examples where oil is used for anointing. What does it represent?
- 2) Review question: list the various types of offerings and their distinctives.
- 3) List the various appearances of the *Shekinah* in both the Old and New Testaments.

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What does this session teach about the holiness of God? What are the implications for the Christian?
- 2) Compare and contrast the events of Nadab and Abihu with Ananias and Sapphira.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Try to reconcile the semiprecious stones listed in the breastplate with similar mentions throughout the Bible, particularly in the Edenic description of Ezek 28, and the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21).
- 2) Explore the various conjectures about the Urim and Thumim in any references available.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 11 and 12.

Notes:

1. Cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, III. viii. 9.

Session 7 Leviticus 11 & 12 Cleanliness & Hygiene

Going gray?

To prevent the hair from turning gray, anoint it with the blood of a black calf which has been boiled in oil, or with the fat of a rattlesnake.

Papyrus Ebers, 1552 B.C.¹

Losing hair?

When it falls out, one remedy is to apply a mixture of six fats, namely those of the horse, the hippopotamus, the crocodile, the cat, the snake, and the ibex. To strengthen it, anoint with the tooth of a donkey crushed in honey.²

(A special hair dressing the Egyptian Queen Schesch consisted of equal parts of a heel of an Abyssinian greyhound, date blossoms, and asses' hoofs, boiled in oil. This choice preparation was intended to make the royal hair grow.)

Embedded splinters were treated with worms' blood and asses' dung. (Since dung is loaded with tetanus spores, it is little wonder that lockjaw took a heavy toll of splinter cases!)

The properly outfitted supply cabinet advised by *Papyrus Ebers* would include "lizards' blood, swines' teeth, putrid meat, stinking fat, moisture from pig's ears, milk goose grease, asses' hoofs, animal fats from various sources, excreta from animals, including human beings, donkeys, antelopes, dogs, cats, and even flies."³

At the time this medical treatise was written, Moses was born in Egypt. And the Scripture tells us that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22).

He would be well acquainted in what was the medical wisdom of the time. However, when Moses led the great company of Israelites out of Egypt, the Lord gave him a most remarkable promise for the new nation:

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.

Exodus 15:26

It is astonishing that Moses did not incorporate a single current medical misconception into the inspired instructions recorded in the Torah!

The instructions in the *Torah* anticipate modern hygienic discoveries, the avoidance of cervical cancer in circumcision, the isolation of contagious diseases, the modern hygienic issues, all on the long list of provocative anticipations of discoveries made 4,000 years later...

In this next section of Leviticus we encounter a radical change in subject: we will switch from the priests to the people; from offerings to God to food for man; from worship before God to the walk in this world.

Today we make a false distinction between the sacred and the secular. Everything in our lives can be done to the glory of God. Could the God of this vast universe be concerned with what His creatures have for dinner?

When we purchase a piece of complex equipment, we consult the instructions provided by the manufacturer for the "care and feeding" of his product. *Our Designer* has also provided us some guidelines that deserve our attention. (In fact, He, too, has a "24-hour hotline" to consult for any special problems!)

When the plague was desolating Europe—one out of four was stricken—the Jews so universally escaped infection that, this their exemption, the popular suspicion was excited into fury, and they were accused of causing the fearful mortality among the Gentile neighbors by poisoning wells and springs.⁴

* * *

Leviticus 11

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These *are* the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that *are* on the earth.

God makes the rules. God draws a strict line of demarcation between light and darkness, right and wrong, and clean and unclean. These were not unique to Mosaic laws: Noah recognized these divisions. We believe they actually date back to the Garden of Eden...

We, however, today, have no command concerning clean and unclean animals for food. Cf. Acts 10:11-15: "Don't you call unclean what God has called clean." God makes the rules.

For Israel, the distinction between clean and unclean animals was part of God's plan to keep them separate from all nations.

- 3] Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, *and* cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

This was the rule to be followed to determine the animals to be eaten. This is repeated in Deuteronomy 14:6. The distinction between clean and unclean is sharply drawn and does not follow any biological division; but a health factor was involved.

The animals that were forbidden to be eaten were largely unclean feeders and more liable to disease.

One of the greatest discoveries of modern science is the fact that a large number of diseases to which animals are liable are due to the presence of low forms of parasitic life. To such diseases those which are unclean in their feeding will be especially exposed, while none will perhaps be found wholly exempt. Another discovery of recent times which has a no less important bearing on the question raised by this chapter is the now ascertained fact that many of these parasitic diseases are common to both animals and men, and may be communicated from the former to the latter.⁵

- 4] Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: *as* the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.

It is interesting that "to meditate" is a figurative expression of a cow chewing the cud (Ps 1:2).

The parting of the hoof speaks of the walk of the believer in separation. (Eph 4:1; 5:2, 15).

- 5] And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.
- 6] And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.
- 7] And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he *is* unclean to you.
- 8] Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they *are* unclean to you.

This list of unclean animals. Carnivorous animals have been excluded. Only vegetable-eating animals chew the cud.

Fish

- 9] These shall ye eat of all that *are* in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.
- 10] And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which *is* in the waters, they *shall be* an abomination unto you:
- 11] They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcases in abomination.
- 12] Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that *shall be* an abomination unto you.

Again, a sharp line is drawn: the clean fish had two visible characteristics: fins and scales. Crawling creatures in the water were forbidden. Fishermen would bring in their fish on the Sabbath Day (Neh 13:16-22).

Flying Creatures

- 13] And these *are they which* ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they *are* an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the osprey,

The ossifrage is a sea-eagle; the osprey is the fish-hawk.

- 14] And the vulture, and the kite after his kind;

The vulture and the kite are known as familiarly as the eagle and raven. These are the birds of the air.

- 15] Every raven after his kind;
 16] And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,

These are the birds of the earth. The “owl” is the ostrich. The night hawk is a species of owl known in Syria: very ravenous, known to attack infants. The cuckoo is probably the sea-swallow or sea-gull.

- 17] And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl,

The great owl is the bittern.

- 18] And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle,

The swan: the “purple-bird” (*Porphyrio hyacinthinus*). The gier-eagle can be extremely aggressive, seizing fish or winged fowl.

- 19] And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

The stork feeds on lizards, frogs, serpents, and other living things. The heron can also be angry and irritable, watching for its prey. The lapwing has beautiful feathers but filthy in its habits.

On the birds there were no visible markers, but the unclean birds were unclean feeders: they fed on dead carcasses of animals, fish, and other fowl.

The specific list reveals that the Mosaic system was intended for the nation Israel and their particular geography. The lesson for us today is that we must make decisions about our conduct and our profession. (Elijah was fed by the ravens: dirty birds. He didn’t eat the ravens, but they fed him.)

Creeping Creatures

- 20] All fowls that creep, going upon *all* four, *shall be* an abomination unto you.
 21] Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon *all* four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth;
 22] *Even* these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.

There were apparently four species of locusts, and (although they don’t appeal to me) they were not ceremonially unclean. John the Baptist had a diet of locusts and wild honey.

- 23] But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

With the exception of the first four, all insects are unclean.

Contact with Carcasses

- 24] And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcass of them shall be unclean until the even.
 25] And whosoever beareth *ought* of the carcass of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.
 26] *The carcasses* of every beast which divideth the hoof, and *is* not clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.
 26] *The carcasses* of every beast which divideth the hoof, and *is* not clovenfooted, nor cheweth the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.
 27] And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts that go on *all* four, those *are* unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcass shall be unclean until the even.
 28] And he that beareth the carcass of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they *are* unclean unto you.

There is an important principle set before us here: Cleanliness or holiness is *not* transferred by contact. Uncleanliness and unholiness *are* transferred by contact. It is impossible to bring holiness out of the unholy. But the unclean can affect the clean. An unrighteous man cannot produce righteous works which are acceptable to God. You cannot bring righteousness out of unrighteousness.

A boy with measles is never cured by contact with a boy who is well. A Christian cannot mingle with the world and play with sin without becoming contaminated.

- 29] These also *shall be* unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,
 30] And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.
 31] These *are* unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even.

These creatures live *on* the ground or *under* the ground.

- 32] And upon whatsoever *any* of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether *it be* any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel *it be*, wherein *any* work is done, it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

- 33] And every earthen vessel, whereinto *any* of them falleth, whatsoever *is* in it shall be unclean; and ye shall break it.
- 34] Of all meat which may be eaten, *that* on which *such* water cometh shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every *such* vessel shall be unclean.
- 35] And every *thing* whereupon *any part* of their carcase falleth shall be unclean; *whether it be* oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: *for they are* unclean, and shall be unclean unto you.
- 36] Nevertheless a fountain or pit, *wherein there is* plenty of water, shall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcase shall be unclean.

God taught His people cleanliness in the preparation of good.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain of living water (Jn 4:14; 7:37-38).

- 37] And if *any part* of their carcase fall upon any sowing seed which is to be sown, it *shall be* clean.

Now we leave the kitchen and go out into the field. Dry seed that was to be sown could not be contaminated.

- 38] But if *any* water be put upon the seed, and *any part* of their carcase fall thereon, it *shall be* unclean unto you.

Contact with Carcasses of Clean Animals

- 39] And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.
- 40] And he that eateth of the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.
- 41] And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth *shall be* an abomination; it shall not be eaten.
- 42] Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon *all four*, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they *are* an abomination.
- 43] Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.

Everything that crept on the earth or that went on its belly was unclean.

- 44] For I *am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- 45] For I *am* the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

All creeping things were unclean as representatives of the fall of man: when the serpent was cursed and made to crawl on its belly...

- 46] This *is* the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:
- 47] To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

Holiness in little things is essential. The acid test of any life of any of God's people is this. God says, "I am you Lord. I am holy. Be ye holy."

You must make the decision whether you are going to walk with God and for God in this contaminated world. This the lesson for us from this chapter of the clean and unclean.

Leviticus 12 Original Sin Transmitted

Our Great Physician is a specialist in all fields. The previous chapter was about dietetics and pediatrics. This chapter deals with obstetrics.

The previous chapter sin by contact; the external character of sin was emphasized. This chapter deals with the *internal* nature of sin. It is a genetic defect we *inherit*

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
Psalm 51:5

The doctrine of the total depravity of man is widely totally rejected, and yet we see it demonstrated every day.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
Romans 5:12

That sweet, cuddly baby, that we so love to admire, is a sinner; brought into the world by a mother and a father who both are sinners, too.

Is a baby who dies in infancy lost because he is a sinner? No. In Adam all die, and that's the reason the little one died. But we believe that those that die before the age of accountability are saved.

Cf. 2 Samuel 12:23 (David will join his dead son); Rom 7:9 (When was Paul “alive without the law,” “before the commandment came”?).

Bold infidelity, turn pale and die,
Beneath this stone four infants’ ashes lie;
Say are they lost or saved,
If death’s by sin, they sinned for they lie here;
If Heaven’s by works, in Heaven they can’t appear.
Reason—Ah, how depraved.
Reverse the Bible’s sacred page, the knot’s untied.
They died, for Adam sinned; they live, for Jesus died.

—Robert Robertson⁶

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean.

The mother is unclean because she has brought a sinner into the world. Eve probably thought she had brought the Savior into the world when Cain was born, but she had brought into the world the first murderer. This Levitical ritual is to remind women that they were bringing into the world the same kind of baby Eve had brought into the world. They cannot do good. They can only sin.

Adam was a “son of God” (Lk 3:38). This term is for a *direct* creation of God; it is also used of angels. You and I are “sons of Adam,” not “sons of God.” It is only through being “born again” that we become the “Sons of God” (Jn 1:11, 12).

- 3] And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

Each male child was born a son of Adam, an Israelite, yet was not included in the covenant until the baby was circumcised. Cf. Romans 9:6, 7. It is interesting that modern medical science has discovered that a newborn baby has peculiar susceptibility to bleeding between the 2nd and 5th days of life. Hemorrhages at this time can be critical and may even produce serious damage to internal organs, especially to the brain, and cause death from shock and exsanguination.⁷ An important blood-clotting element, vitamin K, is not formed in the normal amount until the 5th to the 7th day. The first safe day to perform circumcision would be the 8th day.

A second element which is also necessary for the normal clotting of blood is prothrombin which is minimal in the first few days of the baby’s life, but skyrockets to 110% of normal on the 8th day and then levels off to 100%. An 8-day-old baby has more available prothrombin than on any other day of its entire life. How did Moses know that this was the ideal day for circumcision? By trial and error?! Cf. Gen 17:12.

- 4] And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.

She had two periods of uncleanness: 7 + 33 = 40 days. She is simply being reminded that she is still a sinner.

Some conjecture that 40 days may be specially reminiscent. It may have been that Adam and Eve remained only 40 days *unfallen*. This 40 days would thus be reminiscence of that *only holy time on earth*. The “Second Adam” was 40 days on earth after His resurrection, recalling to mind earth’s time of Paradise. If this be so, every “40” suggests the knell of Paradise lost!⁸

- 5] But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.

The time is doubled for the cleansing of a female child. Some suspect that the male child had the benefit of the covenant in his circumcision. Others remind us that “*the woman was in the transgression*” (1 Tim 2:14).

- 6] And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest:
- 7] Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This *is* the law for her that hath born a male or a female.

Childbearing didn’t save her. A burnt offering and a sin offering were required.

- 8] And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.

Mary, too, followed this procedure (Lk 2:21-23. She, too, was a sinner; she was not sinless. His birth didn't save her; His death and resurrection did, but only by Her accepting Jesus as her own Savior. [Cf. 2 John, which I believe was written to her.]

No offering was ever made *for* Jesus or *by* Jesus. He is the only sinless one.

Their poverty was evident. Isaiah's whisper comes to mind:

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money...

Isaiah 55:1

Next time: Leprosy and its timely lessons...

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) When were the distinctions between to "clean" and "unclean" first instituted?
- 2) What is the implication of the distinction between "clean" and "unclean" upon the parable of the "pearl of great price" in Matthew 13:45,46?

Discussion Questions:

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What other examples of *the absence of error* undergirds our confidence in the Scriptures?
- 2) Give examples of folklore posing as truth in our society today. Give other examples of myths taken seriously in our society.
- 3) How does the distinctions between "clean" and "unclean" impact the Christian today? Can a Christian enjoy a shrimp cocktail?
- 4) What does the raven feeding Elijah say about the use of unclean vessels?

- 5) Give proofs of the "Total Depravity of Man" from today's experiences.
- 6) Can a clone be saved?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) List examples of hygiene in the Scriptures that anticipated modern discoveries.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 13, 14, & 15.

Notes:

1. W.E. Massengill, *A Sketch of Medicine and Pharmacy*, Bristol, Tenn., S. E. Massengill Co., 1943, p.16 (q.v. S.I. McMillen, *None of These Diseases*, Fleming H. Rfevell Co., Old Tappan, NJ 1963).
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. S. H. Kellogg, *The Book of Leviticus*, p. 303.
5. *Ibid.*, p.301.
6. J. V. McGee, *Leviticus*, vol 1, p.140.
7. L. Emmett Holt, Jr., and Rustin McIntosh, *Holt Pediatrics*, 12th edition, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953, pp.125-126.
8. Bonar, *Leviticus*, p.236.

Session 8 Leviticus 13, 14, & 15 Leprosy & Diseases

For many hundreds of years the dreaded disease leprosy killed countless millions of people in Europe. George Rosen summarizes:

Leprosy cast the greatest blight that threw its shadow over the daily life of medieval humanity. Fear of all other diseases taken together can hardly be compared to the terror spread by leprosy. Not even the Black Death in the 14th century or the appearance of syphilis toward the end of the fifteenth

century produced a similar state of fright. . . . Early in the Middle Ages, during the 6th and 7th centuries, it began to spread more widely in Europe and became a serious social and health problem. It was endemic particularly among the poor and reached a terrifying peak in the 13th and 14th centuries.¹

Another plague that made the Dark Ages really dark was the Black Death. In the 14th century alone, this killer took the lives of one out of four persons, an estimated total of 60 million! It was the greatest disaster ever recorded in human history:

Sweeping everything before it, this plague brought panic and confusion in its train. . . . The dead were hurled pell-mell into huge pits, hastily dug for the purpose, and putrefying bodies lay about everywhere in the houses and streets. The sexton and the physician were cast into the same deep and wide grave; the testor and his heirs and executors were hurled from the same cart into the same hole together.

What brought the major plagues of the Dark Ages under control? George Rosen again gives us the answer:

Leadership was taken by the church, as the physicians had nothing to offer. The church took as its guiding principle the concept of contagion as embodied in the Old Testament. . . . This idea and its practical consequences are defined with great clarity in the book of Leviticus. Once the condition of leprosy had been established, the patient was to be segregated and excluded from the community.

[Contrast the HIV procedures: “The Unnecessary Epidemic,” etc.]

Following the precepts laid down in Leviticus the church undertook the task of combatting leprosy. . . . it accomplished the first great feat. . . in methodical eradication of disease.²

The procedures came from Leviticus 13:46. Other historians also credit the Bible for the dawning of a new era in the effective control of disease:

The laws against leprosy in Leviticus 13 may be regarded as the first model of a sanitary legislation.³

It was in 1873 that G. Armauer Hansen, Norwegian, discovered a bacillus that was common in nearly all kinds of leprosy, so it is now known as “Hansen’s disease.” However interesting this may all be historically, that leaves us the question, is all this of practical significance for us today?

Key Topic

However, the real topic here is the ultimate disease: Sin.

The hopelessness and filthiness of sin are dramatically portrayed here. The leper that trudged down a hot, dusty road crying out, “Unclean! Unclean!” was a reminder to the Israelite that he, too, was a moral leper who needed supernatural cleansing.

Sin is exceedingly sinful.

