

Lessons from Leviticus
June 18, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is one thing you know about this book of the Pentateuch (i.e., the first five books of the Bible often called the “books of the law”)?
2. What are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?
 - a. **God is present with His people.**
 - b. **Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
 - c. **Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**

C. Leviticus Introduction continued:

1. Why is it important to understand these ancient ceremonies and rituals?
 - a. **They help us understand that God has always been with His people.**
 - b. **They help us to understand who God is and to what extent He is willing to go for the atonement of His people.**
 - c. **The rationale behind these rituals is foundational for understanding much of the New Testament, especially the concepts of sin, sacrifice/ atonement, and holiness which are used to interpret the death of Christ (see Hebrews).**
 - (1) **The first century Jews would have known why particular sacrifices were offered on a specific occasion and what certain gestures meant.**
 - (2) **Not so with us! We need to look beyond what is written in the book of Leviticus for an explanation of the significance of these rituals and what they tell us about Jesus’ atoning sacrifice.**
 - d. **They reflect the mindset and culture of the Old Testament Israelites, and they were still easily understood by the Jewish people whom the New Testament writers were addressing.**
 - e. **It has been said that ritual exposes the foundations of a society...they define what the society holds dear.**
 - (1) **What does our society hold dear? What rituals in daily life define us as a culture different from other cultures? **Freedom...human rights****
 - (2) **What would other cultures say our rituals are that define us?**
 - f. **The ceremonies in this book define for us what is important and foundational to God and what should have been important to His people...and when they were...the people around them were very aware of the God of Israel.**
 - g. **The holiness codes indicated that all of life was to be lived before God cultivating lives of holiness and hearts of gratitude.**
 - h. **The precision and intentionality of the sacrifices, purification rituals, dietary laws and holiness codes and tabernacle instructions show us that God cared deeply about how His people lived and how they worshipped Him...living intentionally, not “organically,” as the nations around them... in the way that we interact as the covenant community; rejecting the individualistic, consumer mentality with which we are culturally programmed to approach life in the 21st century.**
 - i. **These are God’s proclamation to understand His Word as holy something that we cannot change...ever.**

2. How does Leviticus fit into the Pentateuch?

- a. **Leviticus is part of the covenant law given at Mount Sinai, and Moses is the author....and this is confirmed in the OT as well as the NT.**
- b. **It was most likely written during the wilderness wandering obviously prior to Moses' death. The book of Exodus immediately precedes Leviticus, so recalling some of these events may help us to put Leviticus into context. Here's a very rough sketch of Exodus:**
 - (1) **Exodus 1-15: God delivers his people from slavery in Egypt by mighty signs and wonders;**
 - (2) **Exodus 16-19: He brings them to Mount Sinai, reminds them of the Abrahamic covenant and tells them they are to be *"a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."***
 - (3) **Exodus 19:4-6 - Israel at Mount Sinai, *"You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."* This comes before the commandments are given to remind and prepare the people for where they are going and what is expected of them.**
 - (4) **Exodus 20-24: He confirms their status as His chosen people by entering into a covenant with them as their king and giving them laws to follow; and**
 - (5) **Exodus 25-31, 35-40: He gives the people and priests detailed instructions for the tabernacle, His chosen place to dwell among His people.**
 - (6) **All of this should have left the people with one big question: how can a holy God dwell among an unclean, sinful people? How can the people be made *"a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"*? Leviticus, which immediately follows Exodus, answers this question.**

3. What does Leviticus teach us about animal sacrifices?

- a. **Leviticus stresses the mediatorial role of sacrifices (in atoning for sins) and the mediatorial role of priests (in offering the sacrifices) so that God's people could be before Him –HOLY as He is holy:**
 - (1) **Leviticus 1-7: Explanation of the sacrifices that address sin and enable the people to rightly worship their holy God who dwells in their midst;**
 - (2) **Leviticus 8-10: Institution of the priesthood for the purpose of intercession, offering sacrifice and worship;**
 - (3) **Leviticus 11-15: Ritual purity laws dealing with unclean animals, childbirth, skin disease, and discharges;**
 - (4) **Leviticus 16: The Day of Atonement, the annual ceremony to remove all impurity and sin from the kingdom;**
 - (5) **Leviticus 17-27: The Holiness Code, a series of laws in various areas of life to guide them in being set apart as a *"kingdom of priests and a holy nation"* (e.g., dietary laws made social mixing with Gentiles difficult)**

b. The comprehensiveness of the laws of Leviticus reminded the people that all of life was to be lived before God. Because God's people must be made holy for Him to dwell among them, holiness is a key theme:

(1) *"For I am the Lord your God who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."* Leviticus 11:45

(2) *"To be made holy, there had to be atonement through sacrifice and the shedding of blood: For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life."* Leviticus 17:11

c. A Life Preserver, Not a Burden Contrary to what modern readers are prone to think, commentator Collin Hansen writes that the laws given in Leviticus were a life preserver, not a burden, to the Israelites, as they were the very thing that showed them how to live in relationship with the holy God with whom they were in covenant. The exodus from Egypt (i.e., redemption from slavery reflecting God's grace) precedes the law given at Mount Sinai, so the law was given to those rescued by grace to show them how to live obediently and gratefully in that grace.

d. Animal sacrifices in Scripture made to God:

(1) Gen. 4, Cain and Abel offer the first sacrifices in Scripture by people, mentioned right after Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden, meaning man was now deprived of the privilege of intimacy with God; one motive for sacrifice may have been restoring that fellowship, but offerings must be made with the right motives (consider, the firstlings of Abel's flock and their fat portions, not some of the fruit of the ground as Cain offered). Later offerings had to be unblemished, meaning they were valuable to the offeror/worshipper.

(2) Gen. 8- Noah offers a sacrifice on an altar to God after the flood, presumably out of thanksgiving for being saved, and in response to the pleasing aroma, the Lord said, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth." (Gen. 8:21)

(3) Gen 15- Confirming the Covenant of Grace/Redemption

(4) Gen. 22- Abraham offers Isaac before God provides the ram, saying "for now I know that you fear God." (Gen. 22:12) – This illustrates substitutionary atonement, a concept which becomes more clear in Leviticus with the placing of hands on top of the animal's head, indicating the animal is dying in place of the worshipper.

(5) Exodus 24:3-8: Confirming the Covenant at Mount Sinai after the giving of the law.

4. Where do we find the foundational example for these sacrifices? Gen. 3:21- the LORD Himself sacrificed the unblemished and perfect animals that Adam had Named...

a. From among that first generation of "perfect" beasts...the concept, later codified in the Law...of spotlessness came.

- b. Also, the doctrine of substitutionary atonement is seen to be put in place...as these first sacrifices provided by God, just as His Son would be, were what God used to bring back into relationship with Himself our first parents. Adam could not rescue Himself from His sin...God the Father must do that...just as He ultimately does by providing Christ to secure our salvation as the last perfect sacrifice hanging from the cross.**
 - c. Just so we are clear: Animal sacrifices in the OT prefigure the final sacrifice of Christ. So these animal sacrifices were “types” of Christ. A “type,” in the language of theology, is a special example, symbol, or picture that God designed beforehand, and that he placed in history at an earlier point in time in order to point forward to a later, larger fulfillment.**
 - d. Also, this seems to have become a practice for the first family since we see this practice take front and center in Gen. 4....and in Gen. 8 after the flood as a form of recognition and worship for God’s continued goodness.**
5. But just so we are clear again...on something that is strange to our sensibilities; What is the significance of the shedding of blood?
- a. The blood put the covenant into effect, and sprinkling the people with “the blood of the covenant” cleansed them from sin so that they might enter into covenant relationship (Heb. 9:16-22). This is atonement which equals reconciliation with God by God Himself.**
 - b. The blood also reminded them that the ultimate penalty for breaking the covenant was death, because a sacrifice HAD to be made to pay the penalty of the Law for their/our sin.**
 - c. The shedding of blood dramatized the cost of forgiveness and points forward to the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross, where the symbolism of the Day of Atonement was fulfilled.**
 - (1) In the Old Testament, the blood of bulls and goats temporarily “atoned” for the Israelites’ sins, having to be redone over and over again so that they remained holy before their Holy God, as a practical reminder of:**
 - how they were to worship God...**
 - be obedient to God...**
 - be submissive to God...**
 - be God’s people...**
 - and walk before God.**
- No one was saved by their works, ever! Those who were God’s elect before the foundation of the world were saved by the blood of Christ THAT WOULD BE SHED FOR THEM when the Messiah came...and they already had the Spirit of God given them as of God’s elect. The practices that we will see in Leviticus were for their identity as God’s people...to teach them obedience and submission and to walk in the holiness provided for them by God...it is sort of the “wax on ...wax off” concept...preparing them to worship and live before God as He had commanded and when they did such things...they were blessed in God’s presence.**

(2) Under the New Testament, Jesus provides the new Israel with holiness by His perfect sacrifice, removing the sins of His people forever and giving us His Holy Spirit, who writes God's moral law on our hearts. Jesus proclaimed the fulfillment of this at the Last Supper when He offered the cup, saying: "*And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'*" (Matt. 26:27-28)

6. We have talked around the word "atonement". What does it mean and what does it mean for us?

a. Jesus' atoning sacrifice fulfills once and for all the requirements set forth in Leviticus for the sacrifices of bulls, goats, lambs, doves, grain, etc.

b. The work of Jesus, our great High Priest signified more than just reconciliation. By offering Himself as an atoning sacrifice, He accomplished four things on our behalf:

(1) Expiation – Jesus bore our sins upon himself and, therefore, did away with them. He was "made sin" for us and became our substitute. By expiation, He wipes our slate clean because He took the full penalty (i.e., death) that we owed God for our sins, and as a result, our sins are forgiven.