There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness... For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh... For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

Psalm 38:3-7, 18

From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

Isaiah 1:6

But Christ has borne all these:

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:4, 5

Is He talking about leprosy, or sin?

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 2:24

Were there no sin, there would be neither death nor sickness! There are two critical premises that we need to keep in mind:

- 1) The Bible does not concur with the view that leprosy was incurable in that day. (Cleansing is mentioned in Leviticus 13:2. There were

supernatural cures such as Naaman's in 2 Kings 5. Some expositors believe Job had leprosy.)

- 2) This is not a scientific treatise on the detection, prevention and cure of leprosy. These chapters do not contain a cure for leprosy. It gives instructions to the priest on how a case is to be determined and the measures to be taken to prevent its spreading within the camp. The rituals described were ceremonial rather than curative.

The leper was ceremonially cleansed *after* he had been cured.

The loathsome and death-dealing "leprosy" described here also includes elephantiasis, skin diseases, running issues, cancer, tumors, and social diseases.

Leviticus 13

Diagnosis of a New Case

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,
- 2] When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh like the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests:

These diagnostic procedures may seem crude by today's standards, but this was a religious ritual, not a diagnosis for treatment.

Three symptoms: a rising or boil; a scab or small tumor; and a bright spot. These are suggestive but not conclusive. He was to be brought to the High Priest.

...as we should: we are to pray to our Great High Priest about *everything*. Heb 4:16; 7:25; 1 John 1:9.

- 3] And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.

If the lesion began to disappear, the person was dismissed. If the hair turned white, it was becoming dead and showed that the disease was *beneath* the skin. The priest would then pronounce the person unclean.

Our Great Physician has made a thorough inspection of *us* and has made a diagnosis:

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways:

Romans 3:13-16

He asks us to stick out our tongue and there He finds deceit and lying. We are all spiritual lepers.

Leprosy is a type of sin:

- 1) It becomes overt in loathsome ways.
- 2) It is a horrible disease. Leprosy, from all diseases, has been selected by the Holy Spirit to stand as a type of sin.
- 3) It begins in a small way; yet finally deals a death blow. All drunks start with one drink. [Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler were all, once upon a time, cute, cuddly babies.]
- 4) It progresses slowly, but surely. Some cases will endure 10-20 years before resolving in death.

Dr. William Thompson:

It comes on by degrees in different parts of the body: the hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay, and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away; the gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue, and the palate are slowly consumed; and, finally, the wretched victim sinks into the earth and disappears.⁴

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James 1:15

Leprosy is a living death. He is treated as a dead man (Gal 6:7-8).

- 5) Leprosy goes beyond pain. The absence of pain is one of its characteristics. However, it keeps the person sad and restless. [Look at our culture...] It goes beyond feeling.

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Ephesians 4:10

Having ...a conscience seared with a hot iron...

1 Timothy 4:2

- 6) Leprosy is thought to be hereditary. Sin is!
- 7) Leprosy and sin separate from God.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Isaiah 59:2

The New Jerusalem will shut out the unforgiven and unwashed sinner:
Rev 21:27; 22:15.

- 4] If the bright spot be white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight be not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague seven days:

No haste here, God is slow to anger.

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Exodus 34:6-7

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

- 5] And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight be at a stay, and the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more:

Another inspection to make sure. We need to learn, too, not to make hasty and rash judgments of others. It is a serious thing to make a false charge against another believer.

Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

1 Timothy 5:19

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Matthew 18:15-17

- 6] And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

If the plague in the skin had spread for 14 days, but improved, it obviously was not leprosy and he was pronounced clean. Cf. Luke 5:17-26.

- 7] But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen of the priest again:
- 8] And if the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a leprosy.

Finally a verdict must be rendered. Sometimes some can stand inspection for a while, but ultimately the frightful symptoms break out.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

1 John 2:19

But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

2 Peter 2:22 (q.v. Prov 26:11)

Diagnosis of a Chronic Case

- 9] When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest;
- 10] And the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the rising be white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and there be quick raw flesh in the rising;
- 11] It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean.

Often the polished and slick church member does not believe he has leprosy. The hardened sinner is easier to reach than he. He is more open.

- 12] And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot, wheresoever the priest looketh;
- 13] Then the priest shall consider: and, behold, if the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.
- 14] But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean.
- 15] And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: for the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy.
- 16] Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto white, he shall come unto the priest;
- 17] And the priest shall see him: and, behold, if the plague be turned into white; then the priest shall pronounce him clean that hath the plague: he is clean.

No case is hopeless. Isaiah 1:18 The true mark of leprosy is raw *flesh*.

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Genesis 6:12

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

John 6:63

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Romans 7:18

That no flesh should glory in his presence.

1 Corinthians 1:29; 15:50

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Philippians 3:3

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Jude 23

The flesh can never please God. The flesh is the old nature, judged on the cross.

Diagnosis from a Boil or Burn

- 18] The flesh also, in which, even in the skin thereof, was a boil, and is healed,

- 19] And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot, white, and somewhat reddish, and it be shewed to the priest;
- 20] And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it be in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.
- 21] But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hairs therein, and if it be not lower than the skin, but be somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:
- 22] And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague.
- 23] But if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

A small sore can become cancerous. If it penetrated lower than the skin, it could mean deep-seated trouble. Old habits can return and become malignant.

- 24] Or if there be any flesh, in the skin whereof there is a hot burning, and the quick flesh that burneth have a white bright spot, somewhat reddish, or white;
- 25] Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the hair in the bright spot be turned white, and it be in sight deeper than the skin; it is a leprosy broken out of the burning: wherefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.
- 26] But if the priest look on it, and, behold, there be no white hair in the bright spot, and it be no lower than the other skin, but be somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days:
- 27] And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day: and if it be spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.
- 28] And if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not in the skin, but it be somewhat dark; it is a rising of the burning, and the priest shall pronounce him clean: for it is an inflammation of the burning.

The flesh must be kept under close observation, for it, too, can break out in an alarming manner.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Romans 6:19

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

1 Corinthians 9:27

Leprosy in the Head or Beard

- 29] If a man or woman have a plague upon the head or the beard;
30] Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it be in sight deeper than the skin; and there be in it a yellow thin hair; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a dry scall, even a leprosy upon the head or beard.

It can break out in unlikely spots. A yellow hair indicated that the infection was beneath the epidermis and could be leprosy.

- 31] And if the priest look on the plague of the scall, and, behold, it be not in sight deeper than the skin, and that there is no black hair in it; then the priest shall shut up him that hath the plague of the scall seven days:
32] And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague: and, behold, if the scall spread not, and there be in it no yellow hair, and the scall be not in sight deeper than the skin;
33] He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave; and the priest shall shut up him that hath the scall seven days more:
34] And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and, behold, if the scall be not spread in the skin, nor be in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.
35] But if the scall spread much in the skin after his cleansing;
36] Then the priest shall look on him: and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he is unclean.
37] But if the scall be in his sight at a stay, and that there is black hair grown up therein; the scall is healed, he is clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

These verses show that it might not be leprosy. Accusations should be cautious!

- 38] If a man also or a woman have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, even white bright spots;
39] Then the priest shall look: and, behold, if the bright spots in the skin of their flesh be darkish white; it is a freckled spot that groweth in the skin; he is clean.
40] And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he is bald; yet is he clean.
41] And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he is forehead bald: yet is he clean.
42] And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it is a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.
43] Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, if the rising of the sore be white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh;
44] He is a leprous man, he is unclean: the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; his plague is in his head.

Disposal of Garments

- 45] And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean.

The sinner, too, spreads his sin wherever he goes! His disease is also contagious and infects others.

- 46] All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.
47] The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, whether it be a woollen garment, or a linen garment;
48] Whether it be in the warp, or woof; of linen, or of woollen; whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin;
49] And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a plague of leprosy, and shall be shewed unto the priest:
50] And the priest shall look upon the plague, and shut up it that hath the plague seven days:
51] And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day: if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is unclean.
52] He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.
53] And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin;
54] Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing wherein the plague is, and he shall shut it up seven days more:
55] And the priest shall look on the plague, after that it is washed: and, behold, if the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not spread; it is unclean; thou shalt burn it in the fire; it is fret inward, whether it be bare within or without.
56] And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark after the washing of it; then he shall rend it out of the garment, or out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof:
57] And if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a spreading plague: thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is with fire.
58] And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.
59] This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp, or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean.

The quality of the garment made no difference. Our righteousness is as “used menstrual cloths!” (Isaiah 64:6).

Leviticus 14 Ceremonial Cleansing

The previous chapter dealt with diagnosis here we deal with ceremonial cleansing. We are not being given a *cure* for leprosy.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:
- 3] And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper;

The priest is not going out to heal the leper, but to see if he has been healed. (“...in the day of his cleansing.”) It is a ceremony that followed the cure.

The priest had to go to him. (He was without the camp...) Cf. Luke 17:12. Cf. Heb 2:9-10, 14, 16-17. Hebrews 6, 10. Cf. Rev 3:20.

- 4] Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:
- 5] And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water:
- 6] As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water:
- 7] And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.

The leper was shut out of the tabernacle; the priest had to come to him. Two birds: one for death; the other typifying the resurrection. Scarlet: faith in the blood. Cf. Rahab’s evidence of faith, Joshua 2:18-21 (Cf. Song of Solomon 4:3).

Running water is living water: John 4, 7.

Free as a bird?

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1; Cf. Hebrews 6 & 10

Living water and blood meet in this ceremony (Cf. Jn 19:34-35; 1 Jn 5:6).

- 8] And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean: and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days.
- 9] But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

Clothes represent the habits of life, lifestyle. Shaving off the hair was to call attention to the radical and revolutionary change taking place.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

John 15:3

- 10] And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil.

(The next 10 verses are a single sentence!)

- 11] And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:
- 12] And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:
- 13] And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest’s, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy:
- 14] And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:
- 15] And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand:
- 16] And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD:
- 17] And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering:
- 18] And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest’s hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD.
- 19] And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering:
- 20] And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

For the poor...

- 21] And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil;
- 22] And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering.
- 23] And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.
- 24] And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:
- 25] And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:
- 26] And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand:
- 27] And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD:
- 28] And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering:
- 29] And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make an atonement for him before the LORD.
- 30] And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get;
- 31] Even such as he is able to get, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the LORD.
- 32] This is the law of him in whom is the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get that which pertaineth to his cleansing.

The Cleansing of a House

- 33] And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
- 34] When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession;
- 35] And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me there is as it were a plague in the house:
- 36] Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go into it to see the plague, that all that is in the house be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house:
- 37] And he shall look on the plague, and, behold, if the plague be in the walls of the house with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish, which in sight are lower than the wall;
- 38] Then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days:

- 39] And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look: and, behold, if the plague be spread in the walls of the house;
- 40] Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which the plague is, and they shall cast them into an unclean place without the city:
- 41] And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place:
- 42] And they shall take other stones, and put them in the place of those stones; and he shall take other mortar, and shall plaster the house.
- 43] And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after he hath scraped the house, and after it is plastered;
- 44] Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, if the plague be spread in the house, it is a fretting leprosy in the house: it is unclean.
- 45] And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house; and he shall carry them forth out of the city into an unclean place.
- 46] Moreover he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up shall be unclean until the even.
- 47] And he that lieth in the house shall wash his clothes; and he that eateth in the house shall wash his clothes.
- 48] And if the priest shall come in, and look upon it, and, behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plastered: then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is healed.
- 49] And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:
- 50] And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water:
- 51] And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times:
- 52] And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet:
- 53] But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean.
- 54] This is the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and scall,
- 55] And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house,
- 56] And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot:
- 57] To teach when it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy.

Leviticus 15 Running Issues

Human nature is not only defiled, it is defiling.

Leprosy was a disease that could not be kept secret for long. We, however, have a nature that is hidden. The secret sins are in view here.

I see no fault committed which I too might not have committed.

— Goethe

Every man knows that of himself which he dares not tell to his dearest friends.

— Samuel Johnson

I do not know what the heart of a villain may be—but I only know that of a virtuous man, and that is frightful.

— Count de Maistre

Go to your own bosom. Knock there: and ask your heart what it doth know.

— Shakespeare

Why is there no man who confesses his vices? It is because he has not yet laid them aside. It is a waking man only who can tell his dreams.

— Seneca

The “New morality” turns out the same old diseases that the old morality did!

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a running issue out of his flesh, because of his issue he is unclean.
- 3] And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue: whether his flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it is his uncleanness.

This vivid language reveals how sickening, disgusting, abhorrent, offensive, impure, repugnant, and utterly corrupt and corrupting the human nature is. It is the pus of sin flowing from the human heart. It is everywhere around us.

And we all influence each other. We are all preachers—whether we know it or not! You are preaching with your life...

- 4] Every bed, whereon he lieth that hath the issue, is unclean: and every thing, whereon he sitteth, shall be unclean.
- 5] And whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 6] And he that sitteth on any thing whereon he sat that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 7] And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

Everything he touches is unclean. These running sores are hidden sins...

- 8] And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 9] And what saddle soever he rideth upon that hath the issue shall be unclean.
- 10] And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him shall be unclean until the even: and he that beareth any of those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 11] And whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 12] And the vessel of earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken: and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

Sin by accidental contact. It’s everywhere; how can one avoid it?

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Psalm 119:9

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

John 15:3

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

John 17:17

- 13] And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.
- 14] And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest:
- 15] And the priest shall offer them, the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD for his issue.

The Christian’s bar of soap: 1 John 1:9

- 16] And if any man’s seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 17] And every garment, and every skin, whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even.
- 18] The woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation, they shall both bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the even.

Venereal diseases. Man is always in danger of debasing himself in that which was to be one of the noblest experiences. Cf. Matthew 5:27-28.

- 19] And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.
- 20] And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean.
- 21] And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 22] And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 23] And if it be on her bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even.
- 24] And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean.
- 25] And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean.
- 26] Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation.
- 27] And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 28] But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean.
- 29] And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 30] And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD for the issue of her uncleanness.

Treated as an outcast (Num 5:2); a reminder of the fall of man in Genesis. We can begin to understand the plight of the woman with the issue of blood in Matthew 9:20-26; Mark 5:25-42; Luke 8:43-48.

- 31] Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that is among them.
- 32] This is the law of him that hath an issue, and of him whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith;
- 33] And of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, and of him that lieth with her that is unclean.

Hidden sin is not a trivial matter with God.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Well enough of this disgusting stuff...

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Philippians 4:8

Next Session: *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What is the connection between the woman with the issue of blood (Mt 9:20-26; Mk 5:25-42; Lk 8:43-48) and Jairus' Daughter? (Both are connected with 12 years...)
- 2) List the ways that leprosy is a type of sin.

Discussion Questions:

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) Did animals die before Genesis 3? Why?
- 2) Give examples of the application of Matthew 18:15-17 in the church today.

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the recent discoveries that the “Spanish Flu” of 1918 that killed over 20 million in only a few months were caused by a combination of pig and human flu genes.

- 2) What might be the implications of harvesting organs from animals for use in the human body?

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapter 16, The Day of Atonement.

Notes:

1. George Rosen, *History of Public Health*, MD Publications, New York, 1958, pp.62-63.
2. Rosen, *op cit.*, pp.63-65.
3. Arturo Castiglione, *A History of Medicine*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1941, p.71.
4. William Thompson, *The Land and the Book*, Vol I, pp.530-531; q.v. McGee, p.150.

Session 9 Leviticus 16 Yom Kippur The Day of Atonement

Review

So far in our review of Leviticus we have studied offerings, priests, and sin. None of these have dealt finally and completely with sin. Now we come to that which deals more completely than any other with sin. The chapter before us points more specifically and adequately to the work of Christ in redemption.

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Colossians 2:16, 17

The Midrash emphasizes that *prophecy is pattern*, not just prediction.

Key Topic: Yom Kippur

The rabbis designated the Day of Atonement with the simple word *Yoma*, “The Day.” It was on this day that sin was dealt with in a more adequate

way than in any other ceremony of the Mosaic system. Note the emphasis on “all” sins in vv.16, 21, and 22.

The Day

Yom Kippur was observed in the 7th month, and on the 10th day (v.29). These are significant numbers in Scripture: The 7th month is the sabbatic month and denotes rest and cessation from works. It is significant that this month was selected to express the rest of redemption that is in Christ. The 10th expresses God’s will and way:

The Ten Commandments;
The tithe (tenth);
The remnant of Israel (Isa 6:13);
The day of selection of the Passover (Ex 12:3);
The day of Jubilee (Lev 25:9, which we will take up later).
The 10th day expresses the truth that Christ came to do the will of God: “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him” (Isa 53:10).

Atonement

כַּפַּר *kaphar*, to cover, purge, make an atonement, make reconciliation, cover over with pitch (Noah’s Ark). God did not take away the sins in the Old Testament: He covered them until Christ came and removed them. Cf. Acts 17:30; Rom 3:24-25; Heb 9:8, 9, 15.

Leviticus 16

Preparation of the High Priest

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;

The specificity of the instructions of this day are contrasted with the disobedience of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron who intruded into the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and were put to death by the direct judgment of God (Chapter 10). Many commentators treat these two chapters together.

The great Day of Atonement explains the sudden death of these two men. The utter holiness of God and the utter sinfulness of man are made clear in this service.

This great gulf between God and man, however, is not fixed: it has been bridged! When you come God's way, you can come with boldness (Heb 4:16; 10:19-22). [However, only through Jesus Christ. Any other way is to take the path of Nadab and Abihu!]

- 2] And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy *place* within the vail before the mercy seat, which *is* upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.

He is to come alone (v.17). He is picturing (foreshadowing) Christ. Cf. Ps 22:1; Jn 16:32; 2 Cor 5:19.

- 3] Thus shall Aaron come into the holy *place*: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

After the usual morning sacrifice of seven lambs to indicate the complete offering up to God that was that day to be made (Num29:8ff).

- 4] He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these *are* holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and *so* put them on.

John 1:1, 14, 18.

- 5] And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.
6] And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

This preparation has no counterpart in the life and work of Christ: He had no sin. He never made an offering for Himself. (The offering of turtledoves when He was brought to the Temple as a baby was for the cleansing of Mary, His mother. It was to remind her that she was a sinner.)

“For his house”: Some think that this included the entire body of priests and Levites, as in Psalm 115:12.

Preparation of the Place

- 7] And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
8] And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

- 9] And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD'S lot fell, and offer him *for* a sin offering.
10] But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.
11] And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which *is* for himself:
12] And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the vail:
13] And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not:

The fragrance is drawn out by the fire, to show that acceptance is effected by justice itself.

The very fire that preyed upon the bullock till it was consumed into ashes is that which causes this fragrance to be felt; the very righteousness that sought for an atonement delights to proclaim that the law is magnified, YHWH glorified, the sinner justified.

— Bonar

The offering of incense was always accompanied with prayer (Cf. Rev 8:4; Ps 141:2). In Rev 5:8, the saints have *golden vials*, not *censers*. These prayers are not intercessory, but their own, in anticipation of being presented to the High Priest...

- 14] And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

“Upon” and “before” the Mercy Seat. (Cf. Ezek 43:7 for “the soles of His feet...” See our briefing package, *The Seat of Mercy*.)

- 15] Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:
16] And he shall make an atonement for the holy *place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Atonement for the Holy Place itself? The presence of guilty Israel defiled the courts, and the bringing in of their representative was reckoned as a defilement. Thus,

- 23] It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.
- 24] For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Cf. Hebrews 9:23, 24.

The same ritual is followed in slaying the goat as in the slaying of the bullock for Aaron. The two goats constituted one sin offering. Each represented a distinct aspect of the remission of sin.

One was offered as a sin offering. The other, called *אֲזַאזֵל* *aza'zel*, the scapegoat, was taken into the wilderness. (*אֲזַאזֵל* for goat; and *אֲזַאזֵל* “to depart, go away.”) (LXX, Luther, Kellogg, and Bonar, indicate that it means an entire and utter removal. Edersheim, “wholly to go away.”) It was selected by lot; when you visit the Temple Institute in Jerusalem, you can see the lottery box established for this purpose in the coming Temple.

Before anything was done to the goats, the High Priest had to enter the Holy of Holies with the blood of the bullock for himself and for his house. He went in on only one day of the year, but he went in twice on that day.

Christ was made sin for us on the Cross (2 Cor 5:21). This is the counterpart to the brazen altar in the Tabernacle. Then as our Great High Priest, He entered into heaven and offered His own blood for our sins. Now the Throne of God is a mercy seat for us. (See our briefing pack, *The Seat of Mercy* for the possible destiny for the original relic.)

Aaron went in with fear and trembling; we are bidden to come in with boldness (Heb 4:16). After he had gone in for himself and his house, he was to go into the Holy of Holies for the people. Alone.

- 17] And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.
- 18] And he shall go out unto the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about.
- 19] And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

Even the brazen altar itself must have the blood applied because this is where the sins of Israel were confessed and atoned; it is polluted because of the sin of the people. All of this is to remind us of the One who died on the Cross for us. It is not the Cross that is important: it is the One who died on the Cross (1 Pet 1:18-19; Heb 9:23).

The Preparation of the People

- 20] And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy *place*, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:
- 21] And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:
- 22] And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

The laying on of hands denotes the fact that this goat is now identified with the sins of Israel (Isa 53:6; 2 Cor 5:21). It has been suggested that “the thief knew that those wounds in the body of Christ were not the wounds of Christ, but of the thief.”

The scapegoat was taken out until it disappeared in the wilderness. (Cf. Ps 103:12; Isa 38:17; 44:22; Jer 50:20; 31:34.) [Just as all that contaminates is excluded from the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:27)].

Faith transfers our sins; Christ removes them; God forgets them.

- 23] And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy *place*, and shall leave them there:
- 24] And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.

The ritual of Yom Kippur is now over. All that is left is for Aaron to wash up. This has no counterpart with Christ. When His work was finished, He sat down at the right hand of God.

- 25] And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar.

The fat, the two kidneys, and the fat on them (3:10), and all the fat on the inwards; the blazing flame declaring the dedication of his whole heart and inmost desires, all sent up in one flame to God.

- 26] And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.
- 27] And the bullock *for* the sin offering, and the goat *for* the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy *place*, shall *one* carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.
- 28] And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

All that was contaminated by contact with the live goat had to be cleansed. The carcasses of the bullock and the goat were taken outside the camp and burned, and the people that did that had to wash themselves.

God is impressing these people that they were sinners—lost sinners—and He is showing that He is holy and that sin separates from God.

- 29] And *this* shall be a statute for ever unto you: *that* in the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, *whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you:
- 30] For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.
- 31] It *shall be* a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever.

This seventh month to be as memorable as the seventh day of the week. Isaiah reproves the neglected observance of this holy day in 58:3f. This may also refer to the times of the year of jubilee which began on the evening of *Yom Kippur*. Giving food to the poor, etc. (Ex 23:11).

- 32] And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, *even* the holy garments:
- 33] And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.
- 34] And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the only day of mourning and fasting which God gave His people. It is not a day of celebration: it is a day of contrition and affliction for sin. This is the basis of fasting in the Old Testament.

This day was to be observed until the permanent and eternal sacrifice for sin came. It was fulfilled by Christ in His death.

* * *

“Man of Sorrows!” what a name
For the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood;
Sealed my pardon with His blood;
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Guilty, vile and helpless, we;
Spotless Lamb of God was He;
“Full atonement!” can it be?
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

“Lifted up” was He to die,
“It is finished,” was His cry;
Now in heav’n exalted height;
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

When He comes, our glorious King,
All His ransomed home to bring,
Then anew this song we’ll sing:
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

—P. P. Bliss

[Much of this was excerpted from J. Vernon McGee, and Andrew Bonar; see bibliography.]

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What were the specifics concerning Nadab and Abihu? What was the relevance to this chapter?
- 2) How many times did the High Priest go into the Holy of Holies?

- 3) When? And Why?
- 4) Explain why there were two goats involved.
- 5) Differentiate between the elements that were prophetic of Christ and those which were not.

Discussion Questions:

(Where two people agree, one is redundant.)

- 1) Explain the difference between atonement of, and remission of, sins.
- 2) Why will there be offerings in the Millennium if Christ died once and for all?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) The word *כַּפַּר* *kaphar*, is used in Genesis 6:14 as the pitch for covering Noah's ark. Why?

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 17 – 20.

Session 10 Leviticus 17 - 20

Review

Leviticus is unfolding bedrock truths for Christians today. Although these things were given to Israel in a literal way, and though the reason for doing these things has passed away, they still are instructive with great spiritual lessons for us today.

Key Topic

The focus is now given to the one place of sacrifice and the value of the blood.

This chapter had direct application to the days in the wilderness when the nation was encamped around the Tabernacle. It isn't restricted to the *ceremonial* use of animals; it deals with the food the people ate.

After Israel was scattered throughout the land of Canaan, some of them lived a hundred miles or more from the Tabernacle; it would not have been feasible for them to bring the animals they were to use for food and slay them at the Tabernacle. *In Deuteronomy God revised these instructions when they were ready to enter the land* (Deut 12:15-16, 20-25).

Why all this? Israel had just left Egypt where they had been immersed in a pagan, idol-worshipping culture. There was always the danger of lapsing back into idolatry.

The word translated “devils” in v.7 is actually *שֵׁטִיר* *seirim*, which means “hairy one” and refers to goats. The Egyptians worshiped *Mendes*, the goat god; and the Greeks worshiped the goat god as *Pan*, familiar to us from literature as with tail, horns, and cloven feet. Medieval Christianity then identified this form as the devil. (We get our word *panic* from this period of time when it described the terror the Devil caused.)

From this we understand why Israel was forbidden to kill any animal in any place but the Tabernacle: to prevent them from offering to Pan, the goat god.

We also learn that under no circumstance was the blood to be eaten: it represents life. Life was sacred. Even animals were not be slain needlessly.

Blood speaks of the sacrifice of Christ. It was the means of expiation; it was the symbol of reconciliation, the type of the one great vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. [*Whenever there is a hesitation to mention sin, there is an accompanying playing down of the precious blood of Christ.*]

Leviticus 17

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them; This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded, saying,

These instructions were not for Moses and Aaron alone, but for the entire nation.

God is now going to reach into their private lives. He made a difference between the clean and unclean animals in Chapter 11; now He establishes the regulations by which there were to eat the clean animals. They are to be different than the nations around them, as will be emphasized again in the next chapter (Lev 18:3).

- 3] What man soever *there be* of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth *it* out of the camp,
- 4] And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people:
- 5] To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them *for* peace offerings unto the LORD.
- 6] And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

This is one of those strange laws which do not concern the ceremonial offering of sacrifices. These animals were for food. God was at their dinner table: the heathen gods were to be shut out.

Among the heathen, meat was offered to an idol before it was eaten. This was a roadblock to the road to idolatry. When they were in Egypt, even though they were slaves, they were idolaters (Ezek 20:6-8). They had worshiped animals, and the shedding of blood and the offering of meat were used in idolatry. God is trying to break them from that sordid background. (It only took a few days to get Israel out of Egypt. It took 40 years to get Egypt out of Israel.)

This is also the background to understand the significance of Paul's injunctions to the Corinthians in 1 Cor 8:1-3 and 10:1-33. The offering of meat to idols was an integral part of the distribution system to local market. The converted Gentiles didn't have any qualms about eating the meat because they realized that the idol was nothing. But the Jewish Christian didn't like to eat with a Gentile Christian because of this difference over the meat offered to idols. This chapter in Leviticus gives us the background for the Corinthian passages.

This is among the things that get resolved in the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15.

- 7] And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

The word for "devils" is actually the "hairy ones," or goats. The same word is used in reference to the idolatry that Jeroboam established in the Northern Kingdom:

And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made. And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

2 Chronicles 11:15, 16

[Note: the faithful "out of all the tribes of Israel" thus migrated southward to where the worship of the Living God was "politically correct" (v.16). This is one of the many passages that totally punctures the myth of the "Ten Lost Tribes" of Israel. (See our *Expositional Commentary on Joshua* for a detailed exploration of this common misconception.)

There is a danger to all of us—even today—of returning to idolatry. The popular emphasis on nature worship is a form of pantheism. Also, all covetousness is idolatry; Cf. 1 Cor 10:14; 2 Cor 6:14-17.

- 8] And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice,

There was always a danger from any heathen dwelling in their midst. A little leaven can leaven the whole lump.

- 9] And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.

There was only one place for sacrifice.

- 10] And whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.
- 11] For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.

This is widely recognized as one of the key verses in this book. “The life is in the blood.” It is restated in v.14.

- 12] Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.
- 13] And whatsoever man *there be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.
- 14] For *it is* the life of all flesh; the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

Jesus said something quite shocking:

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

John 6:54-56

What did He mean by that? Jesus is saying that we are to accept His shed blood for our sins by faith and then we receive life. He shed His blood and gave us His life. The life is in the blood.

This is a great eternal truth. This explains why Abel’s sacrifice was more excellent than Cain’s. It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. There is nothing offensive about the blood: the offense is in the sin that required it.

*What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Oh! Precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

- 15] And every soul that eateth that which died *of itself*, or that which was torn *with beasts, whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.
- 16] But if he wash *them* not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.

Leviticus 18

Up to now the regulations concerning ceremonial cleansing have been given. In these next three chapters—18, 19, and 20—we find a section which applies the Ten Commandments to real-life situations. The section opens with a preamble (18:1-5) and closes with a formal post-script at the close of Chapter 20.

In large measure, this section is a total refutation of moral relativism. Three times in the preamble—vv. 2, 4 and 5—God says “I am the Lord.” God makes the rules! He alone determines what is right and what is wrong. Furthermore, He demands that His people be holy.

This chapter deals primarily with the Seventh Commandment. Sexual sins are main subject.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **I am the LORD your God.**
- 3] After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.
- 4] Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: **I am the LORD your God.**
- 5] Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: **I am the LORD.**

They had just come out of Egypt and had been doing disgusting sins; all that was forbidden. Both the Egyptians and the Canaanites were grossly immoral. There’s nothing “new” in the “new morality.” It is just a return to the old way of life that God abhors (Cf. 1 Thess 4:5-7; Eph 4:17-19; 1 Cor 5:11; 2 Pet 1:4).

We are called to holy living (Cf. 1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:16). [In “trying to reach the crowds,” be sure you don’t become part of the crowd!]

Sexual Relations with Relatives

- 6] None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover *their* nakedness: **I am** the LORD.
- 7] The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: *she is* thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

- 8] The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it *is* thy father's nakedness.

These warnings are against incest. Yet this sin was in the Corinthian church. Cf. 1 Corinthians 5:1.

- 9] The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, *whether she be* born at home, or born abroad, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.
- 10] The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs *is* thine own nakedness.
- 11] The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she *is* thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.
- 12] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she *is* thy father's near kinswoman.
- 13] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for she *is* thy mother's near kinswoman.
- 14] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she *is* thine aunt.
- 15] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she *is* thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

Egypt practiced these sins, esp. those of v.9. The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies practiced intermarriage of brother and sister. In the beginning, there was no law against this: Cain and Seth had to marry their own sisters. Abraham married his half-sister. However, now the Law halts this practice.

- 16] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it *is* thy brother's nakedness.

There is an exception to this. Can you recall it? The law of the kinsman-redeemer, stated in Deuteronomy 25:5-10. It figures prominently as a core issue in the Book of Ruth.

Other Sexual Sins

- 17] Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; *for they are* her near kinswomen: it *is* wickedness.
- 18] Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex *her*, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life *time*.

These relationships are by blood, not marriage. This was the problem Jacob faced having two sisters as wives: Leah and Rachel. Certainly not

a happy situation; however, that was long *before* the Law had been given.

- 19] Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.
- 20] Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.

God is raising barriers to protect the home from the licentious practices of the heathen surrounding them. We have Madison Avenue and the entertainment industry which deliberately focuses on these dangerous areas; Cf. 1 Corinthians 7.

- 21] And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

They literally heated a bronze image of Molech red hot, and placed the bodies of children in its arms (Cf. 2 Kgs 17:31; Jer 7:31; Ezek 23:37-39). *We do worse!* We kill the babies in their "Holy of Holies": their mother's womb. Remember, John the Baptist began his ministry when was 9 inches long and weighed about a pound and a half: he was spirit-filled and leapt for joy while in Elisabeth's womb!

- 22] Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it *is* abomination.

It has become politically protected in our decadent society, but God condemns it! In both the Old Testament and the New Testament:

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient...

Romans 1:24-28

What's even worse? Parading it around in public:

Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

Isaiah 5:18

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was not simply homosexuality: it was the public condoning of it. Cf. Gen 19:4. Lot “sat in the gate;” i.e., he was on the city council.

- 23] Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it *is* confusion.

This is unspeakably debased and disgusting. If you think this was confined to the fertility cults and nature worship of the ancient past, ask the police department of your city.

- 24] Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:
25] And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.

The nations in Canaan were cast out because they committed these abominable and atrocious sins. They were put out of the land because God couldn’t tolerate what was taking place.

They were being eaten up by venereal disease. Why do you think that they were not to touch even a garment in the city of Jericho? The AIDS epidemic is spreading because it is politically protected. That’s why Dr. Stan Montiet’s famous book was entitled, *AIDS: The Unnecessary Epidemic*.

- 26] Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations; *neither* any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you:
27] (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which *were* before you, and the land is defiled;)
28] That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that *were* before you.
29] For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people.
30] Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that *ye* commit not *any one* of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I *am* the LORD your God.

This is the very cloud that hangs over America: we have become the primary exporter of everything that God abhors. See our briefing packages, *Hosea, Can You See?* and *Twilight’s Last Gleaming*.

Leviticus 19

Holiness is not just a theory. God intended that it involved every facet of our lives. The law demanded holiness, but couldn’t supply it.

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:19-20

Fortunately, God has given us His Holy Spirit to indwell us so that “sin ain’t gonna reign no more.” Cf. Romans 6.

“I am the LORD,” occurs 16 times in this chapter. It is God who draws the line between right and wrong in absolute terms.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2] Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God *am* holy.

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1 Peter 1:13-16

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

The good news for us is that today the dynamic is supplied to the believer in the person of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Romans 3:3-4

- 3] Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.

Why the focus on the father and mother? The parent stands in the place of God for the child. Things must begin at home. “And keep my Sabbaths.” See our briefing package, *The Seventh Day*.

- 4] Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

This covers the first two commandments. We see idolatry and meaningless rituals in religion today. Pageantry, yes. Meaning, no.

- 5] And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it at your own will.
6] It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if ought remain until the third day, it shall be burnt in the fire.
7] And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it *is* abominable; it shall not be accepted.
8] Therefore *every one* that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

Little new here. Offerings may be voluntary, but they are to be followed through meticulously. We must come to God on His terms. “If you’re going to do it voluntarily, fine; but do it right.”

It is disturbing to see Christians presume to take special liberties or treat things casually just because “it’s a ministry.” There is such a joy and encouragement when you encounter true professionals with real commitment to their tasks; but it seems only too rare within the “Christian” community...

- 9] And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.
10] And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather *every* grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

The law of gleanings is an underlying background to the Book of Ruth (2:2). Cf. Lev 19:9, 16; 23:22; Deut 24:19-21. God did not put anyone on charity. The poor were taken care of by being given the opportunity to work.