(2) Propitiation – Jesus bore the wrath and anger of God due to us for our sin. He turned God's anger away and satisfied the claims of divine justice against us, as a result of His expiation of our sin – i.e., expiation is the action that results in propitiation (the change of God's disposition toward us).

(3) Reconciliation – We are no longer enemies of God, but we can be reconciled to Him because we are now righteous in His sight since our sins have been forgiven (expiation) and His anger has been turned away (propitiation).

(4) Redemption – literally "buying back something" – Jesus comes to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45), buying us back as God's lost property. We are His chosen people, His treasured possession (Hebrew: segullah), meaning that we now belong to Him both by creation and redemption because of Jesus' work on the cross.

7. Again, why should we, as New Testament believers, still study the Old Testament and the laws it contains?

a. Rom. 1:1-6. What is Paul telling us about the importance of the OT concerning our ability to understand and do what God commands?

b. The moral law and all that they teach as well as all they mean... (think of Jesus' interpretations of the moral law in the Sermon on the Mount)... remains; the ceremonial and judicial laws of the Old Covenant have been abrogated. (Westminster Confession of Faith, Ch. 19)

c. We see God's presence with His people...His called and expectations for holiness...and His granted atonement so that we can live as He prescribes.

Lessons from Leviticus
June 25, 2017

A. Prayer
B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?

- a. God is present with His people.**
- b. Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
- c. Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**

2. Again, why should we, as New Testament believers, care to study the Old Testament and the laws it contains?

- a. Rom. 1:1-6.** What is Paul telling us about the importance of the OT concerning our ability to understand and do what God commands?
- b. The moral law and all that they teach as well as all they mean... (think of Jesus' interpretations of the moral law in the Sermon on the Mount)... remains; the ceremonial and judicial laws of the Old Covenant have been abrogated. (Westminster Confession of Faith, Ch. 19)**
- c. We see God's presence with His people...His called and expectations for holiness...and His granted atonement so that we can live as He prescribes.**

C. Leviticus 1-3- Burnt Offerings, Grain offerings and Peace Offerings

1. Leviticus 1- Burnt Offering

a. What things are taken for granted in verses 1-2?

- (1) That Moses was God's mouthpiece. Ever since Sinai the people had said they didn't want to hear God's voice any longer and that God would be pleased to talk to them through Moses. See John 1:17.**
- (2) That the people would be so inclined to bring offerings. Remember it is written into our DNA to worship and as God inclines the heart in our deliverance we seek to worship Him. Voluntary giving.**
- (3) That God's commands and prescribed and expected to be carried out.**
- (4) There is no option on our part but to do it as He prescribes.... His house... His Rules.**
- (5) The offering would come from their herds...their domesticated animals...not someone else's (unless you had no herds and had to purchase from the priests)...or not wild animals. Why? These sacrifices are costly!**
- (6) Fun fact, there is a word missing in the ESV at the beginning of this book. "And" or "then". Go back real quick to Exodus 40:38... Leviticus picks up right after the end of this verse... "Then, the Lord called to Moses...". The tabernacle instructions are given first, then the instructions for the sacrifices of the tabernacle. Sooo....these were to bring the congregation into regular contact with the tabernacle...so we can fellowship with one another and with God.**

b. What are the qualifications placed on the type of sacrifices that can be brought 3-17?

- (1) A bull or a sheep or goat, turtledove or pigeons (vs. 3,10,14)**

- (2) The text says, ***“...he shall offer...”***..which speaks of a voluntary action...a desire on his part to do as God requires. What is offered as a tithe or a sacrifice is to be offered as from the heart in great joy to God. A willing giver is a sign of God’s grace on the life of the believer. See II Cor. 5:9, 9:7. Also, the gift is a costly one...it is not a sacrifice if it doesn’t cost something...in this case his best animal which could net him economic prosperity.
 - (3) Without blemish...in the case of bull , or sheep and goat(the best that one had to offer...the prize animal)...it would have been understood that one would bring the best of the male birds.
 - (4) It must be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting to be determined if it is acceptable.
- c. What is prescribed of the worshipper as he prepares to offer his sacrifice? Why?
- (1) Lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering...how domesticated are these animals? Lay your hands on the head of a bull!?! Really? This animal being sacrificed represents me as I should be the one being sacrificed for my sin...but that is not God’s plan. Making atonement.
 - (2) Then the worshiper shall kill the animal (slit his throat) that he has just been caressing...in the presence of the LORD and the priests. As far as the sheep and goats are concerned the worshipper is to kill them on the north side of the altar.
 - (3) Then the worshiper will flay the bull and cut it into pieces....as well as cut the sheep and goats , along with its head and its fat.
 - (4) Then the worshiper will wash the entrails and the legs with water.
- d. What is prescribed of the priest? Why? See Luke 2:22-24
- (1) Throw the blood of the bull and the sheep and goats against the side of the altar.
 - (2) Get the fire just right
 - (3) Arrange the pieces, the head and the fat on the wood.
 - (4) As far as the birds are concerned the priest does it all:
 - * Bring the bird to the altar
 - * Ring the birds neck and drain its blood out on the side of the altar.
 - * Remove its feathers , and tear it open by its wings...but not completely sever it.
 - (5) Then the priest will place salt on it and burn all of them up as a food offering, a sweet smelling/pleasant aroma. See Gen. 8:20-22; Eph. 5:2
- e. Why so much detail? How can all this preparation speak to us today? What’s the point?
- (1) God has a prescription to be followed...then and now. God cares about how we worship Him. ***“Worship is engaging with God on the terms He has proposes, and by which only He can provide.”***
 - (2) Here we see and we will see with all the offerings... that we are to meet with God where and how He says, we are to draw near to God as He says, and we are to engage with God on the terms He has proposed. We are not allowed to worship God as we see fit.
 - (3) God communes with those who worship Him correctly.
 - (4) The size of the sacrifice doesn’t matter to God...it is that we give as He directs and from what we have been given by Him. The rich offering...the bull... the offering of the 2nd class citizen...sheep and goats...the offering of the poor...the birds... are all said to be a “food offering, a pleasing aroma”.

- (5) The giver is active not passive...he places his hand on the sacrifice identifying himself with the sacrifice.**
- (6) Because of the voluntary nature of this...it reveals how we desire to worship God as He prescribes...how we are willing to worship God as He prescribes...and that we actually long to worship God as He prescribes.**
- (7) Some might and have said that the meat would have been better to go to the poor. Think Judas and the ointment that was poured on Jesus. Why is this wholly appropriate and not a waste of food stuffs?**
 - God commands us to do this. This is how He expressly says we are to worship and we are not to question it or we will begin to question everything else God says.**
 - Worship of Him supersedes all other things.**
 - It is God job to care for the poor...for He is the One who supplies all the needs of His people...worshiping people make sure that the poor are cared for in other ways besides what is offered to God. The tithe is the tithe and an offering is over and above that for today's Christian.**
 - We are to be submissive to Him in giving freely as well as how He prescribes for us to give.**

2. Leviticus 2- Grain Offering

- a. What was the purpose of this offering? **Yet another sign of obedience...a sign of devotion to God...just like today we have different elements in worship...singing, praying hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments.**
- b. How does God take care of the priests through the grain offering?
 - (1) Only a portion is offered up to God...a memorial.**
 - (2) The rest goes to the priest as part of their salary.** What principle is communicated with how we take care of the minister today? **The ministers salary comes FROM the tithe/offering...that the minister and his family should be able to live from the altar ministry not outside work. See Num. 18:19**
- c. What is the point of the salt in verse 13?
 - (1) It is commanded by God...He would have salt at His table/altar.**
 - (2) Men confirmed their covenants with each other by eating and drinking together and there was always salt to season...so God uses an image they would understand...He salts His food offering seasoning it for a pleasant taste and aroma.**
 - (3) Interesting fun fact: The salt and the wood were provided by the church...by God so that His sacrifice would be made acceptable as the priest sprinkled the salt as directed. In providing this item God is saying that our sacrifices are not pleasant in and of themselves. Something has to be added...and He provides what needs to be added...which changes their disposition...from unpleasant to pleasant.**
- d. What seems to be going on in vs. 14-16?
 - (1) Grain offering of first fruit...seems to be a free-will offering.**
 - (2) The person was so thankful to God for His provision that he would actually take a portion of his first fruit and bring it as an extra offering than the original grain offering.**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 2, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?
 - a. **God is present with His people.**
 - b. **Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
 - c. **Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**
2. What was the point for these offerings...Burnt and grain offering?
 - a. **Yet another sign of obedience...a sign of devotion to God...just like today we have different elements in worship...singing, praying hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments.**
 - b. **So that we might be holy as He is holy.**
 - c. **So the priest would be taken care of. God provided that those who serve at the altar should live by the altar and live comfortably. God provides through His people for His paid servants and the church should take this role seriously.**
3. Why so much detail? How can all this preparation speak to us today? What's the point?
 - a. **God has a prescription to be followed...then and now. God cares about how we worship Him. *"Worship is engaging with God on the terms He has proposes, and by which only He can provide."***
 - b. **Here we see and we will see with all the offerings... that we are to meet with God where and how He says, we are to draw near to God as He says, and we are to engage with God on the terms He has proposed. We are not allowed to worship God as we see fit.**
 - c. **God communes with those who worship Him correctly.**
 - d. **The size of the sacrifice doesn't matter to God...it is that we give as He directs and from what we have been given by Him. The rich offering...the bull... the offering of the 2nd class citizen...sheep and goats...the offering of the poor...the birds... are all said to be a "food offering, a pleasing aroma".**
 - e. **The giver is active not passive...he places his hand on the sacrifice identifying himself with the sacrifice.**
 - f. **Because of the voluntary nature of this...it reveals how we desire to worship God as He prescribes...how we are willing to worship God as He prescribes...and that we actually long to worship God as He prescribes.**
 - g. **So we remember that we are to bring our best to God...nothing less!**
 - h. **Why are the procedures for the sacrifices repeated over and over again?**
 - (1) **As we said we are to be obedient to God's Word. There is only one way to do these things...God's way.**
 - (2) **When we change what God has said we defile it by our sinfulness.**
 - (3) **God loves us so much so He seeks for us to remain faithful and holy so He repeats Himself over and over again.**