- 11] Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.
12] And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

This restates the 8th and 9th Commandments (Ex 20:15-16).

The 3rd commandment is included in v.12. God’s name is holy. In business, God’s man is to demonstrate the holiness of God’s name by honest and true dealings.

- 13] Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob *him*: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.
14] Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.

Straightforward; little amplification needed; except to acknowledge the rarity...

- 15] Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

Four things belong to a judge: to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially.

Socrates

Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge that no king can corrupt.

Shakespeare, King Henry VIII

- 16] Thou shalt not go up and down *as* a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD.
17] Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.
18] Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

Talebearing is slander. “You can’t believe everything you hear, but you can repeat it.” (!) The tongue is the most dangerous thing in the world. The most painful sin in the world is gossip...

- 19] Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.

Teaching that there is to be no mingling of truth and error...

- 20] And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that *is* a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

- 21] And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, *even* a ram for a trespass offering.
- 22] And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done: and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

God is not lending approval to slavery. Cf. Mt 19:8 on divorce, et al.

- 23] And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.
- 24] But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the LORD *withal*.
- 25] And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: *I am* the LORD your God.

Most of us are not dendrologists; but apparently young fruit trees will grow faster and yield better if the buds are nipped off (circumcised?) the first few years.

- 26] Ye shall not eat *any thing* with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times.
- 27] Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.
- 28] Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: *I am* the LORD.

Here are six commandments that condemn the practices of the heathen cultures in Canaan.

- 29] Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.
- 30] Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: *I am* the LORD.

The Sabbath was to be observed strictly (Ex 31:13-17).

- 31] Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: *I am* the LORD your God.

One of the many warnings. Don't regard these things as harmless superstitions; they are dangerous, of supernatural and satanic character, and to be avoided.

- 32] Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: *I am* the LORD.

Respect old age. Often repeated in Scripture.

- 33] And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him.
- 34] *But* the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: *I am* the LORD your God.

The stranger was to be treated kindly and was to be loved. It was a reminder that they were strangers in Egypt.

- 35] Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.
- 36] Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: *I am* the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

They were to be honest; representing God in their business dealings.

- 37] Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: *I am* the LORD.

Leviticus 20 The Death Penalty

God instituted capital punishment!

Nowhere in the Word of God is punishment given for the purpose of reforming a criminal. This was not the objective. If you don't believe in the death penalty, let me you ask the same question that pervades the Book of Job: Do you mean to say that you are better than God? He makes no apology for the death penalty.

So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

Number 35:33

It is interesting that there were no prisons in ancient Israel.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever *he be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth *any* of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

The worship of Molech was savage, cruel, brutal, and satanic. Child brutality in our own land could be curtailed if we had stronger judges.

- 3] And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.

Idolatry was high treason in a nation that was a theocracy.

- 4] And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not:
5] Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.

Even to know of such is misprision of a felony.

- 6] And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.

False religion is definitely satanic and highly dangerous. Satan is a liar and the father of the lie (Jn 8:44). Note v.27! Why did God institute the death penalty for participating in these rites? It was spiritual adultery and treason.

- 7] Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God.
8] And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I *am* the LORD which sanctify you.
9] For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood *shall be* upon him.

The 5th commandment. Cf. Rom 1:31; 2 Tim 3:2-3.

- 10] And the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even he* that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.
11] And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.
12] And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood *shall be* upon them.
13] If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.
14] And if a man take a wife and her mother, it *is* wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.
15] And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

- 16] And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

Adultery in every form was punished with death. Sins of sex have caused the most powerful empires to topple.

- 17] And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness; it *is* a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.
18] And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.
19] And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.
20] And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.
21] And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it *is* an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.
22] Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out.

Their failure to obey God brought on them the Babylonian captivity. Cf. 2 Kgs 21:1-2, 6, 9, et al.

- 23] And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them.
24] But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I *am* the LORD your God, which have separated you from *other* people.

Cf. Deut 29:24-28

- 25] Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

God began with their diet and He concludes with it.

- 26] And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD *am* holy, and have severed you from *other* people, that ye should be mine.

Israel has returned to the land, but they have not returned to God.

27] A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

* * *

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) What is an exception to Leviticus 18:16? How and where is it particularly significant?
- 2) Why was it forbidden to kill any animal *except* in the Tabernacle?
- 3) What was a “city of refuge”? How are they prophetically relevant?

Discussion Questions:

(Where two people agree, one is redundant.)

- 1) Explain what Jesus meant in John 6:54-56.
- 2) Is it possible for the Christian to be free from the power of sin? How?
- 3) Is capital punishment appropriate for today?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) What are the textual evidences that demonstrate that the “Ten Lost Tribes” is an unbiblical myth?
- 2) Discuss the fallacy in “everyone did what was right in their own eyes.” (A keynote of the entire book of Judges, and the foundational ethic in today’s “value relativism.”)
- 3) Explore the prophetic implications of the Law of the Kindman-Redeemer in Deuteronomy 25:5-10, and the Avenger of Blood.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapters 21 and 22.

Session 11 Leviticus 21 - 22 Personal Purity

Review

In Chapters 11 - 20, we have been studying the law as it relates to the people. Now we come to the law as it relates to the personal purity of the priests.

A Kingdom of Priests

It had been God’s original intention that the entire nation should be a *kingdom of priests*:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Exodus 19:5, 6

Their disobedience with the golden calf destroyed the possibility of the realization of a perfect and ideal society. It was only the tribe of Levi that stood with Moses (Ex 32:26), so God selected just this one tribe to be priests. In the Millennium that perfect society will be attained. Then the nation of Israel will be the priests here on earth for the earthly people, the Gentile nations. There will be three groups of people:

- 1) The church, in the New Jerusalem;
- 2) The nation Israel here on this earth;
- 3) The saved Gentiles on this earth.

[See our briefing package, *Thy Kingdom Come* for an exploration of the Millennium.]

The Church as a Royal Priesthood

Every believer is a priest and has access to the throne of grace today.

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: {peculiar: or, purchased}

Leviticus 21

{praises: or, virtues} *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*

1 Peter 2:9, 10

Furthermore, every believer-priest is required to live a holy life, which is possible only by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. {shall: or, will} Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:8-11

We are called to a higher way of life:

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind... That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. {true...: or, holiness of truth}

Ephesians 4:17, 22-24

Saved by grace, the child of God has been called to a high place in his life. A believer should be careful about accepting an office in the church. If he becomes an officer, he should measure up to that responsibility. Jesus, our High Priest, measured up to His office:

For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. {consecrated: Gr. perfected}

Hebrews 7:16-28

Jesus was both the High Priest and the sacrifice: He offered Himself. The Law now addresses the priests and the high priests. There is a sense in which it is to impact us as believers...

Defilement of Priesthood prevented in human kinship and friendship

- 1] And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people:

Death is a penalty of sin; the priests are not to be contaminated with sin. Physical contact with the dead brings defilement.

- 2] But for his kin, that is near unto him, *that is*, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother,
- 3] And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.

However, the priests was permitted to defile himself for close relatives. These listed here are all blood relations and by nature close to the priest. He must be permitted to express his feelings of sympathy and grief as a priest of God. (He should be a type of Jesus, who could weep at the grave of Lazarus and be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.) He was not, however, permitted to defile himself for the dead of any others. He could mourn in his heart, but was denied physical contact.

- 4] *But* he shall not defile himself, *being* a chief man among his people, to profane himself.

His office required of him a stricter separation than any common man among the people.

There are places that we cannot go; not because they are “wrong,” but because we don’t want to give offense to anyone, or give occasion of the enemies of God to blaspheme. We are in a position of special responsibility.

- 5] They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

These were practices of the superstitious heathen did, as an act of mourning for the dead. The priest was not to imitate the practices of the pagans around him.

- 6] They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy.

Their mourning was to be that appropriate as if cupbearers to the King (“the bread of their God”). Their position demanded dignity and restraint as God’s representatives. The same applies to those in the church today.

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; {men: or, things} Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. {as...: or, in teaching}

Titus 1:7-9

- 7] They shall not take a wife *that is* a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband: for he *is* holy unto his God.
- 8] Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, *am* holy.

Even in his personal and private life he is to reveal the holiness of God in his position. The priest is a type of Christ. Also, the body of believers—called the Bride of Christ—is to be cleansed before she is to be presented to Him without spot or wrinkle (Cf. Eph 5:26, 27).

- 9] And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.

Why? Because of the position of her father.

The High Priest

- 10] And *he that is* the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes;
- 11] Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother;
- 12] Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: I *am* the LORD.

This is the first mention of the high priest. As God’s anointed priest, he is to be separated unto the Lord. He wore a crown on which was inscribed, “Holiness unto the Lord.” (You can view this when you visit the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.)

He was not to rend his holy garments. (Contrast the conduct at Jesus’ trial, Mt 26:65). He was not to be a violent man. He was not to attend the

funeral of either his father or his mother: he must be totally dedicated to God and separated because of his anointed position.

- 13] And he shall take a wife in her virginity.
- 14] A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, *or* an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.
- 15] Neither shall he profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him.

His wife, too, had to measure up. He was forbidden to marry a harlot, a profane or a divorced woman.

Disqualification for Priestly Function

This list includes blindness, lameness, flat nose (?), dwarfism, scabs, and other deformities and blemishes. There are no compromises to any misguided concept of “equality” or “fairness.” The role required no yielding of standards.

- 16] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 17] Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever *he be* of thy seed in their generations that hath *any* blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God. {bread: or, food}
- 18] For whatsoever man *he be* that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous,
- 19] Or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded,
- 20] Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken; {a dwarf: or, too slender}
- 21] No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.

Why should this be? Just as no sacrifice was to be offerered that had a blemish, no priest could serve if he had a blemish. Christ, again, is the example: no blemish, rather beauty, glory, and excellency.

- 22] He shall eat the bread of his God, *both* of the most holy, and of the holy.

Here is that phrase again, extolling the office.

- 23] Only he shall not go in unto the vail, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.
- 24] And Moses told *it* unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.

Although those with a blemish were forbidden to serve, they were not shut out from the table of the Lord. God provided for them.

Many believers have a serious handicap that may bar them from certain forms of service, yet they are genuine saints of God, and have all the rights and privileges of believers in every respect.

Leviticus 22

Defilement through disease, diet, and the dead.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they profane not my holy name *in those things* which they hallow unto me: I *am* the LORD.

There was to be a separation of the sacred and the secular. Aaron was not to bring things of the Tabernacle home with him. We are not to treat the sacred and holy things of God as if they were commonplace.

- 3] Say unto them, Whosoever *he be* of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence: I *am* the LORD.

The priest was not to go about his office in a careless or slipshod manner. He was to be put out of office if he did that.

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32

- 4] What man soever of the seed of Aaron *is* a leper, or hath a running issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing *that is* unclean *by* the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him; {running...: Heb. running of the reins}
- 5] Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath;
- 6] The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.
- 7] And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it *is* his food.
- 8] That which dieth of itself, or is torn *with beasts*, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I *am* the LORD.

- 9] They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.

The priests were to be holy in all of their relationships: in their homes, in the social contacts, in their business contacts, in any way they touched the world. They were to be examples. He had to walk the talk.

- 10] There shall no stranger eat *of* the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat *of* the holy thing.

The sanctity of the Tabernacle required the excluding of the stranger. Only the sons of God can worship God.

- 11] But if the priest buy *any* soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat. {with...: Heb. with the purchase of his money}
- 12] If the priest's daughter also be *married* unto a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things. {a stranger: Heb. a man a stranger}
- 13] But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat: but there shall no stranger eat thereof.

Only those who belong to the priest, those who were born in his house, can eat of his meat. If a priest's daughter married a Gentile, she was excluded from access to the holy things. If she was widowed or divorced and returned to her father's house, she could eat her father's meat.

- 14] And if a man eat *of* the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth *part* thereof unto it, and shall give *it* unto the priest with the holy thing.
- 15] And they shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer unto the LORD;
- 16] Or suffer them to bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things: for I the LORD do sanctify them. {suffer...: or, lade themselves with the iniquity of trespass in their eating}

Ignorance of the law affords no excuse. The man who eats of holy things unwittingly is guilty. A fine is expected of him. This placed an added responsibility upon the priests to guard the holy place. Indifference or irreverence is immediately detected by outside unbelievers and impacts their concept of God. Jesus said,

Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Matthew 18:7

Discernment of Offerings

- 17] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
18] Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever *he be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;
19] *Ye shall offer* at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.
20] *But* whatsoever hath a blemish, *that* shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.

This section contains the rules and regulations for the people bringing their offerings, and they had to be strictly enforced by the priests. No offering with a blemish was to be permitted because these offering pointed to Christ. Any departure would lower the concept of the person of Christ.

- 21] And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish *his* vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein. {sheep: or, goats}
22] Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.
23] Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer *for* a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted. {lamb: or, kid}
24] Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make *any offering thereof* in your land.
25] Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption *is* in them, *and* blemishes *be* in them: they shall not be accepted for you.
26] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
27] When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
28] And *whether it be* cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day. {ewe: or, she goat}

Natural deformity in an animal, as well as cuts, bruises, or broken bones, comprised blemishes. Any of these would result in rejection. No stranger was to make an offering. Any animal had to be at least seven days old (representing completion).

It was in this point that Israel failed miserably (Cf. Mal 1:6-14).

- 29] And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the LORD, offer *it* at your own will.
30] On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I *am* the LORD.

The offering was to be a free will offering. This represented the Father who gave His Son in love and the Son who came "...for the joy that was set before him..." (Heb 12:2). The offering must be eaten the same day. No opportunity must be allowed for the slightest bit of corruption.

- 31] Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them: I *am* the LORD.
32] Neither shall ye profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: I *am* the LORD which hallow you,
33] That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD.

They were to be a witness for God. What was their motivation for their obedience? Dr. Andrew Bonar suggests 5 reasons:

- 1) "I am the Lord."
- 2) "I will be hallowed among the children of Israel"
- 3) "I am the Lord which hallow you"
- 4) "I am the Lord which brought you out of Egypt"
- 5) "Your God."

"I am the Lord which hallow you." There is liberty for the believer today, but liberty does not grant license. The holiness and righteousness of God must be zealously maintained in all our worship.

"I am the Lord which brought you out of Egypt." God has saved you, by grace. Grace does not require payment (or it wouldn't be grace.) But do you love Him? Do you want to serve Him? If He is your God, you represent Him. The world is reading you. Men are not reading the Bible today. They are reading you and me. What are they reading in you?

Study Questions:

(For the diligent Student.)

- 1) Give examples where the tribe of Levi acquitted itself positively.
- 2) Contrast the priesthoods of Aaron and that of Melchizedek.
- 3) What is an exception to Leviticus 18:16? How and where is it particularly significant?

- 4) Why did the offerings have to be totally free of blemishes?

Discussion Questions:

(Where two people agree, one is redundant.)

- 1) Is it unfair to deny equal opportunities of service to any in the fellowship?
- 2) In light of Leviticus 21, can a pastor marry a divorced wife?

For Further Research:

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Why do some see the Millennium as the most evil of all the dispensations? It will have righteous judgment, absence of want, full knowledge of the Lord, no disease, etc. Satan will be bound.
- 2) Can a clone be a priest? (Cf. 22:10)
- 3) Can a clone be saved? (Isa 26:14 Hebrew).

Preparation for Next Session:

“The Jews catechism is his calendar.” Read Chapter 23. Chart the seven feasts.

Session 12 Leviticus 23 The Once and Future Calendar

The Jew's catechism is his calendar.

Samson Raphael Hirsch

The Law is our schoolmaster (Gal 3:25); and The Jewish Calendar is the ultimate teaching aid (Mt 5:17; Rom 15:4).

Calendars

- All ancient 360-day calendars changed in 701 B.C. (See *Signs in the*

Heavens for discussion of possible Mars fly-bys, etc.)

- Pope Gregory XIII, 1582: 365 1/4 days
- Lunar calendar: 11 1/2 days shorter than solar year.
- Hezekiah: Intercalary months added for seven leap years of 13 months in cycle of 19 years, on the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, 19th, years.
- Jewish day starts at sunset.

Leviticus 23

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts.

The details for most of these feasts were given elsewhere, but here they are set out in order.

Spring Feasts (Month of Nisan)

Passover

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Feast of First Fruits

[+ 49 days: Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*)]

Fall Feasts (Month of Tishri)

Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*)

(Not to be confused with *Rosh Hoshana*, the civil New Year, occurring on the same day.)

Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*)

Feast of Tabernacles (*Succoth*)

- 3] Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

The Seventh Day: Sabbath

The “heptadic” (sevenfold) structure is evident in the calendar too: Seven days to a week; seven weeks to the Feast of Weeks; seven months to the Feast of Tabernacles; seven years to a Sabbatical Year. The Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee are found in Leviticus 25.

The Sabbath is pre-Mosaic and goes back to the original creation. See our Briefing Pack, *The Seventh Day*, for a discussion. Anyone who thinks this is a simple, easily resolved issue hasn't studied it.

- 4] These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

God set their feast times:

“Holy convocation”: מִקְרָא *miqraw*, rehearsal;

“Seasons”: מוֹעֵד *mowed*, to keep an appointment.

(Lev 23; also Num 28-29; Deut 16.)

(We will defer some provocative discoveries hidden in the text itself until the end of this session.)

Prophetic Role

Paul tell us that these feasts are not only commemorative, they are also prophetic:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come....

Colossians 2:16, 17

The hermeneutics of the *Midrash* also highlights that: *Prophecy is pattern, not just prediction*. The NT is in OT concealed; the OT is in NT revealed.

Passover

- 5] In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. Commemorates deliverance from Egypt (Ex 12:1-14; 43-48; Lev 23:5).

Note: Israel = “my firstborn” (Ex 4; 21-23). Jesus also reckoned as “His Firstborn” (Zech 12:10). God had predicted deliverance 430 years earlier (Gen 15:13-16—to the day!).