C. Leviticus 3- Peace Offering

1. What is its purpose?

- a. A communion offering**
- b. A covenant sacrifice**
- c. A corporate offering**
- d. A concluding sacrifice- It was usually the final act in a series of sacrifices in which reconciliation had been re-established**
- e. It expressed sincere and complete thanks to God because of His provision.**

2. What things seem to be different with this offering?

- a. It too is offered as a free-will offering. Seeking blessing or having received blessing was a form of giving thanks as one rested in God's peace.**
- b. The burnt offering expressed the costliness of obedience, the peace offering expressed the joy and happiness of fellowship with God.**
- c. This offering could be either male or female since it was a fellowship offering .**
- d. Specific information considering fat, kidneys and blood.**
- e. The people actually got to eat some of this meal. ..as they were in fellowship with God. See 7:11-18 Fellowship/Communion with God is experienced only by the shedding of the blood of a prescribed (read perfect) substitute for atonement. The NT counterpart to this meal is the Lord's Supper in a sense.**

2. What do the "fat", the "kidneys" and the "blood represent that are important for us today?

- a. An interesting assortments of "parts". It seems clear that the people and the priest probably did not have a good knowledge of the function of animal anatomy. They did not know for sure what the parts did. But they did know this...a human and an animal are made of outward parts and inward parts. Also, when they dissected the animals they discovered that many of the parts are buried deep within the animal many wrapped in muscle and covered with special membranes....the fat, the kidneys/liver and the blood.**
- b. "Fat" in the OT is symbolic of the best. The worshiper is to give the very best of the animal to God...the "fat" in obedience to God...which represents the worshiper giving the best parts of their life.**
- c. "the Blood"- this blood symbolizes life...and God controls life and so the blood is His to control. The pagan drank the blood in their sacrifices ...God would not allow such a holy element to be misused in such a way... the disobedient must be dealt with swiftly so as not to infect the whole. Whenever we misuse the "things" of God we are due His discipline.**

(1) See verse 17

(2) See Lev. 7:22-27...penalty for going against God's Law... *"shall be cut off from his people."* Capital punishment in one of 2 senses:

- Execution**
- Death without children...the curse of barrenness...to die without children meant that your heritage was gone from the earth...an appropriate sentence for the unjust and ungodly and unrighteous.**

- d. **“kidneys/liver- long lobe of the liver-the membrane covering the upper part of the liver” ...to these people this was the most inward part of the body...it is the largest and heaviest of organs so in the Hebrew the word for “liver” is a form of the word “heavy” (which is the word “kavod” which also means “glory”) and was considered important on the grounds that heavy meant important... the source of the bodies life...not just physically but also emotionally like we look at the heart today but the point of all of this is that the choicest all the part were to be devoted to God giving Him the best, the fat here was considered to be the sweetest= best...so that tells us that we are to give to God our best...not our left overs.**
- e. **“entrails” – the entrails and the legs The “rump” were washed to signify the universal and perfect purity of the entrails(think heart) stomach, bowels, and the feet from the knee joint(legs)washing away of lusts= read harmful behavioral choices and washing the feet is cleansing symbolizing walking a more godly pure path ...our best sacrifices still need cleansing.**
- f. **God gets the same parts every time. (compare into chapter 4 as well) He wants the parts that were of the most significance...the center of life the “sweet parts”...these are His... Lev. 3:17. So...the extend this...God does not want merely external deeds from us, performed out of ritual with no engagement of heart or mind. God wants our inmost parts...our heart...our mind ...our soul/might...You know the passage... *“Love the Lord with all your...”* also consider Rom. 1:9, *“For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son”*...many people serve externally for glory and honor and with NOT their all and they eventually wear out...but Paul speaks of serving from his inward being...with all that he has and is.**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 9, 2017

A. Prayer
B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?

- a. God is present with His people.**
- b. Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
- c. Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**

2. What things were different with the peace offering?

- a. It too is offered as a free-will offering. Seeking blessing or having received blessing was a form of giving thanks as one rested in God's peace. It was voluntary...but it was also expected...but more importantly the people wanted to do this before the LORD. Sort of like going to church is a voluntary thing but it also is to be the desire of our hearts as believers.**
- b. The burnt offering expressed the costliness of obedience, the peace offering expressed the joy and happiness of fellowship with God.**
- c. This offering could be either male or female since it was a fellowship offering .**
- d. Specific information considering fat, kidneys and blood. See...Prov. 23:16.. "...inmost being"= kidneys in the original.**
- e. The people actually got to eat some of this meal. ..as they were in fellowship with God. See 7:11-18 Fellowship/Communion with God is experienced only by the shedding of the blood of a prescribed (read perfect) substitute for atonement. The NT counterpart to this meal is the Lord's Supper in a sense.**

C. Leviticus 4-5:13- Laws for the Sin Offerings

1. Unintentional Sins= (non-premeditated sins) 4:1-12...concerning the high priest who sins.

a. What do you suppose verses 1-2 are here for?

(1) He begins with God covenantal name... LORD...to remind us:

- * That is God who speaks and sets the terms for His people.**
- * That it is God speaking to Moses His direct representative for the people about such matters as how to be holy.**
- * By using Yahweh...He is also emphasizing His relationship with His people...reminding them of His covenantal promises and their covenantal responsibilities to live and act as He has and does prescribe so they/we will be blessed and He will be glorified.**

(2) Unintentional sins still defiles us (think sins of omission) ... all sin must be atoned for. This is a whole section for the "But I didn't mean to"...sins! This is how much God seeks the holiness of His people. This is the first offering in which atonement is the dominant element. This sacrifice re-establishes the covenant between God and man...in atonement the fellowship is restored.

- * This offering expiates the guilt and punishment for sin.**

*** This involved grace on God's part and faith on man's part. God's grace in providing the sacrifice and Man's faith which revealed his heart in what his motivation was in carry through with the sacrifice.**

*** God hates any religious activity without accompanying faith-
Is. 1:10-20; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8**

(2) They serve as a heading for the coming sections:

- * vs. 3-12- concerning the high priest who sins unintentionally.**
- * vs. 13-21- concerning the whole congregation who sin Unintentionally.**
- vs. 22-26- concerning the unintentional sin of a leader=judge, elder.**
- vs. 27-35- concerning the common person who unintentionally sins.**
- * 5:1-13- Some examples where we might find our self in need of being forgiven for unintentional sins.**

b. Why does he start with the high priests need for purification?

(1) For the High Priest stands/represents all the people...his sins bring guilt on all the people...just like Adams sin brought guilt on all mankind. He is God's agent to represent all of God's people before God...so if he sins, unintentionally we are all sinning...the corporate nature of sin is an important part here. So if he is defiled how can he do His job? This was also the Jewish understanding of corporateness.

(2) What does this say of all our elders today?

- * That as leaders we are to keep a short list of our sins before the Lord as well.**
- That as God's chosen leaders we are held to a higher standard because we represent the people before the Lord and we are vested with watching/shepherding them to keep them safe from others and themselves.**
- That as God's leaders we must seek repentance of our sins and the sins of our people and not let up on unintentional as well as intentional sins.**

(3) Why don't we see any forgiveness here for the High Priest? It is understood. Read Lev. 9:1-7..make atonement for yourself.

(4) What sin (s) might he have committed that would need purification?