Lambs observed: 10th - 14th. Slain “between the evenings” of 14th. [This would be Friday 13th the on the Egyptian calendar, a *Gentile* tradition in the making! (Immanuel Veilikovsky).¹]

Originally killed by head of household, not priests (transferred to the Temple (Deut 16:1-6).

Not a bone to be broken (Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20). “No bones broken” (Jn 19:31-33, 36).

Entire lamb to be consumed; nothing left to the next day (Ex 12:1-13; Lev 23:4,5).

Jesus First introduced by John the Baptist as “the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world” (John 1:29, 36).

Our Passover (1 Cor 5:7; Isa 53; Ps 22). Presented on the 10th of Nisan: John 12:1 Observed (Mt 21:23-27; 23). Pilate: “I find not fault in him” (John 19:4). Without blemish (1 Pet 1:18-21). And He will be recognized as “The Lamb that had been slain” in Rev 5:6.

Current traditions:

Bedikat hametz: ritual search for leaven...

Matzah: pierced, striped? Three: middle one broken = *aphikomen*; half wrapped in cloth and hidden?

Blood provided life (Lev 17:11; Mt 26:27, 28).

Four cups:

“Bring out”

“Delivering”

“Redemption/Blessing”

“Taking out”

Mishna:² Wine mixed with warm water? (Jn 19:34).

Uncircumcised could not participate.

Passover Lamb = “His Body.”

Haggadah = “showing forth” (Ex 13:8).

Application: His blood on the doorposts of our heart: 1 Jn 1:7; 1 Cor 15:51-57; Eph 2:13; Jn 5:24.

Circumcision is of the heart: Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Gal 3:26; Phil 3:3; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15; 2 Cor 5:17.

Feast of Unleavened Bread

- 6] And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.
- 7] In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.
- 8] But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

Hag haMatzah: One of only three feasts which were compulsory: Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut 16:16).

Leaven

Type of sin: corrupts by puffing up

OT: Ex 12:15; 13:7; Lev 2:11; 6:17; 10:12

NT type: Mt 16:6; Lk 13:21; 1 Cor 5:6-8; Gal 5:7-9. [Cf. Woman and the leaven? Mt. 13:33.]

Other Bread Models

Manna

Melchizedek: Bread and Wine (Gen 14) [Who gives to whom?]

Joseph: Baker (broken)

Wine Steward (redeemed) Gen 40

Frees from the old life, bondage; call to separation (Eph 4:22).

“I Am the bread of Life”: John 6:32-35; 47-51

Jesus “made sin for us”: 2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 3:5.

Feast of First Fruits

- 9] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 10] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:
- 11] And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Thus, always on a Sunday.

- 12] And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD.

- 13] And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.
- 14] And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

First fruits: representative of the entire harvest.

Jesus = Fulfillment 1 Cor 15:20-23; Eph 1:6; Rom 11:16 (Cf. Job 19:25-26) [Mt 27:52-53? Some argue that a “sheaf” (v.11) requires a multiple.]
Application: Gal 2:20; Rom 6:11-14; Jas 1:18.

There was no sin offering included because that was included in the death of Christ (2 Cor 5:21).

When did Noah’s “new beginning” start? (Gen 8:4). Note: There are *Two* Calendars: Ex 12:2

Months	Old	New
Tishri (Ethanim)	1	7
Cheshvan (Bul)	2	8
Chisleu	3	9
Tevet	4	10
Sh’vat	5	11
Adar	6	12
Nisan, Aviv	7	1
Ilyar (Zif)	8	2
Sivan	9	3
Tammuz	10	4
Av	11	5
Elul	12	6

Passover: 14th of Nisan. 1st month of the religious year; 7th month of the civil (Genesis) year. How long was Christ in the grave? Three days.

Resurrection, our “new beginning” in Christ: 14 + 3 days = 17th of Nisan, 7th month on the Genesis calendar! *Our* “new beginning” in Christ was also on the anniversary of the earth’s “new beginning” under Noah!

[In their flight after Passover, Israel retrieved the body of Joseph from his tomb (Ex 13:19-20). After Passover, Jesus was retrieved from another Joseph’s tomb on this anniversary.]

Shavuot, Feast of Pentecost

15] And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete:

Which is why it is known as the “Feast of Weeks.”

16] Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

Which is why it is also known as the “Feast of Pentecost” (50).

17] Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be **baken with leaven**(!); they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.

What? Leaven! *This is the only case where leavened bread is specified!*
This gives the feast a non-Jewish flavor, or coloration... All nations? Gentiles!?

18] And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD.

19] Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings.

20] And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits for a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21] And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

This was a second of the three compulsory occasions (Deut 16:16).

22] And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God.

The Law of Gleaning (prominent in the Book of Ruth, cf. Lev 19:9, 10; Deut 24:19, 21).

Hag Ha Shavuot; Also, Hag HaKazir, The Feast of Harvest (“the 1st Harvest”).

Observance:

Two loaves of leavened bread (integrated? Not offered on altar).
Two lambs offered (Jew + Gentile? Law vs. Grace?).

Fulfillment: 2:1-47. “When the day of Pentecost was fully come...” Acts 2:1.

Compare closely Ex 19 and Acts 2: Birth of Israel and the birth of the Church?

Giving of the Torah (Ex 19); (thus also called “The Feast of Revelation”) 3rd day of 3rd month: 46 days; Moses to prepare for the 3rd day: 49 days. “Trumpet of God”: only twice in Bible: Giving of the Torah at Sinai (Ex 19:13, 16) and Rapture? (1 Thess 4:16).

Enoch Tradition: Born on the same day as *Shavuot*. Translated (raptured) on his birthday!?! [Earliest prophecy in the Bible by Enoch (of the Second Coming!) Jude 14, 15.]

Israel and Church are Distinct

Seventy Weeks, by Gabriel (Dan 9:24-27):

9:24	Scope of prophecy
9:25	69 weeks
9:26	(Interval, or “gap”)
9:27	70th week

(See *Daniel’s 70 Weeks* briefing package.)

Church hidden in OT (Eph 3:3-7). Luke 4:18, 19 vs. Isaiah 61:1, 2; note omission. Same gap between Rev 12:5 and 6. (Is the Man-child the ascension of the Body of Christ? or are both in view?) Israel temporarily set aside (Luke 19:42 vs. Rom 11:25). (A Gentile rapture on *Shavuot* could restart the clock for Israel?)

Yom Terurah, Feast of Trumpets

23] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

Yom Teruah; Not to be confused with *Rosh Hoshanna*, the “Chief of the Year,” or Jewish New Year, which is the civil holiday on the same day, the beginning of a Sabbatic month.

- 25] Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

(*Torah* = 1 day; a 2nd day added about 500 B.C.)

Teki'at shofar: ram's horn; not silver Temple trumpets. *Shofar*: Isa 58:1; 27:13.

Akedah: substitutionary ram. Left horn = “first trump”; right horn = “last trump.” Three series of 10 blasts each; then final blowing of 10 blasts: *Teki'ah Gedolah*, “the great blowing.” Not short blasts (= “alarm”); but long blasts = victory!

“The Last Trump”? (1 Cor 15:51-52; Cf. Mt 24:31) Note: 7th trumpet judgment of Revelation not “last” since trumpets will be blown in Millennial Temple, etc. (But 1 Thess 4:16-18: “The Trump of God;” only here and in Ex 19.)

Yomim Noraim, Days of Affliction

Seven days before Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement; suggestive of the Threshing floor? (Lk 3:16, 17); regarded by some as idiom of the Tribulation. [Note: Ruth (Gentile bride) at Boaz's feet (the kinsman-redeemer) during the threshing floor event (Ruth 3:8-9).]

Yom Kippur, Day of Atonement

- 26] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
27] Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Yom Kippur, 10th of Tishri; (Lev 16:1-19; 23:26-32; Heb 9:1-16). Most solemn of all feasts. This was covered in Chapter 16.

- 28] And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God.
29] For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.

- 30] And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.
31] Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.
32] It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

High priest: The only day he enters the Holy of Holies; sprinkles the Mercy Seat. God, who “dwelleth between the cherubim,” looking down on the broken law, is propitiated (*hilasterion*, Gr.) by the shed blood (of Christ, cf. Heb 9:1-16).

Two goats: *azazel*, scapegoat (Lev 16:20-34; Mt 27:33; 2 Cor 5:21; Isa 53:6; 52:15). [Lottery box for the Third Temple available for viewing at the Temple Institute in Jerusalem.]

Red Heifer (Num 19; Heb 9:13) Cf. John 2: water of purification to wine!

Veil: 4 inches thick (Josephus). Rent: Mt 27:50, 51; Heb 10:10, 14, 17-22; Isa 52:14, 15.

There is little relationship between Mosaic Judaism and Talmudic (“Rabbinic”) Judaism. The loss of the Temple for 19 centuries left them in a dilemma: Lev 17:11, etc. no altar; no shedding of blood; leads to a man-centered, good-works system of appeasement; prayer, charity, penitence...)

Succoth, Feast of Tabernacles

- 33] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
34] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.

Succoth (“Booths”); 15th of Tishri: five days (grace?) after *Yom Kippur*.

- 35] On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

This is the final of the three compulsory feasts (Deut 16:16).

- 36] Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.

- 37] These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day:
- 38] Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD.
- 39] Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.

The 8th day is *Shmini Atzeret* (Eighth Day of Assembly).

- 40] And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of the palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

Procession:

- Lulav willow: no fragrance, no fruit
- Myrtle: fragrance, no fruit
- Palm: no fragrance, fruit
- Ethrog citrus: fragrance + fruit

(Cf. Mt 13:3-9; 18-23; Rev 7:9)

Trees = men (Ps 1; Dan 4); John 7:2, 20, 37-39; from Rock (1 Cor 10; Rev 21:3-6; 38).

Sacrifices: 13 bulls, 2 rams, 14 lambs, 1 kid. 13, 12, 11... for 7 days = 70 (Cf. Gen 10, 70 nations; *Talmud*). Solomon dedicated the Temple on Feast of Tabernacles.

Transfiguration during Feasts of Booths? Cf. Peter: build three "succoths"? (Mt 17:4).

- 41] And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.
- 42] Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:
- 43] That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Temporary dwellings: Seven days + special sabbath; gaps in sides, roof: = wilderness wanderings... Feast = "rehearsal"; after the week, leave temporary dwellings for permanent (Hos 5:15-Hos 6:3; Zech 14:4, 9, 16).

- 44] And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

Hebrews 11 declares that,

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Hebrews 11:13

They were persuaded of them and they embraced them. This season will be observed during the Millennium:

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zechariah 14:16-18

The ELS discoveries

There has been a great deal of controversy over the "Bible Codes."³ The main flurry of controversy has been about the *equidistant letter sequences* that seem to be hidden within the Biblical text. An example of this occurs in Genesis 1:14:

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

The word *הַמּוֹעֲדִים*, *HaMoyadim*, here translated "seasons," means "the appointed times." When searched for as an equidistant letter sequence, this word appears only once in the Book of Genesis, at the interval of 70, clustering exactly where the word is spelled explicitly in the text, and where the calendar is established.

There are only 70 specially appointed times for holy days called *הַמּוֹעֲדִים*, *HaMoyadim*, in a year, as defined by Leviticus 23: 52 sabbaths, seven days of *Pesach* (encompassing Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Feast of First Fruits), one day for *Hag Ha Shavuot* (Feast of Pentecost), one day for *Yom Teruah* (Feast of Trumpets, which is coincident with *Rosh Hoshana*), one day for *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), 7 days for *Sukkot* (Feast of Booths), and one day of *Shmini*

Atzeret (Eighth Day of Assembly).⁴ $52 + 7 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 7 + 1 = 70$, the very interval where *HaMoyadim*, “the appointed times,” is encrypted in the text. Coincidence? I don’t think so.

The longer the word, the smaller its chances to be found in the text at any given interval. Statistically, the word *HaMoyadim* would be expected to occur only five times in the 78,064 letters of Genesis. In fact, it appears in this hidden form *only once* in Genesis; and on that one occasion its equidistant letter interval is exactly 70, and centered within the span of that hidden appearance is precisely its only open appearance in the text. The odds against this have been estimated at more than 70,000,000 to one.⁵

* * *

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) Explore the differences between the sidereal year, the solar year, the lunar year, and the Hebrew luni-solar composite.
- 2) Why is the Islamic calendar a lunar one?
- 3) How does the details of the Passover, instituted in Egypt as the prelude to the Exodus, anticipate Jesus Christ? And the Feast of Unleavened Bread? And the Feast of First Fruits?
- 4) How does the details of *Shavuot*, the Feast of Pentecost, suggest the Church?
- 5) What are the occasions that trumpets were used? What was the difference between the silver Temple trumpets and the ram’s horn (*Shofar*)?
- 6) Compare the accounts of Exodus 19 and Acts 2: the Birth of Israel and the birth of the Church.

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) Give examples of how “The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed; the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed” from the Hebrew calendar.

- 2) Give examples of how the calendar was relevant to major episodes in the Bible.
- 3) Why is the Hebrew calendar dated 3760 years earlier than our common calendar? How accurate do you think it is?
- 4) How can the peculiar statistics surrounding the appearance of *HaMoyadim* in the text be explained?
- 5) Is there a difference between the events of 1 Cor 15:51, 52 and Matthew 24:31?

Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) How accurate is the current Hebrew reckoning of the year?
- 2) Why did Hezekiah need to revise the Hebrew calendar after 701 B.C.?
- 3) Study the various offerings in Leviticus and the ways they point to Jesus Christ.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read the next two chapters, Chapter 24 and 25.

Notes:

1. Immanuel Veilikovsky, *Worlds in Collision*, 1951.
2. *Mishna*, Pesach, VII 13.
3. For a comprehensive discussion of this widely misunderstood topic, see *Cosmic Codes: Hidden Messages From the Edge of Eternity*, by this author and publisher.
4. Prof. Daniel Michelson, “Codes in the Torah,” *B’Or Ha’Torah*, No.16, 1987, published by the Association of Religious Professionals from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in Israel, p.31.
5. Jeffrey Satinover, *Cracking the Bible Code*, William Morrow & Co, New York, 1997, p.125.

Session 13 Leviticus 24 The Fear of God

Review

Eight times in the Bible you find this text: “Be Holy, for I am Holy.” This chapter underlines three aspects of the demands of our Holy God:

- 1) The oil for the lampstand
- 2) The flour for the Showbread
- 3) The death penalty for blasphemy

Holy oil. Holy bread. Holy name.

Some commentators admit that this chapter seems “out of place” between the Feasts of Israel (23) and the Sabbatic Year (25).¹ [This ostensible strangeness is repeated on a similar occasion dealing with the instructions for lighting the lights (Numbers 8:1-4) where the brief description is inserted between the gifts of the princes and the cleansing of the Levites.]

However, the most important structure in the Camp of Israel was the Tabernacle, this strange portable sanctuary whose detailed specifications were given to Moses along with the Ten Commandments.

From outside, it “had no form nor comeliness;”² but inside it was discovered to be costly and glorious. It was what made the camp holy and set apart for God. (Just as the Holy Spirit within the believers set them apart from the world and sanctified for God’s use (1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Eph 1:13-14).

A key point here is that God wanted the *people* to be participants in the provision and worship of the Tabernacle: *they* were to provide the oil and the flour.

The participation of the people is the point of emphasis. The message is, “You bring the oil; you bring the flour.”

Leviticus 24

The Oil for the Lampstand

The importance of the lampstand—the *Menorah*—cannot be overstated. It was an accurate, beautiful, appropriate picture of Christ in the Tabernacle.

There were no windows in the Tabernacle; the only source of light was the *Menorah*, the Golden Lampstand. It was hammered out of pure gold and made into one piece with a central shaft and six branches (1 + 6 = 7; “I am the vine, ye are the branches”); pure olive oil fueled the lamps on the branches (Cf. Ex 25:31-39; 27:20-21; 30:7, 8; 40:24-25).

The *only* source of light in the Tabernacle. (“I am the light of the world.”) And then, before He left, He told His own that *they* were to be the light of the world. Paul applies the same idea when he says, “. . . among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Phil 2:15).

(Every detail of the Tabernacle—the materials, the architecture, etc.—all point directly to Christ. See our Commentary on Exodus, or our briefing pack, *The Mystery of the Lost Ark* for a detailed discussion.)

Aaron had sole charge of the lights of the lampstand to keep them burning (Ex 30:7-8). Each morning and evening, when the high priest burned incense on the golden altar, he was to care for the individual lights on the lampstand to make sure they would continue to burn. Special golden instruments were provided for pulling up the wicks and trimming them. One aspect of the daily service of the menorah required the priests to clean the seven individual cups of the candelabra. A special vessel which included tongs and brush was utilized for this task.

It is important to see that today the lamps are in the hands of our Great High Priest. In Revelation 1 and 2, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our High Priest, walks in the midst of the lampstands today to keep us shining. He pours in the oil (the filling of the Holy Spirit). He trims the wicks to that the light will be brighter. He removes the light when it refuses to burn—this is the sin unto death which John mentions in his epistle (1 John 5:16).

In the fall of Jerusalem, in 70 A.D., the Romans plundered the Temple and this is commemorated on a frieze on the Arch of Titus in Rome, which

prominently displays the Golden Lampstand as among the trophies taken. It, thus, gives us a detailed glimpse of its design and construction.

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.

The emphasis is that *the people of Israel* were to furnish the olive oil, and since the seven lamps burned continually, both day and night, this was no trivial item. This gave each Israelite, as well as the tribe of Levi, and personal interest in the service of the Tabernacle.

The olive oil was to be pure, free from leaves or impurities. It was to be beaten out to produce the very best grade. The oil speaks of the Holy Spirit (Cf. Zech 4:1-6).

There is also a sense in which it speaks of the Word of God (Ps 119:105, 130; 2 Pet 1:19). The unconverted can't see or understand the Word of God since they lack the ministry of the Holy Spirit:

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:9-16

- 3] Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be a statute for ever in your generations.*
- 4] He shall order the lamps upon the pure lampstand before the LORD continually. The Lamps were to be kept lit continually while the tabernacle was set up.

(Obviously, when they marched in the wilderness, they didn't continue to have them lit.) Aaron alone continued to control the use and service of the lampstand:

And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

Exodus 30:7, 8

If the people didn't bring the beaten olive oil, the lights couldn't be kept burning in the Holy Place. The people might say, "Well we can't see the lampstand anyway, so what difference does it make?" The lamp wasn't there for the people to see but for God to see and for the priest to use as he carried on his ministry. *What happened in the presence of God was far more important than what happened elsewhere in the camp!*

Jesus also declared:

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 8:12; cf. Luke 2:32; John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 9:5.

Local churches are also lampstands (Rev 1:12, 30; Cf. Mt 5:16; Eph 5:8; Phil 2:15). These lampstands also need oil to keep burning. It is the involvement of the people that keeps the church spreading its light. Many churches have had their light go out because of the unfaithfulness of its members. They fail to pray, give, and allow the Holy Spirit to use them. Somebody has to provide the oil.

The Lord Jesus Christ is walking in the midst of the lampstands today.

And in the midst of the seven [lampstands] one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle...and the seven [lampstands] which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Revelation 1:13, 20

He trims them every now and then; sometimes He must snuff out a light that is giving off too much smoke instead of light...

The Flour for the Table of Showbread

Not only were the people to bring pure olive oil for the lamp, they were also to bring the fine flour out of which 12 loaves of bread were baked each week. They were put on the golden Table of Showbread each Sabbath, and then the old bread was eaten by the priests.

- 5] And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.
- 6] And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD.
- 7] And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

These loaves were treated like a “meal offering,” complete with the frankincense (2:1-11). On the Sabbath, when the loaves were replaced, the priest would take a “memorial portion” from a loaf, add the frankincense, and burn it on the altar along with the daily burnt offering.

The frankincense speaks of the priesthood, and also the wonderful fragrance of His life.

- 8] Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.
- 9] And it shall be Aaron’s and his sons’; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.

The bread would stay on the table for a week. It was to be changed on the Sabbath (was that “work”?), and the old bread was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons—and always in the Holy Place.

When David and his men were in flight and in desperate need, Ahimelech gave him some of the showbread to eat (1 Sam 21:1-6). Our Lord defended this action when they criticized His disciples for eating grain on the Sabbath Day (Mt 12:1-4).

The Bread of Presence

Only the priests (all of the tribe of Levi) were allowed in the Holy Place, but the other tribes were represented by the jewels on the high priest’s garments (Ex 28:6-21) and by the 12 loaves on the table.

The table was called “the Table of Showbread” (Num 4:7) and the loaves were called “Showbread” (Ex 25:30), which can also be translated “bread of presence.” God was present with His people, and they were in His presence in the Tabernacle. No matter where they might be in the camp, their tribe was represented in the Holy Place.

The NT application is in Colossians 3:1ff. The bread, too, may be viewed as pointing to Jesus Christ:

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

John 6:35

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

John 6:51

However, there were 12 loaves, not one. Manna would seem to be the allusions above. Matthew 6:11 comes to mind: “Give us this day our daily bread.” Whether spiritual bread or material bread, we must look to God alone.

Death Penalty for Blasphemy

There are only two actual incidents that are recorded in the Book of Leviticus. One is the incident of Nadab and Abihu in Chapter 10. The second incident deals with the son of an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father who blasphemed.

[This may seem like a strange interruption to tell about a blasphemer who was judged, but the narrative is an illustration, not an interruption. The basis for obedience to the law is the fear of the Lord. And here, a negative example is dealt with for clarity.]

- 10] And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish *woman* and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;

This is an example of the problems and difficulties presented by the “mixed multitude” that came out of Egypt with Israel (Ex 12:38). They were problem children and troublemakers. We saw this group start trouble, and would murmur and cause strife (Num 11:4).

They correspond to those in the church today who are torn between the world on the one hand serving God on the other.

This one of the reasons that God told His people then—and He tells us now—that there should not be intermarriage between a believer and a nonbeliever. (This has nothing to do with race.) I would never have known it was wrong if God hadn't said it (Cf. 2 Co 6:14).

The boy (inevitably) got into a fight. He didn't really have a place among the tribe of Dan, but was a hanger-on who had access to the camp of Israel.

- 11] And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name *of the LORD*, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name *was* Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

Whoops! This was, indeed, serious: he cursed the name of the Lord. Every Jew knew the 3rd commandment:

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

Exodus 20:7

The name of the Lord was so sacred in Israel that it was not even permitted to voice it! The Hebrew tetragrammaton YHWH is so sacred that they never pronounced it, so even to this day there are scholastic doubts about how properly pronounce it: is it Jehovah? Yahweh? Yehovah? (In written documents, a devout Jew will write "G-d"; and pronounce "Adonai" (Lord) instead.)

Of course, it's possible to blaspheme God's name in other ways beside swearing: perjury (Lev 19:12) and stealing (Prov 30:8-9).

Jesus taught that we shouldn't use oaths or vows to make people believe us (Mt 5:33-37). A multitude of words may be evidence that sin is present (Prov 10:19).

- 12] And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them.

This is a critical step: they didn't guess. They sought the mind of the Lord to know what to do! (This is the first of four recorded occasions in which Moses had to seek the mind of the Lord about special problems. Cf. Num 9:6-14; 15:32-36; 27:1-11; 36:1ff. Moses' example of humility is a lesson to all of us!)

- 13] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
14] Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard *him* lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

The verdict is guilty; the penalty is death. Blasphemy was a capital crime in Israel (Mt 26:65; Acts 6:11, 13; 7:58). God takes it very seriously. The witnesses would be the first to stone him (Deut 17:7).

- 15] And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.
16] And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name *of the LORD*, shall be put to death.

The same law is for the "strangers." Even "strangers" were not to blaspheme the name of the God of Israel.

- 17] And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.

Human life is sacred and must be protected.

- 18] And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast.

God also provides for the protection of personal property. Private ownership is the subject of one of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:15).

- 19] And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him;
20] Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*.

Lex Talionis

Here is established what is known as *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation: an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. The punishment must fit the crime (Cf. Ex 21:22-25; Deut 19:21). The principle is that the guilty offender was not punished more severely than the crime demanded.

The murderer was to be put to death (Lev 24:17, 21; Gen 9:5, 6), but the penalties for other crimes had to suit the offense.

Because this principle has been misunderstood, many people have called it cruel and unjust. They have questioned how a God of love and mercy could enunciate it.

But this law was actually an expression of God's justice and compassion, because it helped restrain personal revenge in a society that had no police force, elaborate judicial system, and no prisons (!). Apart from this law, the strong could have crushed the weak at the least offense.

(In modern international law, the term describes the rule by which one state may inflict upon the citizens of another state death, imprisonment, or other hardship, in retaliation for similar injuries imposed upon its own citizens.)³

The Pharisees used the *lex talionis* to defend their practice of private revenge, a practice that Jesus condemned in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:38-39).

- 21] And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.
- 22] Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God.
- 23] And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Jesus dealt with blasphemy and revenge in Mt 5:33-48 paralleling the topics in Leviticus 24:10-23. Romans 13:1-7 is God's statement of human government in society. Romans 12:14-21 is God's admonition to His people concerning personal insults and attacks.

Capital Punishment⁴

The arguments surrounding capital punishment are many and varied, but we must make our personal opinions or convictions a test of fellowship or spirituality.

In the Bible, murder is considered a serious crime. Humans are made in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27; 1 Cor 11:7; James 3:9), and to kill a human being is to attack God's image (Gen 9:4-6).

Life is a sacred gift from God, and only God can take it away or authorize it to be taken away. God has ordained human government and given civil authorities the power of the sword (Rom 13:1-5). The purpose of capital punishment is not to frighten criminals into being good, but to uphold and defend the law. It's a declaration that men and women are special—created in the image of God—and that life is sacred in God's sight.

Whether or not capital punishment affects the crime statistics isn't the main issue. It's doubtful that *any* of our laws are really deterrents to crime: careless drivers still speed, people still park in "no parking" zones, wage earners still cheat on their income tax, and burglars still steal. But would any of us want our legislatures to repeal the laws against speeding, parking illegally, falsifying one's income tax, or stealing?

Respect for truth, life, and property are cornerstones of a just and peaceful society. Capital punishment may not decrease the number of murders any more than speeding tickets decrease the number of speeders, but it does declare that humans are made in the image of God and that life is a sacred gift.

The Bible doesn't present capital punishment as a "cure-all" for crime. It presents it as a form of punishment that shows respect for law, for life, and for humans made in the image of God. To take either a pragmatic or sentimental approach to the subject is to miss the point completely.

Opponents of capital punishment like to quote statistics to prove that executions are not a deterrent to crime. But using statistics to defend or oppose capital punishment is a difficult challenge since there is no possible way to set up a "control" situation to test the statistics. The size and composition of the population of a state or city, plus the local laws and how they are enforced, have considerable bearing on the matter.

Even the American humanist lawyer Clarence Darrow, an enemy of capital punishment, had to admit, "It is a question that cannot be proven one way or the other by statistics."⁵ Darrow defended one hundred accused murderers, and not one was executed.

Perhaps the greatest deterrent to supporting capital punishment is our lack of confidence in an imperfect justice system. There are two kinds of errors that the system is potentially liable for:

- a) letting the guilty go free; and
- b) punishing the innocent.

This is analogous to the resolution exposure to the two types of errors in mathematical statistics encountered in the design of experiments:⁶

Type I: The rejection of a true hypothesis; and
Type II: The acceptance of a false hypothesis.

It is our lack of confidence in our system of jurisprudence that cause many to shrink from taking the irreversible step of execution rather than extended incarceration, which could be repaired if subsequent evidence later justifies.

Our Own Guilt

God is righteous in all His dealings. We, too, are guilty before God:

The soul that sinneth it shall die.

Ezek 18:4,20

But Christ has borne our sentence of death:

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:4-6

The Cities of Refuge

The law of Moses provided a distinction between murder and manslaughter (Ex 21:12-14) through six “Cities of Refuge,” where an innocent man could be protected and get a fair trial (Num 35; Deut 19; Josh 20). This arrangement frustrated the plans of angry relatives of the dead person—and the “avenger of blood”—who would be in pursuit.

I have long insisted that everything in the Bible is there by specific design, and, further, relates, somehow, to Jesus Christ. I have been challenged on this view: “Aren’t some of the Biblical rules and regulations simply quaint tribal customs?”

We have already explored the peculiar exception granted to the daughters of Zelophehad in regards to the genealogy in Luke Chapter 3. Another specific challenge is the strange practice involving the “Cities of Refuge.”

After the conquest of Joshua was completed, the land of Canaan was divided, by lot, among the Twelve Tribes.⁷ The tribe of Levi, however, did not inherit land as “the Lord was their inheritance.”⁸ They were,

however, awarded 48 cities, six of which were designated “cities of refuge.”⁹

If someone was killed by an assailant, his slayer would be pursued by the next of kin, the *goel*, the “avenger of blood.” In the case where there was no premeditation—what we would term “manslaughter,”—the slayer could seek refuge in the nearest “city of refuge.” Assuming that he could convince the elders at the gate of the city that there was no premeditation, etc., he was secure from the “avenger of blood,” *as long as he remained within the city*. If the slayer left the confines of the ‘city of refuge,’ he was fair game to the “avenger of blood.”¹⁰

All of this remained in this state until the death of the high priest in Jerusalem. After the death of the high priest the slayer was free to leave the “city of refuge,” free of any further jeopardy from the “avenger of blood.”

In Israel they had no police force or prisons. Still, it does seem like a strange procedure. The fate of the slayer was dependent upon his ability to access the nearest city of refuge. Yet, what has the death of the high priest, in distant Jerusalem, have to do with any of this? Why should this impact the status of the fugitive refugee?

Quaint Rule or Spiritual Insight?

These peculiar arrangements are expressly specified in the Torah, the most venerated part of the Old Testament. Paul emphasized,

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Romans 15:4

“Whatsoever things” means everything. What’s the possible *spiritual* significance behind this unusual procedure involving the cities of refuge? Jesus also declared,

The volume of the book is written of me.

Psalm 40:7 (q.v. Hebrews 10:7)

So, perhaps, the key to any Biblical dilemma is to put Jesus right into the middle of it and see what emerges! (In fact, that can also apply to any of the issues of life!)

First or Second Degree?

Let's begin by examining the death of Jesus Christ. Was it "first degree" (premeditated) murder or "second degree" (manslaughter)? From God's point of view, it was "first degree." It was ordained "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,"¹¹ and, thus, from the Father's point of view, it was indeed premeditated. In fact, it was a deal struck with the Son before the foundation of the world!

Our Predicament

But what about *our* position? After all, it *was* our sins which put Him on that cross! Would this be considered "first" or "second" degree murder? Remember the words of Jesus Himself, (who is, after all, our own defense counsel): "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."¹² I would argue that, for this purpose at least, it could be considered manslaughter, and would qualify us to flee to our city of refuge! And just where *is* our city of refuge? In *Jesus Christ Himself*, of course.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2

And all this was to obtain until the death of the high priest. Who is *our* High Priest? Jesus Christ.¹³ And it was His death that has freed us from the pursuit of the Avenger of Blood.¹⁴

However, every check, to be cashed, requires the endorsement of the recipient. Every pardon needs an acceptance. Have *you* laid claim to what He has purchased for *you*?

Cities of Refuge Summary

Num 35:11-30 (No state police force). No help for a murderer (Gen 9:6; Ex 20:1-17; 21:12-13). 1st murderer: Satan (John 8:44). Avenger of Blood (*Goel*); Bedoins today. Six cities (of the 48 given to the Levites): three east of the Jordan, three west of the Jordan.

Cities of Refuge available to all (sojourners also); sanctified (set aside). Always open; ways, bridges, repaired each spring (Deut 19:3). Easy reach; "way", Deut 19:3; open to all, Rev 22:17; doors never locked; stocked with provisions; etc.

Type of Christ (Heb 6:16-20; Acts 3:12-18; Luke 23:34; 1 Cor 2:7-8). Wages of sin is death, Rom 6:23; God's appointed refuge, Acts 4:12; no other help available (Heb 10:28-29); *until* the death of the High Priest (Heb 7:23-27).

Differences: Only innocent saved; we know we're guilty! Christ more available (John 6:37; Rev 3:20); "blessing" (Eph 1:3).

[This Addenda was excerpted from *Hidden Treasures in the Biblical Text*, Koinonia House, 2000, p. 101-104.]

Leviticus 24 Summary

Leviticus 24 begins in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle and ends outside the camp. It opens with oil and bread and closes with the shedding of guilty blood. But the emphasis is the same: Our God is a holy God and we must honor Him with extreme diligence, whether bringing our gifts or respecting His name.

The Lord doesn't execute blasphemers today, but there is coming a day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts will be revealed and then God will "render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom 2:6).

* * *

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) What is the meaning of the word "Holy"?
- 2) What is the significance of having the people provide the oil and the flour?
- 3) What are the various ways that one might "take the name of God in vain"?
- 4) What is the primary reason for laws? How does fear of the Lord tie into obedience to the law? How does it impact our life as a Christian?

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What would be the practical effect on us if God were not completely holy?
- 2) How does Colossians 3:1-4 relate to the "bread of presence" in Leviticus 24?
- 3) Discuss the ostensible contradiction between *lex talionis* of Leviticus 24:19-20 and Matthew 5:38-48.
- 4) Discuss the appropriateness of capital punishment today.

Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the roles and responsibilities of the *Goel*, the Kinsman-Redeemer and Avenger of Blood. How do they typify Christ?

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Chapter 25, and the Book of Ruth. Also read Isaiah 11, 35, 40; Jeremiah 23; Micah 4; Revelation 20, as time permits.

Notes:

1. J. Vernon McGee is but one highly respected example.
2. Isaiah 53:2.
3. *Black's Law Dictionary*, West5 Publishing Co., St. Paul MN, 1891, p.1058.
4. Adapted from Warren Wiersbe, *Be Holy*, Chariot Victor, Colorado Springs CO 1994, p.120-1.
5. William Safire, *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1992, pp.327-35.
6. J. Neyman and E. S. Pearson, *Transactions of Royal Society of London*, A, 31, 1933, pp.289-337, is the classic reference.
7. Joshua 11:23; 18:10.
8. Numbers 18:20.
9. Number 35:2-7; Joshua 21:41.
10. Numbers 35:15-34..
11. Acts 2:23.
12. Luke 23:34.
13. Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:1, 5, 10; 8:1; 9:11, et al.
14. Romans 8:1.

Session 14 Leviticus 25 Israel in the Land

In this book on "holiness" we now focus on Israel in regards to its real estate and its economy. Previously, we had focused on its calendar. Now we find the land also uniquely linked to that calendar.

"Land" is used 39 times in the next two chapters. (There are 39 books in the OT). If Israel was to possess and enjoy the land, they had to recognize certain fundamentals:

God owned the land: (v.2, 23, 38). [It doesn't belong to the PLO or the UN, or even Israel; they are tenants of a "land Lord" under conditions of obedience.]

God also owned the people of Israel: (v.55), because He had redeemed them from the Egyptian bondage. Because they belonged to Him, all the Jews were to treat one another as brothers and sisters (vv.25, 35-38) and not take advantage of each other in regards to personal debts or property claims.