- * Remembering that Aaron is in mind as he writes this from God...what do we know of Aarons personality that might lead to needing repentance for unintentional sins?**
 - He was easily swayed by the people's influence.**
 - He had authority issues...which is interesting given all that he and Moses had been through in Egypt but also that it was he who was chosen to be the first High Priest and that his sons were to be priests after him...**
 - This and more makes him a "real" person...with real issues...that may unintentionally lead him to sin so he needs to repent and sacrifice so that he is not carrying with hi sin that will eventually lead the people astray.**

- **Another issue might have been; the qualification that was required in a high priest was, that he should be "one that could have compassion," and this is set forth in Hebrews 5:2. He that was high priest was not chosen into that office for his deep wisdom, great power, or exact holiness; but for the mercy and compassion that was in him. Interesting, that it is the only mentioned, characteristic in a high priest; and the special essential qualification that was inwardly and internally fit for that office, as God's appointment, as Hebrews 5:4 has it. And the word δυνάμενος, "the one or ones who can" or "is able," imports an inward work, a spirit, a disposition, a heart that knows how to be compassionate. And it is the same word that the apostle had before used to express Christ's heart by, even in the words of the text, δυνάμενον συμπαθεῖν, that is, "the one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."**
 - **So here is the qualification disposing him for this office, merciful compassionateness; so that he can deal mercifully with all sorts of sinners, according to the proportion and measure of their sins and miseries. If he does not show this quality: 1. He is no longer fit for this place, unless he continues to be of a gracious disposition, and one that can have compassion. 2. He can no longer be faithful in the discharge of this office, according to the ends for which it was appointed, unless he shows all grace and mercy unto them that come unto his throne of grace for it.**
 - **So he must give a sacrifice for his lack of compassion which affects the whole body as he represents the body and how the body should treat one another.**
2. Why is the blood "spread" so much wider...on more things...in the sin offering?
- a. **Veil of the sanctuary...horned corners of the altar...the incense altar**
 - b. **Because the tent of meeting and its furniture were closely related to God's people...the peoples sins defiled themselves...one another and the tent of meeting as well...**
 - c. **What is this to communicate to us today? The pervasiveness of our sin.**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 16, 2017

A. Prayer
B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?
 - a. God is present with His people.**
 - b. Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
 - c. Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**
2. Chapter 4 vs. 1-12 speaks to the unintentional sins of the High Priest. What principles can be gleaned for today's elders?
 - a. That as God's leaders we are to keep a short list of our sins before the Lord as well.**
 - b. That as God's chosen leaders we are held to a higher standard because we represent the people before the Lord and we are vested with watching/shepherding them to keep them safe from others and themselves.**
 - c. That as God's leaders we must seek repentance of our sins and the sins of our people and not let up on unintentional as well as intentional sins.**
3. Verse 12 is interesting for a number of reason but I would like to take a few minutes to discuss the word "clean" here in our text...in this case to a "*clean place*"
 - a. It is important for us to understand the meaning of "clean and unclean", as it is used in the Old Testament, and its application for us in the New Testament. It is a predominant theme in the book of Leviticus. "clean" is used over 60 times and unclean over 72 times in this one book alone.**
 - b. God never tells Israel why something is clean or unclean. He never gives a reason for the definition of clean or unclean. For centuries, men have tried to give reasons for these definitions of clean and unclean, and one reliable commentary outlines 4, which I think are worthy of mentioning. Why is one kind of food clean and another kind of food unclean?**
 - (1) Because of some animal's association with paganism, God could not allow them to be brought into the Israelite's worship of the True God.**
 - (2) Another basic theory was, that God prohibited the eating of certain animals because it was unhealthy to eat them in those days. But then, Jesus declared all of those to be clean., "All things now are clean." Therefore it doesn't seem that health is the issue concerning cleanness or uncleanness.**
 - (3) In those things man eats, or does not eat, he is an imitator of God—that is, there are only certain things which God allows to be offered up as burnt offerings to Him. Interestingly, the sacrificial terminology is used, but it is offered up as food to God. Now obviously God does not eat the food, but it is the symbolism employed. So if God is selective about what He eats, that is, what is sacrificed to Him, the Israelites ought to also be choosy about what they eat.**

- (4) It is a divine choice, as is His right as Creator of all things. Why did God call the pig unclean and a cow clean? God never explains this, and by looking at all the commentaries, we find that nobody has figured it out either.**
- It may be that there isn't any reason at all other than that God said "clean" or "unclean." Think about God's choice of Israel as a nation. Is there some reason why God chose Israel as opposed to the Canaanites? Did He choose the Israelites because they were so spiritually pure? They weren't!**
 - The prophets remind Israel that they served foreign gods when they were in Egypt, and they brought those foreign gods with them when they came out of Egypt. Was it because they were powerful and numerous and looked promising, and God wanted to go with a winning team? No, they were nobody! Why did God choose Israel and not some other nation? It was just God's sovereign choice. That's all! There was nothing intrinsically good about them or intrinsically more evil about anybody else. It was God's divine choice. God said He chose Jacob, and He rejected Esau. Why? Because sovereign choices are sovereign choices, and they don't have reasons that we can always see. Election is the point we see in the clean and the unclean, as well as in the deliverance of Israel.**
- c. If we were to look for the words "*clean or unclean*", we would discover that these are found first in Genesis 7- 8...with Noah. And it is found with respect to those animals that were brought onto the ark. There were 7 of each species that were clean. By the end of Genesis 8, Noah offered up the clean animals as a sacrifice to God. Noah didn't say to God, "Clean? Unclean? What is that?" Noah knew what a clean creature was, and he knew what an unclean creature was, and he brought 7 of the clean ones so that he could sacrifice them to God. Noah already understood that anything that was to be offered to God had to be something that was clean. But it is not until Leviticus 4 that the "clean and unclean" terminology reappears after Genesis 7 and 8. Now it is given more substance, and "clean and unclean" are brought to bear on Israel's worship of God and on Israel's eating habits. So there is a history of clean and unclean that goes back beyond the Book of Leviticus and beyond the life of Moses.**
- d. We find these issues discussed and debated heatedly between the scribes and the Pharisees, and our Lord had to do with cleanness and uncleanness—particularly the area of ceremonial uncleanness as defined by Jewish tradition, not so much as defined by Old Testament revelation. We must also observe that cleanness and uncleanness is related to holiness. Certainly, this is so in Leviticus.**
- e. We should also note that clean and unclean was the great issue dividing Jews and Gentiles. Clean and unclean was the critical issue that had to be met head on and solved in Acts 10 and 11 before the church could become a church where the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles was torn down.**

- f. Cleanness or uncleanness is a matter of category more than of condition.**
When we talk about being clean, we generally speak of a condition someone is in. If our children come in unclean, they need to have their hands washed, but they are still in the category of a child. Or when the feet were washed to symbolize that the whole body was clean when entering into a person home...now their condition was considered to be clean people. Clean is a categorical pronouncement. It is all those land animals that chew their cud and have split hooves, whether their hooves have been washed or not. The category is clean or the category is unclean, depending upon the classification of the creature that is in mind.
- g. Cleanness is that which is defined by God and declared by the priests.**
Clean or unclean is clean or unclean by the definition, and the definition for the clean and unclean creatures is given in Leviticus. It is declared by the priests, which will become more and more important as we get into skin disorders. It is the priest who must say, this person or this disease is clean or unclean. It is God's definition and it is the declaration of the priests.
- h. Cleanness or uncleanness is the state of access to God. The practical outworking of being declared unclean means that we have to go away.**
For example, a priest in Leviticus 4:1-12 cannot go about his priestly duties in a state of uncleanness. He must sacrifice an offering and/or wait until he is ceremonially clean, according to Lev. 22. So one may not approach God in his normal worship in an unclean state. It restricts one's fellowship with God, and it restricts one's fellowship with men. That is the natural consequence of the declaration of uncleanness.
- i. Cleanness is related to holiness. Now we get down to the basic reason why an Israelite is to make these distinctions between clean and unclean, it is because God says, "You are to be holy, for I am holy." Since the Genesis passages men and women are to observe these distinctions because God has made them. Therefore cleanliness is related to God's holiness, and Israel is to observe it because of the holiness of God. There is a direct relationship between what is clean and what is holy in Scripture. What is unclean can never be holy. Some things that are clean may be consecrated and set apart as holy, but nothing which is holy is unclean; only that which is clean can become holy.**
- j. Simply put...God never tells Israel why something is clean or unclean. He never gives a reason for the definition of clean or unclean.**

C. Chapter 4:13-35 continued:

- 1. Unintentional Sins of the Whole congregation- 4:13-35. What is the main thing that this section is teaching us very clearly?**
 - a. That we need to recognize our own sin.**
 - b. There are corporate consequences for the whole community when people within the community sin even unintentionally. I.e.-Remember the story of Achan in the days of Joshua...one man, one family: consequences for all of Israel until Achan and his family were dealt with.**