God gave the increase: The Jews were expected to toil in their fields, but God supplied the sunshine, rain, and harvests. They were to trust in His Word, obey His commandments, and trust in His promises.

Had they obeyed these principles, their economic system would have functioned smoothly, the land would have provided all they needed, and everyone would have been cared for adequately. However, they didn't obey the Lord: the rich got richer, the poor got poorer, and the land was ruined.

Sabbatical Year (v.1-7, 18-22)

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **When** ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the **land** keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

That word "when" must have been a great encouragement to Moses! Especially after Israel failed to claim their inheritance at Kadesh-Barnea, and had to wander in the wilderness (Numbers 13, 14).

We have continuously observed the “hepatadic” structure throughout the Word of God: there are both explicit, implicit (and hidden) sevens throughout, from Genesis to Revelation.

In a previous chapter (23) we noted that their calendar was built on seven days, seven weeks, seven months, and now, seven years. (And, we will also discover, seven groups of seven years, climaxing in the “Jubilee” (v.8-17,23-24).)

The concept of the Sabbath harks back to the Creation when God “rested” from His labors. “Sabbath” means rest, and in its ultimate meaning refers to the rest of redemption:

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Hebrews 4:9-11

But here we have introduced the concept of a rest *for the land*.

- 3] Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;
- 4] But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.
- 5] That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land.
- 6] And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,
- 7] And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

Even the farm animals rested. Routine tasks to keep buildings from falling down were addressed, but the normal activities of an agricultural economy—plowing, sowing, and harvesting—were prohibited.

Deuteronomy amplifies these instructions to include personal debts being cancelled and indentured servants being set free.

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD'S release. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release;

Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it: Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day. For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee. If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land. And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

Deuteronomy 15:1-15

[The subsequent verses establish the procedure for the voluntary election to become a *doulos*, or “bondslave,” ceremonialized by the piercing of the ear to the doorpost of the house (vv.16, 17). [Cf. *Coeur d’Alene* = Fr., “heart of the awl (bondslave)”]

The Babylonian Captivity

One of the purposes of the Sabbatical year for the land was to deliver the Israelite from covetousness. It was the breaking of this regulation that sent Israel into exile from the land itself.

One of the major events in the history of Israel was, of course, the 70 years of the Babylonian Captivity under Nebuchadnezzar 6th century B.C. Why 70 years? (Fulfilled precisely, to the very day.)

To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

2 Chronicles 36:21

Nowhere in Scripture is there any record of them *ever* keeping the Sabbath of the land. After 490 years, God simply said, “You owe me 70!” God removed Israel into exile in Babylon to give the land the rest the law had provided (Jer 25:8-11; 29:10).

(During the siege of Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah proclaimed a release for the slaves, but later reneged (Jer 34:8ff).

They *do* observe the Sabbatical Year—sort of—today in Israel. In form rather than substance. Some of the landowners “sell” their land to an Arab with a buy-back provision at the end of the Sabbatical Year, leaving him a small profit for facilitating this “dodge” of the law. Very controversial among the orthodox, but practiced nevertheless to keep the land in fruits and vegetables.

A basic principle: whatever we rob from God we can never keep and enjoy ourselves.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:8-10

Jubilee Year

- 8] And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.
- 9] Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

“To sound the trumpet” (the *shofar*, the ram’s horn). Each new year began with the blowing of the trumpets on the 1st of Tishri (which was both the “Head of the Year,” *Rosh HaShannah*, and the Feast of Trumpets, *Yom Teruwah*).

Ten days later was *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. It is strange that the Jubilee Year did not start on the 1st day of the year, but the 10th.

Why the 10th? Why not at *Rosh HaShannah*? It is significant that the Year of Jubilee began on the day of repentance, with the cleansing and forgiveness of the Lord.

- 10] And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

“To proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof” is inscribed on the Liberty Bell which hangs in Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

At the start of the Jubilee, the people were commanded to release their indentured servants so they could return to their own lands and families. A Hebrew servant was to serve for a maximum of 6 years and then be set free (Ex 21:2). All property was also to revert back to its original owner (vv.13-17).

- 11] A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed. Just as the previous year (a Sabbatical Year), it was also to be observed as year of rest. They had to rely on the Lord to keep His promises and supply sufficient food for almost 3 years, since they wouldn’t be able to work the land until the 51st year and even then they’d have wait for the harvest.
- 12] For it *is* the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

The people, including the poor and the foreigners, could gather from the fields and be God’s “guests.”

The Restitution of All Things

- 13] In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.
- 14] And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest *ought* of thy neighbour’s hand, ye shall not oppress one another:
- 15] According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, *and* according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

- 16] According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for *according* to the number of *the years* of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

In Israel, property wasn't sold *in fee simple*, as we are used to. Only the *use* of the land was sold—what we would call a lease. The land belonged to the Lord, and Israel was only a tenant, under conditions of obedience. The Lord wanted His land to remain with the tribes and families to which it had been allotted. There still was a form of private ownership that gave stability to the economy; a sense of proprietorship and caring for the property. People usually take care of what they themselves own. (Anyone who has traveled in a communist country quickly recognizes the penalties of ambiguities and the lack of accountability in public ownership.)

These laws made impossible for wealthy real estate speculators to accumulate vast holdings and distort the economy. Even the poorest Israelite family received its land back; and by working the land they could provide for their needs and perhaps the needs of others.

The Year of the Gospel?

The Greek word for trumpet is *kerux*; the verb is *kerusso*, which means to proclaim or to herald. There are many commentators who suggest that this is all suggestive of proclaiming the spiritual liberty available through the Gospel (Cf. John 8:32, 36). When Jesus declared His mandate at the synagogue at Nazareth, He read from Isaiah,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Luke 4:18, 19

Then He declared, “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

“To preach the gospel” is to proclaim it. And indeed it has been as we discover the marvelous events of His ministry in the four Gospel accounts. However, when you examine the passage in Isaiah more carefully (Isaiah 61:1,2f), we discover that He didn't read the entire passage; in fact, He stopped a comma and *omitted* the rest, and much that follows: that after “the day of vengeance of our God;” He would release His people and restore them to their land and bless them

abundantly. This is clearly referring to the Millennial period following His Second Coming in power and glory. Cf. Isaiah 11, 35, 40; Jeremiah 23; Micah 4; Revelation 20.

The “acceptable year of the Lord” of God's grace is separated from the future day of judgment by a comma that has lasted about 2,000 years! God's “day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:2) has lasted as long as it has because God is longsuffering and wants sinners to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9, 15).

- 17] Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I *am* the LORD your God.

The Jubilee Year provided a new beginning for the released slaves and landowners, and thus kept poverty and inequality to a minimum. [Our bankruptcy laws are intended to serve the same fundamental purpose in affording a fresh start after catastrophic misfortunes, etc.]

- 18] Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

The Reading of the Law

Every Sabbatical Year, at the Feast of Tabernacles, the Book of Deuteronomy was to be read publicly to all the people (Deut 31:9-13). The nation would have learned the real meaning of “give us this day our daily bread.” God promised to protect them and provide for them if they would trust and obey (vv. 18-22).

(As we noticed in our study of the dismal period of the Book of Judges, if they had observed this their entire history of the servitudes to their enemies would have been averted. If they had followed the specific instructions in Deuteronomy 7, their oppressions would have been avoided.)

- 19] And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.
20] And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:
21] Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.
22] And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat *yet* of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat *of the old store*.

The Law of Redemption: the *Goel*

- 23] The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land *is* mine; for ye *are* strangers and sojourners with me.
- 24] And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.
- 25] If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away *some* of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.
- 26] And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it;

This was the opportunity for the *Goel*, the Kinsman-Redeemer. There were four conditions:

- 1) He had to be a Kinsman;
- 2) He had to be able to redeem;
- 3) He had to be willing; (it was not obligatory);
- 4) He had to assume all the obligations involved...

There also was the Law of Levirate Marriage for the kinsman (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). [The Book of Ruth is the definitive example: Boaz redeems the land for Naomi, and purchases Ruth (a Gentile) as his bride. It is provocative, indeed, that this book is read each year at the Feast of Pentecost, which itself is a prophecy of the Church.]

The ultimate example of all of this is when our Kindman-Redeemer takes up the title deed of the earth (the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation 5) to take possession of that which He purchased on the cross.

[An illustrative example of this seems represented by Jeremiah's strange purchase of land from his uncle's son, even though the Babylonian armies were all over it, and Jeremiah himself will not survive another 70 years. It would ultimately be redeemed by his kinsmen after the captivity (Jer 32:6-16).]

- 27] Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession.
- 28] But if he be not able to restore *it* to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.

Walled villages were an exception.

- 29] And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; *within* a full year may he redeem it.

A house within a walled village was much more valuable than one in open land since it afforded protection from invaders. The former owner in this case had only one year in which to redeem the house.

- 30] And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that *is* in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubilee.
- 31] But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubilee.
- 32] Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, *and* the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.

The Levites were given no tribal allotments, because the Lord was their inheritance (Josh 13:14, 33; 14:3-4; 18:7); so they were given 48 cities (Num 35; Josh 21), and pasture lands adjacent to their cities (Num 35:1-5). [Although there would seem to be the exception in Acts 4:34-37, but this was in Cyprus, not Israel.]

- 33] And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in *the year of* jubilee: for the houses of the cities of the Levites *are* their possession among the children of Israel.
- 34] But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it *is* their perpetual possession.

The Bankrupt Brother

- 35] And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: *yea, though he be* a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.
- 36] Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.
Interest-free loans apparently are in view here. (NIV: "excessive interest." Cf. Nehemiah 5.) They were, however, allowed to charge interest to Gentiles (Deut 23:19-20).
- 37] Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.
- 38] I *am* the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, *and* to be your God.

Freely ye have received, freely give.

Matthew 10:8

The early church was quick to adopt this principle, helping widows and other needy believers (Acts 2:44-47; 4:34-5:1; 6:1-7; Cf. Deut 10:18; 24:17).

Indentured Brother

- 39] And if thy brother *that dwelleth* by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant:
40] *But* as an hired servant, *and* as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, *and* shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee:

No more than six years; he went free on the Sabbath Year (Ex 21:2).

- 41] And *then* shall he depart from thee, *both* he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.
42] For they *are* my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen.
43] Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God.
44] Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, *shall be* of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.
45] Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that *are* with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.
46] And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them for* a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

Jews were allowed to own slaves from the Gentile nations around them or the aliens living in their land, but a Jew could never enslave a fellow Jew. Slaves were considered property of their owner and could be part of a family inheritance. Gentile slaves had no hope of being set free, unless they could secure the purchase price, or the master chose to set them free.

During the Civil War era, some Americans used passages like these to prove that it was Biblical and right for people to own and sell slaves. But it must be noted that God's laws didn't *establish* slavery; they *regulated* it and made it more humane.

Slavery was an institution that had existed long before Moses and the law; the Law of Moses forbade Jews to enslave one another. Had the Jews treated one another as the law required they would have been a testimony to the Gentile nations. Instead, Israel failed to obey and eventually became slaves themselves (Cf. the Book of Judges).

During the Roman Empire, there were about 60 million slaves. The message of Jesus and Paul was to individuals; it was ultimately through that influence that the institution of slavery would eventually be abolished.

The Jew Enslaved by a Gentile

- 47] And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother *that dwelleth* by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger *or* sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:
48] After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him:
49] Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or *any* that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.
50] And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubilee: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.

It is interesting that a Gentile "resident stranger" in the land of Israel had to obey the law of Moses, even though he wasn't a member of the covenant community. The Gentile was required to treat him as hired servant and not treat him harshly. If not redeemed he and his family would be released at the Jubilee Year.

Summary

It was unfortunate that Israel did not obey the laws in this chapter; their selfishness and greed brought ruin to the land and their economic system. The prophets rebuked the rich for exploiting the poor and stealing their lands, their houses, even their children (Isa 3:14-15; 5; 10:1-3; Amos 2:6-7; 5:11). God is concerned with how we use the resources He has given us and how we treat one another in the marketplace. He eventually judges those who exploit others and treat them in ways that are less than humane (Amos 1-2).

Eschatological Conjectures

The Jubilee Year was a time when
All debts were forgiven;
All slaves went free; and
The land returned to its proper owners;
It was the "time of restitution of all things."

Peter, in his second sermon in the Book of Acts, refers to ultimate “time of refreshing” and the “times of restitution of all things”:

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:19-21

There will come a day when the curse upon the ground itself shall be lifted from the Creation (Rom 8:20-22; Isa 35:1-2); the ultimate “restitution of all things.”

There are many who recognize that the Year of Jubilee probably has eschatological implications, and so there are some who try to predict when the Jubilee years will fall on the contemporary calendar. The problem is that there are many rabbinical debates about all of the various details.

Some rabbis argue that the next Sabbatical cycle of seven years begins *after* a Jubilee year; some that the Jubilee is the first of the next seven, etc. (I would side with those who maintain a long-term grid of Sabbatical sevens, counting the Jubilee year when it falls as the first of the subsequent seven.)

There is also the problem of determining when they were ever observed: there is no credible evidence that they were ever observed! They were supposed to begin when the conquest under Joshua was completed, but there is no clear historical evidence of this.

Many of the prophecy “charts” that get circulated *presume* to begin a series with the refounding of the state of Israel in 1948, but there is no Biblical basis for this reckoning.

We do suspect that we are about 70 Jubilees since Joshua’s conquest of Canaan (“70 times 7”) but, again, the lack of precision should restrain any conjectures! But we probably are very near “the time for the restitution of all things!

[E.W. Bullinger reckons the Nativity (2 B.C?) as at the 29th Jubilee. That would make the 70th Jubilee 41 Jubilees years later (2009 - 2, or 2007)?]

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) When was the Sabbath established?
- 2) What does the phrase, “Give us this day our daily bread” mean?
- 3) How does the Jubilee Year symbolize the proclamation of the Gospel message?
- 4) How did the ultimate return of the land to its original owners impact the functioning of society in Israel?

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) How would the view that we “own nothing in life” affect how we live our lives?
- 2) How is covetousness equivalent to idolatry?
- 3) In what way is pursuing ecological responsibility a spiritual endeavor?
- 4) Samuel Johnson said, “A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization.” How is our country doing in this regard? How is your church doing? What specific recommendations due you suggest?

Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Study the Book of Ruth in terms of its prophetic aspects. What is its relationship to Revelation Chapter 5?
- 2) Analyze the strange circumstances and the implications of Jeremiah’s purchase of Anathoth land from his uncle’s son (Jer 32:6-16). Why would God have instructed Jeremiah regarding this unlikely transaction when the armies of Babylon were already all over the place, and Jeremiah would not survive the forthcoming 70 years to redeem it? Cf. Rev 5:1-7ff.

Preparation for Next Session:

Read Leviticus Chapters 26 and 27.

Session 15 Leviticus 26 - 27 Israel's Magna Carta

The Word "If"

We often emphasize the fact that the Abrahamic Covenant is *unconditional* and that all of our benefits—even as Gentiles—derive from that covenant. The heresy of “replacement theology” is a tragic legacy of many denominationally focused churches. Furthermore, our security in Christ is unconditionally sealed by His completed work on our behalf and the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

However, we have rarely focused on the *conditional* aspects of God's covenant, and this is the area of Israel's failure—and our own! (The Book of Judges chronicles their dismal cycle of failures and it tragically mirrors our own times as well.)

This session will focus on the shortest, and most tragic, word in the English language: “if.”

Debating on what might have happened in world history *if* Wellington had lost at Waterloo, or *if* Lee had won at Gettysburg is an exercise in futility. However, the history of Israel cannot be properly understood apart from the “if's” in God's covenant. In terms of Israel's—and our—relationship to God, “if” is a very big word.

Obedience is the ground of blessing.

In the two remaining chapters of Leviticus, the word “if” is used at least 32 times. Examples:

- “If you walk in my statutes...” (v.3);
- “If you do not obey me...” (v.14);
- “If they confess their iniquity...” (v.40).

These final two chapters will also focus us on four responsibilities every Christian has toward the Lord. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. *However*, there are some “ifs” connected with these also. We can put up an umbrella of indifference; an umbrella of sin; an umbrella of stepping out of the will of God.

Leviticus 26

1. Obeying His Commandments (26:1-13)

- 1] Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up *any* image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God.

“...standing...”: or, pillar.

“...image of...”: or, figured stone: Heb., a stone of picture.

Moses lists four reasons why we should obey the Lord:

- 1) Because of who God *is* (v.1).
- 2) Because of what God *did* (v.2a).
- 3) Because of where God *dwells* (v.2b).
- 4) Because of what God *promised* (vv.3-13).

- 2] Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.

These two verses sum up the first part of the Ten Commandments.

We are to make no idols. The Hebrew word for idol, עֵלֶל ‘eleel, of nought, good for nothing, worthless. When we make an idol we make nothing. Anything that takes the place of God is a nothing.

The word “Sabbaths” refers to all the special days on the Jewish calendar, not just the 7th day of the week. (We reviewed them in Chapter 23). Although the 7th day was instituted as a special sign between the Lord and Israel (Ex 31:13), its focus was the first week of creation and is an appropriate acknowledgment for all of us.

In addition to the emphasis on what God *did*, they needed to obey Him because of where He dwelt: among them in the Tabernacle. To sin was not only violation of His law, it was a desecration of His sanctuary. To sin was to defile the camp and that's why the unclean had to leave the camp.

[That is even more emphatic for us, because He dwells *in* us! Cf. 1 Cor 6:1-20; Eph 4:17-32.]

- 3] If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

To “obey God” is to walk in His statutes; to disobey Him is to walk contrary to the Lord and despise His statutes (vv. 15, 21, 23-24, 27-28, 40-41). Another reason (of the four reasons) that we should obey is because of what He promised (vv. 3-13).

Moses later elaborated on the “covenant of blessing” (Deut 28-30) which were the conditions of Israel’s tenancy on *His* land: the conditions that they were to fulfill and the resultant promises God would perform:

- 4] Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Israel depended on the “latter rain” in the spring and the “former rain” in the autumn for water for their crops and domestic needs. One reason Baal worship ensnared the Israelites was the posture of Baal as the Canaanite storm god. To discipline His people, God would often withhold the rain, as He did in the days of Elijah (1 Kgs 17-18.)

- 5] And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

(Cf. Ezek 34:26-2; Joel 2:23-24)

- 6] And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make *you* afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

“...rid”: Heb. cause to cease.

- 7] And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.
8] And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we remember the name of the Lord our God.

Psalm 20:7; cf. Josh 23:10.

- 9] For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

If they obeyed His law, God promised to multiply their population. Large families were a blessing from God (Gen 17:6; Deut 7:13-14; Ps 127-128). (Abortion was a capital crime among pagan cultures since population growth was a measure of their strength.)

- 10] And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.
11] And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.
12] And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. The Lord’s presence was the greatest blessing promised; all other blessings were dependent upon this.

Cf. 1 John 1:7; 2 Cor 6:16; Rev 21:3.

- 13] *I am* the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

Nine times in Leviticus we find the Lord reminding them that He had delivered them out of Egypt and this alone was sufficient to deserve their obedience (Lev 11:45; 19:36; 22:33; 23:43; 25:28, 42, 55; 26:13, 45).

We, too, have everything we need for “life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3) because we have “every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph 1:3). But possessing is one thing; invoking them is something else. We, too, have battles to fight and work to do, but as we walk in obedience to the Lord, He enables us to overcome the enemy, claim the land, and enjoy its blessings.

But God’s blessing isn’t always health, wealth, and success. Some of the greatest heroes of faith suffered because of their obedience (Heb 11:36-40). The “success preachers”—the “name it and claim it” or “blab it and grab it” health-and-wealth evangelists—like to promote the blessings but assume the accompanying judgments and curses apply to someone else!

2. Submitting to His Chastisements (26:14-39)

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Hebrews 12:6; cf. Prov 3:11-12.

Israel’s special relationship to YHWH brought with it special obligations.

You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

Amos 3:2

- 14] But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;
15] And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant:

The “ifs” of these two verses are of a breach of the covenant: refusal to hear, refusal to do, despising and abhorring God’s statutes and judgments.

- 16] I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

“...over”: Heb. Upon.

“...consumption”: slow wasting diseases, like tuberculosis.

- 17] And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

Proverbs 28:1

Cf. Judg 2:14; 3:8; 4:2; Jer 5:17; Mic 6:15.

- 18] And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

Here is the multiple of seven again (cf. v. 18, 21, 24, 28). If this is applied to the mysterious “430 years” of Ezekiel 4, we have an astonishing precision implied in the modern reestablishment of the State of Israel. [See appendix]

- 19] And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

Pride is always a problem. Judgment will likewise come upon the whole world in Revelation 16 (cf. v.9, 11.)

- 20] And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.
21] And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.

- 22] I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your *high* ways shall be desolate.

This, too, will the experience wild beasts with the “pale” (*chloros*) horse in Revelation 6:8. (They aren’t necessarily mammals: they may be microscopic...)

- 23] And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;
24] Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

Here is the multiple of seven again (Cf. v. 18, 21, 24, 28).

- 25] And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of *my* covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

War, pestilence, and famine usually go together. (Cf. Ezek 5.)

- 26] *And* when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver *you* your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

Ezekiel warned them that 1/3 would die of pestilence and with famine, 1/3 would be scattered (Ezek 5:12). [Revelation 8 records the first of 4 “trumpet judgments” that are also known as the “judgment of the thirds.”]

- 27] And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;
28] Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

Here is that multiple of seven again (cf. v. 18, 21, 24, 28).

- 29] And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

We have difficulty imagining the desperation of real famine (cf. 2 Kgs 6:29; Jer 19:9; Lam 4:10).

- 30] And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.

31] And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.

Even when they try to revive their worship of YHWH, it will be too late. Their cities and sanctuaries will be leveled to the ground. Up to now, their chastisements would be in the land, but now He removes them *from* the land. The siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 6:28-29) and the siege of Jerusalem by Babylon (Lam 2:20; 4:10).

32] And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

33] And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

This clearly includes the 1900 years, from the beginning of the Diaspora from the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD to the restoration of the State of Israel may 14, 1948.

34] Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye *be* in your enemies' land; *even* then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

In 722 B.C., the Assyrians took the Northern Kingdom captive, never to return; in 606 B.C., the Babylonians took the Southern Kingdom captive for 70 years (leaving the land to “enjoy her Sabbaths” (2 Chr 36:21; Jer 25:11).

35] As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

36] And upon them that are left *alive* of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

“...shaken”: Heb. driven.

37] And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

38] And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

39] And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

The Lord mercifully allowed a remnant to return under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. (Less than 50,000. The nation never regained its former power or glory. With exception of short periods of freedom, such

as under the Maccabees, the Jews were subsequently always under the control of some foreign power, until May 14, 1948...

[The duration of the Diaspora seems provocatively predicted in the application of the “seven times” multiple being applied to the missing “360 years” of exile implied by Ezekiel 4. See the appendix for details of this astonishing conjecture.]

3. Trusting His Covenant (26:40-46)

Even under the worst situations, however, there is always hope, for the Lord is:

merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...

Exodus 34:6-7

40] If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

If we confess our sins and repent, He will forgive and restore (Cf 1 Kgs 8:33-34; Neh 9:2; 1 Jn 1:9) Use the “Christian’s bar of soap”:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

41] And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

External circumcision wasn’t enough to save them (Mt 3:7-12). It took more than an outward sign: it took a change of heart (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 9:25; Rom 2:29).

42] Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

43] The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

- 44] And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I *am* the LORD their God.

which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

Deuteronomy 23:21-23

This directly refutes the commonly taught “replacement” theology: that the church “replaces” Israel. God may punish His people, but He will never reject them or cast them away (Rom 11:1-25; Jer 31:31-34). One reason for His chastening is to bring His erring people back into His arms of love, where He can bless them once again (Heb 12:1-13).

- 45] But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I *am* the LORD.

The people may forget His law, but He remembers His covenant.

- 46] These *are* the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Leviticus 27

This is viewed as an addendum or a postscript by many expositors (J. A. Seiss doesn't even include it!). It does seem strange that this book should end with a chapter on vows rather than with an account of a special demonstration of God's glory and holiness.

But *our promises* to God must be just as inviolable as His covenant with us! Vows are voluntary, but if a promise is made to God, it is essential that it be fulfilled!

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

Ecclesiastes 5:2

It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.

Proverbs 20:25

Vows are voluntary, but if made, they must be taken *very* seriously!

When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That

4. Keeping our Commitments to God (27:1-34)

- 1] And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
- 2] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons *shall be* for the LORD by thy estimation.

“A singular vow”: to single out something of particular value to the individual. (Remember how David would not offer to God something that did not cost him anything (2 Sam 24:24). This assumes that someone dedicated to the Lord would be redeemed with money given to the priests for the ministry of the sanctuary. (In the case of Samuel (1 Sam 1-2) the lad was actually given to the high priest by Hannah and trained to serve, but this was not the general rule.)

- 3] And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

In estimating the redemption value, it had nothing to do with the “worth” of the individual; it had to do with how much work they would have been able to do. A shekel was the equivalent of a month's income for a worker; but we really don't know how much buying power it had. Here for a person 20-60 it was about four years' income.

- 4] And if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels.
- 5] And if it be from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.
- 6] And if it be from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation shall be three shekels of silver.
- 7] And if it be from sixty years old and above; if it be a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.
- 8] But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him; according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.
- 9] And if it be a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that any man giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

Animals could also be dedicated and then redeemed.

- 10] He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

A proposed exchange *and* the defective original were kept. This was one of the sins in Malachi's day (Mal 1:13-14).

- 11] And if it be any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, then he shall present the beast before the priest:
12] And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad: as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.
13] But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.
14] And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

Property could also be dedicated and redeemed, but the owner had to add 20% to the evaluation when he gave redemption money to the priest.

- 15] And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.
16] And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.
17] If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand.
18] But if he sanctify his field after the jubilee, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.
19] And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.
20] And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.
21] But the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.
22] And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession;
23] Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubilee: and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.
24] In the year of the jubilee the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong.
25] And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.

Unredeemable Things

- 26] Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD'S firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether *it be* ox, or sheep: *it is* the LORD'S.

There were three unredeemable things:

The firstborn of the beasts (Ex 13:2; 34:19-20);

Anything God put under a ban;

And the required tithes.

These were already the Lord's.

- 27] And if it be of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth part of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.

“Devoted” Things

- 28] Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, *both* of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing *is* most holy unto the LORD.

“Devoted”: things that God had set aside for Himself, such as the spoils of war at Jericho (Josh 6:17-19; 7:11-15). King Saul broke this law when he tried to give to God that which He had already banned: the Amalekites and all their wealth (1 Sam 15).

- 29] None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; *but* shall surely be put to death.

Tithes

- 30] And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD'S: *it is* holy unto the LORD.

It seems that the Israelites paid tithes: a tithe to the Levites, who in turn tithed it to the Priests (Num 18:21-32); a tithe that was brought to the sanctuary and eaten “before the Lord” (Deut 14:22-27); and a tithe every three years for the poor (Deut 14:28-29).

- 31] And if a man will at all redeem *ought* of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth *part* thereof.
32] And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, *even* of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

- 33] He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.
- 34] These *are* the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.

The major lesson in this chapter is that God expects us to keep our commitments to Him and to be honest in all of our dealings with Him. Jesus Christ paid with His own life the redemption price for sinners, and *we weren't worth it*. Any sacrifice we make for Him is nothing compared to the sacrifice He made for us.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:11-14

Appendix:

Ezekiel's 430 Years

There is a puzzling prophecy in the book of Ezekiel that speaks of 430 years of judgment pronounced upon Israel (Ezek 4:1-8). Seventy years are clearly accounted for by the Babylonian Captivity. But that leaves 360 years that do not seem to fit any specific interpretation of history. There are passages in Leviticus that indicate that if Israel doesn't obey the first time God will multiply her punishment by seven (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28). 360 years times 7 equals 2520 years.

However, the Bible seems to deal in 360-day years (See *Daniel's Seventy Weeks*). Converting the 2520 years/360 results in 2483 years/365 plus 9 months and 21 days:

2483 years ₃₆₅	906,295 days
plus, for leap years	614 days
9 months	270 days
21 days	21 days
2520 years ₃₆₀	907,200 days

But where does one apply this interval?

The Servitude of the Nation

If one starts with the first siege of Nebuchadnezzar, which began the "Servitude of the Nation" in 606 B.C., the seventy years of servitude ended in 537 B.C. If July 23, 537 B.C. was the release from servitude, then

$$\begin{array}{r} -537 \text{ y } 7 \text{ m } 23 \text{ d} \\ 1 \quad \quad \quad \text{(No "year 0") } \\ 2483 \text{ y } 9 \text{ m } 21 \text{ d} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$1948 \text{ y } 5 \text{ m } 14 \text{ d} = \text{May 14, 1948}$$

On May 14, 1948, David Ben Gurion, citing the book of Ezekiel as his authority, proclaimed Israel as the new Jewish homeland. The nation Israel was reestablished on the very completion of this interval from the end of the "Servitude of the Nation" under Babylon. What a "coincidence."

The Desolations of Jerusalem

If one starts with the third siege of Nebuchadnezzar, which began the "Desolations of Jerusalem" in 587 B.C., the seventy years of desolations ended in 518 B.C. With August 16, 518 B.C. as the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, then

$$\begin{array}{r} -518 \text{ y } 8 \text{ m } 16 \text{ d} \\ 1 \quad \quad \quad \text{(No "year 0") } \\ 2483 \text{ y } 9 \text{ m } 21 \text{ d} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

$$1967 \text{ y } 6 \text{ m } 7 \text{ d} = \text{June 7, 1967}$$

On June 7, 1967, as a consequence of the "Six Day War," the Old City of Jerusalem fell under Israeli control for the first time since Jesus' prediction:

...Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Luke 21:24

Israel regained Jerusalem at the very completion of this same interval since the "Desolations of Jerusalem" under Babylon. What a "coincidence." (The rabbis say that "coincidence is not a kosher word.")

* * *

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) List the unconditional covenants.
- 2) List the conditional covenants.
- 3) What was the primary purpose of the six periods of chastisements (2:19)?
- 4) Give four reasons Moses gave for obeying the Lord.
- 5) Give examples in the Scripture where obedience is the ground of blessing.
- 6) What passage in this session is the best refutation of “replacement” theology?

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) What are the current international implications of God’s *conditional* covenants with Israel?
- 2) Is punishment a good teacher? How does punishment in Leviticus relate to the New Testament concept of discipline (as described in Hebrews 12:5-13)?
- 3) What should the Christian do regarding the 7th day Sabbath? Is Sunday a substitute? On what ground?
- 4) Should a Christian make vows? Under what circumstances?
- 5) Should a Christian tithe?
- 6) What are the social and political implications of “replacement” theology today?

Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Trace the major geopolitical milestones on the restoration of Israel to the land.

Preparation for Next Session:

In our final session, we’ll review the entire book.

Session 16 Review

Major Lessons from Leviticus

This is the primary book of the Bible devoted to the most important subject of the Bible: Holiness. There are many intricate details which we could only skim over in our review, but their main lessons we dare not ignore.

Here are ten basic lessons summarized, with practical applications to each of our lives today (as suggested by Warren Wiersbe).

1. Our God is a Holy God

Whenever we minimize the holiness of God, we are in danger of minimizing human sinfulness and minimizing the work of Christ on the cross. God’s holiness means His complete “apartness” from anything that is sinful. He is *different* from that which is common. He is *separate* from that which is defiling.

2. Our God wants His people to be holy

Eight times in Scripture, God said, “Be holy, for I am holy.” He called His people to be a “holy nation.” (Cf. Ex 19:6; 1 Pet 2:9). Since “God’s commandments are also His enablements,” it’s possible for us to live a holy life. What health is to the body, holiness is to the soul.

3. Holiness begins at the altar

Leviticus didn’t begin with a prayer meeting, praise service, or a sharing meeting; it begins at the altar where innocent sacrifices shed their blood for guilty sinners. Our sins killed His only Son. Our holiness depends on His completed work, not our sincere resolutions, religious habits, or theological knowledge. We can measure our holiness by our recognition and hatred of sin.

4. Holiness involves obedience and discipline

Jesus didn't call us to be "the lips of the world"; but rather, the light of the world. Our holiness wasn't completed by bringing a sacrifice to the altar and then going away unchanged: we must obey the rules and regulations God gave His people regarding what was clean and unclean; what's right and wrong, etc., in His sight, not ours. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world (James 1:27). Bible study is an important beginning, but disciplined obedience is a critical part of holy living.

5. Holiness must be from God and be genuine

We must beware of "false zeal." Nadab and Abihu (and Ananias and Saphira) violated the holy law of God. It is possible to imitate spirituality, but God is not mocked. Sentimental religious feelings are no guarantee that we are pleasing God. We must discern Satan's (sometimes elegant) counterfeits. God's Word is the only and ultimate measure.

6. Holiness involves priestly mediation

All believers are now priests, but we must come to God through our mediating High Priest, Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:5). There can be no growth in holiness apart from fellowship with Jesus Christ. We learn from the Word of God. We gain a fear (respect) through our devotional life.

7. Lack of holiness affects our land

Sin is not limited to individual activity, affecting only the sinner. Idolatry and sexual immorality are polluting our land and is collectively contagious. (Cf. Lev 18:24-25). "I tremble for my country when I recall that God is just, and His justice will not sleep forever." Thomas Jefferson. Judgment is coming and it will begin "at the house of God" (1 Pet 4:17).

8. Holiness isn't a private affair

We are part of a worshiping community, just as Israel was supposed to be. One of the dangers today is the tendency—and emphasis—on "individual Christianity," as though each believer can go it alone in their quest for holiness. We need the help, support, and encouragement of other believers and they need us. Anyone who isn't exercising their

spiritual gifts is defrauding the Body. We are not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together" (Heb 10:25).

9. Holiness glorifies the Lord

Since only God can make a person holy, a godly life is a trophy of His grace and a tribute to His power. Only God gets the glory when people really see Christ reproduced in us. We may not see the changes taking place in us, but God can see them and so can others.

10. Holiness means living to please God alone

One of the principles that Jesus emphasized in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5, 6, & 7) is that we live our lives before the eyes of God, to please Him alone, and not before the eyes of other people in order to impress them. We are to concentrate on building character, not just a reputation. (Heb 4:13). We are His workmanship; it's the reality that will bring Him glory, not the appearance.

* * *

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

1. What relevance does the Book of Leviticus have for the Christian (who is not under the Law)?
- 2) How do salvation and sanctification compare and contrast?
- 3) How can Christian liberty be abused to the point that it downplays obedience and discipline?
- 4) For each of the 10 primary lessons listed in the review, give an example.

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) What evidence have you seen that the Church neglects godly character and conduct?
- 2) How can we distinguish "false zeal" from true holiness?

- 3) Where should the Church draw the line between “being relevant” and “being like the world”?

Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the Epistle to the Hebrews in light of its amplification and fulfillment of the Book of Leviticus.
- 2) Explore the Epistle to the Romans in light of its amplification and fulfillment of the Book of Leviticus.

Preparation for Next Session:

Select another book of the Bible to study verse by verse.

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(Much of the accompanying notes were excerpted from the following references, especially those by McGee, Wiersbe, Seiss, Kellogg, and Bonar, but all were useful.)

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