- c. Do you think of yourself as accountable to one another in this congregation this way? Do we realize that we cannot live our lives the way we want and it not affect the whole congregation? **That is what is being taught here...the principle is still true today.**
2. What is being communicated with the numerous uses of the phrase “*before the Lord*”?
- a. **Everything is to done “Coram Deo”- before the face of God.**
 - b. **All worship...from repentance to praise is done before the face of God.**
 - c. **Sooo...how we worship is always seen by the LORD...we forget this...**
 - d. **It is also very public...practically...we sin publically we sacrifice publically the priest declares us atoned publically.**
3. How do you understand the term “make atonement”?
- a. **We can’t go before the Lord and seek atonement for ourselves. This is crucial for us even today...for many think we can bypass the “priest” Jesus to do this on our own...our very phraseology says this; “I asked the Lord into my heart.” Covenantal people understand that you have to go through the priest...in our case through Jesus and Jesus decides... based on God’s decision before the foundation of the world.**
 - b. **The priest is the one who has been vested with the authority to declare the people atoned! “make atonement” also means “declared atoned”. Jesus our High Priest declared us atoned when He said “It is finished!”**
 - c. **A couple of dynamic equivalents for today...**
 - (1) **This is seen when the elders hear someone’s testimony before agreeing for individuals to become members of the church. The family is enlarged and everyone rejoices.**
 - (2) **Also, this is seen as the elders do their job concerning public and not public sins when metering out discipline among the congregation. When someone is declared absolved or if repentance is granted the family is made whole again**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 23, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?
 - a. God is present with His people.**
 - b. Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
 - c. Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**
2. Unintentional Sins of the Whole congregation- 4:13-35. What was the main things that this section is teaching us very clearly?
 - a. That we need to recognize our own sin.**
 - b. There are corporate consequences for the whole community when people within the community sin even unintentionally. I.e.-Remember the story of Achan in the days of Joshua...one man, one family: consequences for all of Israel until Achan and his family were dealt with.**
3. How do you understand the term “make atonement”?
 - a. We can’t go before the Lord and seek atonement for ourselves. This is crucial for us even today...for many think we can bypass the “priest” Jesus to do this on our own...our very phraseology says this; “I asked the Lord into my heart.” Covenantal people understand that you have to go through the priest...in our case through Jesus and Jesus decides...based on God’s decision before the foundation of the world.**
 - b. The priest is the one who has been vested with the authority to declare the people atoned! “make atonement” also means “declared atoned”. Jesus our High Priest declared us atoned when He said “It is finished!”**
 - c. A couple of dynamic equivalents for today...**
 - (1) This is seen when the elders hear someone’s testimony before agreeing for individuals to become members of the church. The family is enlarged and everyone rejoices.**
 - (2) Also, this is seen as the elders do their job concerning public and not public sins when metering out discipline among the congregation. When someone is declared absolved or if repentance is granted the family is made whole again**
4. How important are these sacrifices?
 - a. Obviously, very important!**
 - b. Some might say that they make it hard to approach God...but I would say that God has made it easy to approach Him as long as the priests and the people do exactly as He says to do.**
 - c. The shedding of blood portrays how important they were...this is not to be taken lightly...as the shedding of blood was sacred to God...for without the shedding of blood there can be no atonement.**
 - d. Ok, granted...but then what about texts like these? What is the broader point?**
 - (1) I Samuel 15:22**

- (2) Prov. 21:3
- (3) Micah 6:6-8

C. Chapter 5:1-13

1. What are some of the examples where we find ourselves needing to be forgiven in these verses? And what are their dynamic equivalents for today?

a. sin of withholding evidence-

- (1) this was considered a sin against the ruling authorities and the people themselves...for all were bound to participate in this system of justice. However, some might seek to not testify so as not to offend a friend or an enemy...or to appear unbiased.**
- (2) “bear his iniquity”- as if he lied...for not coming forward with what he knows first-hand or circumstantially. Bear his iniquity- also means- that the iniquity has been made known by himself declaring his unknown sin when he realizes it or by being outed by someone else publically and not denying the accusation until he goes and makes his sacrifice.**

b. sin of having contact with any unclean thing...

- (1) turn to Luke 10...we must not be too quick to judge these men...they were in the midst of a human dilemma...which to choose...remain clean and to be able to serve all the people...or to serve this man in the road and be unclean for 7 days and not be able to serve all the people. Jesus makes it clear the immediate need outweighed the temple service (He was always bringing into question the ceremonial practices with the call to love our neighbor) ...they chose wrongly...but it must have been a real dilemma for them...How often do we choose the wrong thing...when trying to do the right thing?**
- (2) uncleanness was tantamount to leprosy in the eyes of the people...if you came into the temple unclean you defiled everything you touched making it and all the people unclean by your actions...ceremonial guilt equaled moral guilt even if unaware.**

c. sin of meaningless oaths whether good or bad.

- (1) May make an oath simply to try and protect himself...**
- (2) May make a meaningless oath like “I swear on my sainted mother’s grave.”**
- (3) May promise to do something to appease someone and then forget to do it.**
- (4) May swear to do something that is unlawful but at the time is unaware that it is unlawful.**
- (5) He is guilty for not keeping his oath and guilty if he does, especially if it is a bad oath...of course, Jesus speaks to this in the Sermon of the Mount. This is something that God’s people are prone to do...so Jesus says to us let our Yes be yes and our No be No!**
- (7) See Proverbs 6:1-5**

2. What “new” requirement is added when a person realizes they have sinned?
 - a. **When he becomes aware of the sin he must “confess” his sin then sacrifice. vs.5...not really a new thing just further explanation.**
 - b. **Sin must be confessed and cleansed before worship and communion with God can be enjoyed.**
 - (1) **This confession must be specific...I have sinned in this particular way for it to be a true confession.**
 - (2) **No general overarching confession... “I’m sorry for everything I did”...won’t cut it.**
 - (3) **The priest would not accept his sacrifice without a specific confession.**
 - c. **All of these details are being given to us to help us understand the basic realities of communion with God:**
 - (1) **All sin defiles the person. All sin...unintentional and intentional.**
 - (2) **Every last bit of sin must be dealt with from the priest to the common member and our life and actions have a corporate effect and confession and sacrifice must be offered before the priest can declare us atoned. How does this apply to us today? See Hebrews 10:1-18**
3. After looking at these verses, what hit you about all of this?
 - a. **How bloody it is! Sacrificing was a bloody business for everyone.**
 - b. **God has a way to cleanse His people that looks forward to the day we will be completely cleansed and never have to offer up any more imperfect sacrifices again.**
 - c. **God’s plan enables communion with Him as long as we follow His plan.**
 - d. **Forgiveness comes only through the shedding of blood.**
 - e. **Our reconciliation to God requires our repentance each time couple with Christ’s work and we are forgiven.**
 - f. **Considering the poor...no man poverty shall ever keep them away from their pardon. All are to have access to the Lord of Glory when seeking to repent and be forgiven. 2 offerings...sin and burnt ...are offered here because of the smallness of the overall offering and the need to kill 2 birds with one stone if you will...pun intended.**
4. Looking back over verses 1-13 specifically...where do we see God’s grace?
 - a. **Everyone in their measure can participate is these so as to obtain atonement from God and the priest for their unintentional sins.**
 - b. **God doesn’t make it hard to worship Him.**
 - c. **Constant forgiveness is available for those who are devoted to Him and seek His forgiveness.**
 - d. **God looks especially favorably upon the poor ...providing for them in their low estate.**
5. For extra points: What are some of the difference between pagan animal sacrifices and these animal sacrifices?
 - a. **These were instituted by God based on the various needs for forgiveness in His people. Instituted out of love for their momentary atonement.**
 - b. **Pagan sacrifices were instituted by man with the hope that the deity might forgive...or might give them fertility...or might enable them to win the war...or maybe appease what they perceived as his or her anger.**

- c. God created animal sacrifices for atonement...looking forward to the ultimate atonement of His people in Jesus Christ. Everything else is a counterfeit meant to worship a false god...so as NOT to worship or acknowledge the One True God.**
- d. When they followed Him with what He prescribed He guaranteed atonement...no wondering it was certain...just as a atonement in Christ is certain once for all of His elect.**

Lessons from Leviticus
August 6, 2017

A. Prayer
B. Review

1. Again what are the 3 basic themes to Leviticus?
 - a. God is present with His people.**
 - b. Because God is Holy, His people are to be holy.**
 - c. Atonement/sacrifice is necessary to restore the relationship with God, so that the first 2 can be experienced.**
2. Looking back over verses Lev. 1-5:13...where and in what ways do we see God's grace?
 - a. Everyone in their measure can participate in these so as to receive atonement from God and the priest for their intentional and unintentional sins.**
 - b. God doesn't make it hard to worship Him.**
 - c. Constant forgiveness is available for those who are devoted to Him and seek His forgiveness.**
 - c. God looks especially favorably upon the poor ...providing for them in their low estate.**

C. Leviticus 5:14-19- Sin or Trespass offerings...

1. Leviticus 5:14-19-
 - a. "Breach of faith"= a trespass or sin against someone else. What else is communicated by a statement like this?
 - (1) Something dire was done...even if unintentional. An act of sacrilege.**
 - (2) What was done requires repentance and restitution/compensation in some way...**
 - b. Who specifically is this sin or trespass against according to our text?
 - (1) God... for these were His things to be dealt with as He said...this also talks about the lifestyle that God had directed...these are not just acts of worship during a service and/or a sacrifice...but also how we are to live before our brothers and sisters as well.**
 - (2) The priest...for they are the ones in charge of the "holy things"- "sacred property".**
 - (3) The people...by virtue of defaming the holy things and not living a holy lifestyle before one another...because all are connected in theses atonement offerings.**
 - c. Lev. 22 gives us some examples of the type of ways this "breach of faith" might come to pass.
 - (1) Lev. 22:1-9- Approaching the holy things when a priest is unclean brings a death sentence... "*...cut off from my presence...*" and "*...lest they bear sin and die thereby when they profane it...*" Think Aaron's own sons- Nadab and Abihu- Lev. 10:1-3; also, Eli's sons... I Sam. 2:12 -16, 27-36...4:11.**
 - (2) Lev. 22:10-16- this speaks of "wrong" people and the eating of the sacred food that was given to the priests for their consumption/payment for their service.**

- (3) Lev. 22:17-25- perhaps a failure to keep a vow...like not keeping well your Nazarite vow or maybe a blemished animal that the owner believed to be unblemished...for you gave your words that it was unblemished.**
- (4) Lev. 22:26-33- killing the sacrifice before its time is not acceptable. Or killing of an animal and its young on the same day is not acceptable.**
- (5) In the last 3 there is no sign of a death sentence fro unintentional trespass...simply an offering will suffice. However, according to Hebrews 10:28 if it was done with malice or on purpose then death was to be immediate...just like with the priest.**

2. What is expected of the man who sins in this way?

- a. Bring an unblemished ram to be slaughtered in the way of the previous sin offerings...in this case also the ram you bring is to be of worth...in as much as a ram in more valuable for this offering is dearer...because this is a heavy offense...because he has wronged God as well as his brothers and sisters...in misusing the holy things of the Lord...which always also includes living a holy lifestyle.**
- b. Its value is determined based on the shekel measurement of the Temple...based on the crime it is determined this way as to how big a ram to bring and it is given as a guilt offering.**
- c. Then he shall make restitution...that is come up with its worth and then add 20% to that number and give it to the priest....and if all of this is acceptable the priest will declare he is atoned and forgiven.**

3. What is the purpose for the provision of verses 17-19?

- a. Read the note in your study Bibles for vs. 17-19.**
- b. This is the person who was not certain whether or not that he did something sinful...he senses that he might have so it is good to be sure, so he brings his guilt/trespass-offering.**
- c. God gives this law to aid His children in right standing before Him and one another...for when the sin is known or made known it is to be dealt with immediately.**
 - (1) Now this was designed to show the very great evil there is in sacrilege. Also to help those with a guilty conscience to find rest...**
 - (2) This shows the evil of it, that if a man had, through mere ignorance, and unknowingly, defiled in some way the holy things or was not living in accordance to the holy living God required, even if he did only suspect that he had done so, he must bring of an offering, with the trouble of bringing it, and must take shame to himself, by making confession of it.**
 - (3) It is always wrong to invade God's property and/or to walk our own path, because we should be extremely cautious so as to not give any appearance of evil.**

(4) We are also taught here to be so conscious of ourselves...so aware of our sinful nature...it should be the desire of our hearts not to seek in any way to deface God or His stuff, or by not living as He prescribes for us to live...but to immediately seek pardon for the sin, and make satisfaction for the wrong which we do but also those things that we suspect ourselves guilty of... for the last phrase is true, “...he has indeed incurred guilt before the LORD.” We always bear some guilt before the Lord...so regular repentance before the Lord is a good thing... a freeing thing...a “thing” that leads to peace in the Lord.

d. The question was asked concerning the offering in this section...Was the “offering and either or”? The text says, “*He shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent for a guilt offering...*”

(1) I don’t know but based on the rest of these sacrifices I would say “no” in this sense: If you have a ram you must bring a ram from your flock...if you do not have sheep the priest will determine an equivalent...this is not left up to the individual.

(2) But the point of this is to not make forgiveness hard...being faithful to God can be determined by His Word and His faithful servants so that people can freely repent and be atoned for. We have seen this grace of God before when we have looked at the numerous ways that he allows for the poor to bring offerings.

Lessons from Leviticus
August 13, 2017

A. Prayer
B. Review

1. Considering all the provisions God gives to Moses for unintentional sins...what are some of the things that are being communicated for us today?
 - a. **All sin is against God and is cosmic rebellion and must be atoned for.**
 - b. **It should remind us of our need to recognize that men are NOT trustworthy...they all sin and as such there is only One we can truly trust.**
 - b. **God delights in providing a way for His people to grow into holiness...by securing for us a pathway to Him through His Son Jesus Christ the ultimate sacrifice made by Him on our behalf...substitutionary atonement... because nothing we could ever offer would be “good enough”.**
 - c. **That we are not to take God’s pardon lightly...we are to be very concerned with our lifestyle and how it is lived out before God and our brothers and sisters in the faith. This would be presumptuous on our part and we know how God feels about presumption on the part of His people.**
 - d. **These continue to remind us to let the “fear of God” reign in us always, which has the benefit of controlling our desire for sin as well as opens our eyes to the sin around us and enables us to know when we have sinned unintentionally ...and/or take our due knee in repentance when it is pointed out to us by other faithful.**
 - e. **Sooo...we must always be examining ourselves...our actions and our motivations before the Lord.**
2. What are some “breaches of faith” that we commit every day...that we need to ask God for forgiveness for?

C. Leviticus 6:1-7

1. Who specifically is this sin or trespass against according to Lev. 6:1-7?
 - a. **God...since He has given the law of how we are to treat our neighbor...And every sin is first and foremost against the LORD.**
 - b. **Our neighbor/ a brother...as the initial one who is harmed in this pre-meditated act.**
 - c. **This is not an unintentional act as was the case in chapters 4 and 5. These were deliberate sins. Deliberate acts of unfaithfulness.**
2. Why does God seem to place such emphasis on what we say...the oaths we take...the promises we make...the things we tell one another?
 - a. **What we say reveals our heart.**
 - b. **When we are not honest with one another...breaking oaths/promises/ one’s own word...is a breach of faith=sacrilegious because we have just destroys the unity that we have in Christ...at least for a while. Why would we seek out to “lie” to the people that care the most about you?**
 - c. **This lack of truthfulness reveals our heart condition and may indicate the lack of faith.**
 - d. **Treating one another in this way reflects on our “relationship” with the Lord.**
 - e. **For the sins envisioned here are unfaithfulness and perjury= lying!**

3. What point is God making by saying the phrase, "...in any of all the things that people do and sin thereby...thereby become guilty..." ?
 - a. **That there are things that we are to do that do not leads us to sin, like:**
 - (1) Not deceiving our neighbor financially**
 - (2) Not robbing our neighbor nor oppressing our neighbor**
 - (3) Not lying to our neighbor so we can have what the neighbor lost....seeking to find the neighbor and return what was lost...or is it "finding something the neighbor lost" because we lost it for them...another form of robbery?**
 - b. **It also speaks to the issue of the oaths we take or lies we spread with no intent on making them right...or keeping them.**
 - c. **If atonement is not made...punishment will ensue... See I Thess. 4:6.**
3. Again, what point (s) is/are being made here?
 - a. **Sin is a serious matter.**
 - (1) So it should cause us to question ourselves...Are we serious about sin?**
 - (2) J.C. Ryle, in his treatise on Holiness begins his treatise with this statement, "He who would make great strides in holiness must first uncover the depth of his sins."**
 - (3) Sin is so serious there is even a provision for when we sense we have done something we need forgiveness for...and don't know...because we have sinned before the LORD.**
 - (4) We cannot come into the presence of the most holy God without a sacrifice...thankfully Christ was provided by God the Father as our sacrifice but we must also be mindful of our daily sins and seek God through repentance of our sins as well.**
 - b. **Some sins require restitution.**
 - (1) Think Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Some sins required a 4 fold restitution- 25%...not just a fifth...or 20% as here.**
 - (2) A willingness to give restitution is a sign of a changed heart. For us this means admitting that we have taken things from work that don't belong to us and returning them...or from church...or from someone we care about. If you have given your word...following through no matter how much it costs you. Being willing to pay for something that you have broken.**
 - c. **But there is forgiveness.**
 - (1) "The priest shall make atonement..." ...you bring the ram to the door of the tabernacle place your hand on its head, then you confess publically before the priest and the offended party and then you slaughter the animal and offer it to the priest...and if it all looks good and seems sincere and heartfelt...he declares you pardoned/forgiven.**
 - (2) There can be no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. But with the shedding of blood there is forgiveness...no matter what the sin, no matter how complicated the sin...no matter how offensive the sin...God has provided forgiveness...there is full forgiveness in the LORD. Isaiah 53:10 shows us the Christ is the guilt offering...all that renders us guilty before the LORD... Jesus... our guilt... offering...bore it.**

**(3) Jesus is the great substitutionary atonement for all who are His.
There is forgiveness of sins for those whom He has declared to be
atoned/forgiven.**

4. Just for fun, what are some of the significant things that are communicated by the headings/phrases, *"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying..."* or *"The Lord commanded Moses, saying..."*
 - a. **This points to Moses as being God's chosen representative...the one through whom He will speak His Word.**
 - b. **This clarifies that this is all God's Word...not Moses' word.**
 - c. **Signifies His covenantal presence with His people.**
 - d. **Speaks to His authority. His ways will be upheld.**
 - e. **The significance of this is that God tells us how He wants things done...He doesn't leave anything up to question...because He loves us and wants us to be holy He tells us what is expected.**
 - f. **This is a very public process...both their sins and their successes...**
5. Once again, before we move on; what are some of the basic principles that we have learned so far as we have looked at these offerings? It could come across as "So many details...this is so involved...and so complicated for the average person. Why, does God seem to make it so hard?"...or does He?
 - a. **To communicate that God obviously cares about how He is to be worshiped.**
 - b. **Actually He makes it easy to worship Him...Oh, there is a lot of work but the fact that He lays it out so clearly with so many avenues for people to be forgiven is wonderful.**
 - c. **Many, however, may not see it that way because:**
 - (1) **In each case they are being exposed public for their sin...whether it is pointed out or whether they become aware on their own...the Spirit's work.**
 - (2) **The fallen nature within us doesn't understand why we need to do anything...why doesn't God just do it all? So it keeps causing us to ask the reasons why we must do things as He has said to do them.**
 - (3) **Also, by nature we like things done for us..."I didn't come to worship to have to think about what or why I am doing what I am doing...and in some cases I'd rather just be entertained...great music...a great children's ministry so I don't have to be bothered...the best youth group in town...once again so I don't have to do anything."**
 - d. **To communicate their importance. We are not given the authority to change anything that he says.**
 - e. **To communicate the process of forgiveness.**
 - f. **To communicate the process of sanctification.**
 - g. **To promote obedience.**
 - h. **To enable us to easily pursue holiness. To enable us to enjoy God's presence in the way He prescribes.**
 - i. **That the LORD accepts and communes with those who come into His presence through the death of an atoning sacrifice. Our communion with God is dependent upon that atoning sacrifice...because we are sinful and there is nothing about us that can get us into God's presence.**

j. To communicate to the priests:

- (1) Their calling is a calling of service.**
- (2) Their calling is a holy calling.**
- (3) That they must remain humble...keeping the fires burning and cleaning up and taking out the excess ash.**
- (4) They must treat all that belongs to God with great care. Nothing should be taken lightly otherwise God will be dishonored...**
- (5) It matters very much to God how His leaders obey Him...**
- (6) There are consequences to inappropriate behavior...**
- (7) God will be holy and so will His priests.**

Lessons from Leviticus
August 20, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Why does God seem to place such emphasis on what we say, especially to one another (brothers and sisters in Christ...the oaths we take...the promises we make...the things we tell one another?
 - a. **What we say reveals our heart.**
 - b. **When we are not honest with one another...breaking oaths/promises/one's own word...is a breach of faith=sacrilegious because we have just destroys the unity that we have in Christ...at least for a while. Why would we seek out to "lie" to the people that care the most about you?**
 - c. **This lack of truthfulness reveals our heart condition and may indicate the lack of faith.**
 - d. **Treating one another in this way reflects on our "relationship" with the Lord.**
 - e. **For the sins envisioned here are unfaithfulness and perjury= lying!**
2. Once again, before we move on; what are some of the basic principles that we have learned so far as we have looked at these offerings?
 - a. **To communicate that God cares about how He is to be worshiped.**
 - b. **Actually He makes it easy to worship Him... makes it clear how. To enable us to easily pursue holiness. To enable us to enjoy God's presence in the way He prescribes.**
 - c. **Many, however, may not see it that way because:**
 - (1) **In each case they are being exposed public for their sin...whether it is pointed out or whether they become aware on their own...the Spirit's work.**
 - (2) **The fallen nature within us doesn't understand why we need to do anything...why doesn't God just do it all? So it keeps causing us to ask the reasons why we must do things as He has said to do them.**
 - (3) **Also, by nature we like things done for us..."I didn't come to worship to have to think about what or why I am doing what I am doing...and in some cases I'd rather just be entertained...great music...a great children's ministry so I don't have to be bothered...the best youth group in town...once again so I don't have to do anything."**
 - d. **To communicate the importance of worshiping God. We are not given the authority to change anything that he says.**
 - e. **To communicate the process of forgiveness.**
 - f. **To communicate the process of sanctification.**
 - g. **To promote obedience.**
 - h. **To communicate to the priests:**
 - (1) **Their calling is a calling of service.**
 - (2) **Their calling is a holy calling.**
 - (3) **That they must remain humble...keeping the fires burning and cleaning up and taking out the excess ash.**
 - (4) **They must treat all that belongs to God with great care. Nothing should be taken lightly otherwise God will be dishonored...**

- (5) It matters very much to God how His leaders obey Him...**
- (6) There are consequences to inappropriate behavior...**
- (7) God will be holy and so will His priests.**

C. Leviticus 6:8-7:38- The Priest and their offerings. We will now look at these offerings again as they pertain to the priests...remembering that formal worshipping the way God prescribes has not yet begun...this is God giving the details to Moses and then Moses giving the details to the priests and the people as God's spokesman. The formal start of this won't be until after the consecration of the priests which doesn't formally occur until the end of chapter 9.

1. Lev. 6:8-13

a. What is the first thing God says to Moses and what does it mean?

(1) "Command"...saying, "This is the Law..."...this is the first time in this conversation between Moses and God we have had this sentence structure. This was assumed every other time...but now He leaves nothing to question.

(2) Law= instruction= Torah...when God uses this word in Scripture He always means something that has a positive teaching function...not just a code or human tradition...So God's point to the priest is 2 fold:

- **The details are to be followed to the letter of the law.**
- **God would not allow any detail to be doubtful in the mind of His servants.**
- **That the priest (and us) would appreciate the truth that the instruction is supposed to symbolize. In other words...what it looks forward to...the priest is to see the big picture so they have purpose beyond the day to day sacrifices.**

b. What is the point of proper priestly garb/apparel in verses 10-11?

(1) Per God's instruction, the priest has a prescribed clothing/uniform to wear. We see these described in Exodus as instruction for what Moses was to have made for the priests.

(2) Functionally, the priest is supposed to be completely clothed...unlike other religions of the area. God even describes and requires the type of underwear the priest is to wear before Him.

(3) Spiritually or symbolically, the priests clothing, represents his consecration before the LORD. As he wore the clothing provided for him by God these clothes represented his communion with God on behalf of the people. No one but the priest could wear this special clothing as to separate them...not as better but with a specific function.

(4) Once again, the main point is that the priest are to come before the LORD in the way God commands...and the garments represent the holiness given to them by God for them to be clothed in!

(5) These special clothings look forward to the day when the priesthood of all believers are clothed in Christ through His Spirit and then with our new bodies when all things are made brand new.

c. Multiple times in these few verses there is reference to the fire burning 24/7. Why, what's the point?

(1) See Lev. 9:24- tells us that it was God who started the fire...when all of these regulations/rituals actually began. It is up to the priest...God's chosen men...to keep the fire burning hot 24/7...this is by command and we know this because it is repeated several times. This fire has 2 basic functions:

*** To remind the people that as long as the fire is burning God is with them. God's presence is often symbolized by fire in the Scripture.**

*** But there is also an implied curse... if the fire of God goes out due to carelessness and sin, they could not expect it to be rekindled. The Jews say that the fire never went out till the Babylonian Exile.**

(2) See Ex. 29:38-42- These verses remind us that worship is essentially meeting with God on the terms He commands and only by the means that He provides. And here the means are a continual sacrifice...which reminds them that they have a continuous need for atonement if they are going to have continual fellowship with the LORD. Atonement guarantees continual communion with God.

(3) By this process and law, we the leaders, are being taught to keep our minds focused on living by faith with our acts of piety devotion and service so as to always be ready for every good work God puts before us. We must not quench the Spirit, we must stir one another up to love and good works. We must keep the fire of love to God always burning in our hearts.

(4) See Hebrews 10:1-25, for the rest of the story.

(5) This story has been told for years...true or not??? But here is the story, none the less; A Jewish boy was talking to his father one day after Hebrew class where they were learning the Pentateuch. The Little boy went up to his father a Rabbi, in the local synagogue and asked, "Father, we don't offer sacrifices in the synagogue. Why don't we offer sacrifices in the synagogue? How are our sins forgiven since we don't offer sacrifices in the synagogue?" His father explained to him that according to the Torah sins are forgive by blood sacrifices. The little boy said, "Father, I know, but there are no blood sacrifices in the synagogue so how then are our sins forgiven?" And his father was silent...for he could not answer that question...since Judaism does not have an answer to that question. That is a big problem...since all of those sacrifices only looked forward to the greatest sacrifice made by Jesus Christ whom they do not recognize as the Messiah. It is Jesus that is the point to these sacrifices and if you are not in Christ you have no hope of atonement.

2. Lev. 6:14-18-

a. Thinking back to Lev. 2 and now looking at this section on the grain offering, what would you say is its importance?

(1) Interesting, there are no cakes or wafers prepared this time.

- (2) **It is an act of dedication to the LORD. Those who had been reconciled to the LORD and have a renewed access to His presence would want to acknowledge that they owe God everything...and they do so in this offering by bringing a gift...a portion of what God has given to them... a picture of giving ourselves to the LORD.**
 - (2) **It is also a memorial...a remembrance ...They bring God a portion of their daily bread, if you will, of what God has provided for them...similar to a tithe...remembering that it all comes from God and remembering His great provision.**
- b. The purpose of this offering, beyond what we have already described seems to be as a means of pay for their services from the LORD, but is there something deeper that needs to be seen? What might that be?
- (1) **The bread that is to be eaten is to be unleavened...their food is pure and holy...nothing in the food that would lend to its deterioration.**
 - (2) **It is only to be eaten in a holy place; the court of the tabernacle.**
 - (3) **Only Aaron's male descendants can eat of this meal. There were other offerings that the priest whole families could eat but not this one.**
 - (4) **Everyone who comes in contact with this bread must be consecrated ...so not just the descendants of Aaron can eat of this but only those who have been consecrated...God is emphasizing the holiness of the fellowship with Him...the necessity of holiness in fellowship with Him.**
 - (5) **And the offering of the consecrated is accepted by God, and with the acceptance of the priests offering the people could be assured of theirs as well. This offering is stated in such a way that it is certain that the offering was accepted by God to assure the people when they do what is expected of them as prescribed by God that God will do as He promises...hear them, accept them...deliver them...sanctify them and then ultimately glorify them. Thus enabling the priest to fulfill their role as mediator before the people...to assure the people that God does in fact accept their sacrifice and they will be atoned.**
 - (6) **This prescribed role of the priest points to Christ and His role of assuring the people of God. The believer is assured by the sacrifice of Christ, knowing that it was duly accepted By God the Father to make certain that we are atoned for...we who are His.**
 - (7) **One last thought, for now, Jesus tells His disciples, *"As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever. Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum."* (John 6:57-59) The bread was holy in these offering just like the bread from heaven...just like the Bread of Life. The priest were commanded to eat what God provided for their physical and spiritual needs so too we who are in Christ are commanded to eat as the priesthood of believers for our spiritual needs as well...the LORD's SUPPER...as we seek to obey God. Hence, even in this sacrifice before us we see a NT type...for all those in Christ to participate in and not deny unless otherwise providentially hindered.**

Lessons from Leviticus
September 10, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Read 6:1-13...Review and finishing Lev. 6:8-13

1. What is the point of proper priestly garb/apparel in Lev. 6:10-11?
 - a. **Per God's instruction, the priest has a prescribed clothing/uniform to wear. The main point is that the priest are to come before the LORD in the way God commands...and the garments represent the holiness given to them by God for them to be clothed in!**
 - b. **Functionally, the priest is supposed to be completely clothed...unlike other religions of the area.**
 - c. **Spiritually or symbolically, the priests clothing, represents his consecration before the LORD. As he wore the clothing provided for him by God these clothes represented his communion with God on behalf of the people. No one but the priest could wear this special clothing as to separate them...not as better but with a specific function.**
 - d. **These special clothings look forward to the day when the priesthood of all believers are clothed in Christ through His Spirit and then with our new bodies when all things are made brand new.**
2. Lev. 6:14-18-Thinking back to Lev. 2 and now looking at this section on the grain offering, what would you say is its importance for the priest and the people?
 - a. **The offering of the consecrated is accepted by God, and with the acceptance of the priests offering the people could be assured of theirs as well. This offering is stated in such a way that it is certain that the offering was accepted by God to assure the people when they do what is expected of them as prescribed by God that God will do as He promises...hear them, accept them...deliver them...sanctify them and then ultimately glorify them. Thus enabling the priest to fulfill their role as mediator before the people...to assure the people that God does in fact accept their sacrifice and they will be atoned.**
 - b. **When we come before the Lord as He commands we can know that our worship is acceptable to God!**
 - c. **One last thought, for now, Jesus tells His disciples, *"As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever. Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum."* (John 6:57-59) The bread was holy in these offering just like the bread from heaven...just like the Bread of Life. The priest were commanded to eat what God provided for their physical and spiritual needs so too we who are in Christ are commanded to eat as the priesthood of believers for our spiritual needs as well...the LORD's SUPPER...as we seek to obey God. Hence, even in this sacrifice before us we see a NT type...for all those in Christ to participate in and not deny unless otherwise providentially hindered.**

3. What have we learned so far about why God has such high expectations on His priests?
 - a. They are a direct representative of God to the people.**
 - b. They bear the peoples sins and intercession to God.**
4. So far as we have seen, what does this communicate to the elders of this church?
 - a. By this process and law, we the leaders, are being taught to keep our minds focused on living by faith with our acts of piety devotion and service so as to always be ready for every good work God puts before us. We must not quench the Spirit, we must stir one another up to love and good works. We must keep the fire of love to God always burning in our hearts.**
 - b. That they must remain humble...keeping the fires burning and cleaning up and taking out the excess ash.**
 - c. They must treat all that belongs to God with great care. Nothing should be taken lightly otherwise God will be dishonored...**
 - d. It matters very much to God how His leaders obey Him...**
 - e. There are consequences to inappropriate behavior...**
 - f. God is holy and so will His leaders.**
 - g. How the leaders act will affect how the people act.**

Lessons from Leviticus
October 1, 2017

A, Prayer

B. Review and Read 6:8-18

1. What have we learned so far about why God has such high expectations on His priests?

- a. They are a direct representative of God to the people.**
- b. They bear the peoples sins and intercession to God.**

2. So far as we have seen, what does this communicate to the elders of this church?

- a. By this process and law, we the leaders, are being taught to keep our minds focused on living by faith with our acts of piety devotion and service so as to always be ready for every good work God puts before us. We must not quench the Spirit, we must stir one another up to love and good works. We must keep the fire of love to God always burning in our hearts.**
- b. That they must remain humble...keeping the fires burning and cleaning up and taking out the excess ash.**
- c. They must treat all that belongs to God with great care. Nothing should be taken lightly otherwise God will be dishonored...**
- d. It matters very much to God how His leaders obey Him...**
- e. There are consequences to inappropriate behavior...**
- f. God is holy and so will His leaders. Direct representatives of God in leadership role.**
- g. How the leaders act will affect how the people act.**
- h. God has provided forgiveness when we do not do our job well...because we are sheep as well...sometimes we don't get it right...but God provided sacrifices for the priest...and God provided forgiveness for us in Christ Jesus.**

C. Continuing through Lev. 6:8-7:38

1. Lev. 6:19-23- Yet "another grain offering"?

a. What do we know about the grain offering from before?

(1) From Lev. 2 where we first see the grain offering we see 2 specific things:

- * The grain offering serves as a kind of memorial- a remembrance, a reminder that God provides everything that we are and have...that God lays claim to the 1st fruits...and so giving this back to Him acknowledges His lordship over all...God owns the one who offers and the offering!**
- * It is also an act of dedication to the LORD. It often followed the burnt offering though it could be done alone. It expressed the idea that those who have been reconciled to God through the various other offerings or "just because" a person realizes their own reconciliation with the Lord ..these folks will want to acknowledge that they owe God everything and they are continuously dedicating themselves to the Lord. As a part of their daily bread they give back in thanksgiving for the great salvation/reconciliation God has done in their life...a life of**

continuous thanks is in mind here....and as the priesthood of believers we offer ourselves up to God on a regular basis... every time we seek to come into His presence realizing that His presence is always open to us through Jesus who open the door of heaven.

(2) And then from last week, 6:14-18...we saw the role of the priest in the grain offering and how they were to dispose of the remainder of the grain offering.

- **Part would be burnt.**
- **Part would be given to the priest for “payment” for their services...which really function as an assurance to the people that the sacrifice would be acceptable to the LORD....and had in fact, been acceptable to the LORD...as this portion was ONLY eaten by the faithful priest of the LORD, on holy ground, indicating God’s acceptance of their offering to the LORD.**
- **It is an utter kindness of a good God that He would provide a way for the people to know without a doubt that their offering was accepted by Him....so they had the assurance that God wanted them to have.**

(3) The one we are looking at now deals with a unique part of the grain offering that we have not looked at before.

b. Why call it this...ordination/consecration offering?

(1) The Bible calls it this... See also Lev. 7:37

(2) Jewish history has called it this...

(3) The text says this is an offering to be given by the priest on the day of their anointing...

(4) A regular grain offering...every day...day and night.

c. What things does this short passage teach us?

(1) That this priestly offering is about the consecration (read) ordination of the OT priesthood.

- **The high priest brings to the LORD a small portion of baked grain...4 pints worth= a tenth of an ephah...the same amount of manna that was to be gathered daily in the wilderness...same amount that the people brought for their grain offering...reminding them and us that God provides “our daily bread” and that we are “tithing” back to him what He has so faithfully supplied to us.**
- **It is an expression of their on-going dedication to the service of the LORD. It is similar to that of the people but different.**
- **It is unique in that this one is only offered by the high priest (in this case Aaron) on behalf of all the priests.**
- **This offering begins on the day of their anointing/ordination to the office...or on the day of the anointing of the high priest and continues day by day...night and day.**
- **It reminds us that the priest needs to be rededicated to the Lord’s service every day....an accountability structure if you will.**

- **The priest cannot eat the grain of his own offering...it must be wholly offered before the LORD and burnt. And this burning it completely symbolizes the giving of their complete self to the LORD.**
- **This reminds the priest that they serve at the pleasure and glory of God alone for the benefit of His people and that they are to be consecrated to the Lord.**
- **This reminds them daily as to the importance of remaining faithful and pure before the LORD to be able to carry out their calling and obligation before the LORD for God's people....And this is to be done forever...day and night as an act of obedience as well.**
- **As the priesthood of believers this re-dedication on a daily basis is what is expected of us as well...as we seek God and seek to live by faith so as to bring Him glory. Lord we are not our own...we live our lives for you.**

(2) This offering is yet another example of God's acceptance and the assurance of that offering for the priest to know they are acceptable to God.

- **As "a pleasing/soothing aroma"- vs. 21...See Gen. 8:21... *"The Lord smelled the pleasing/soothing aroma"* = which symbolizes (since God doesn't have a nose) that Noah's sacrifice had been deemed acceptable to God.**
- **But also, look at vs. 23 we see that this offering is to be burnt completely and what is seen is the smoke going up to heaven serves as an assurance of God's acceptance.**
- **The people had this assurance that their offering was acceptable by the priest eating the offering...but the priest couldn't eat theirs...so Moses through God assures them as they lift this offering up that it will be a pleasing aroma...an acceptable offering to the Lord...God said it would be as long as they did as He said.**
- **God sent His Only Son, who died for us...resurrected back to life and ascended to heaven all showing us that His sacrifice was acceptable telling us that ours offered up in a manner as He prescribes are as well.**

(3) This offering also reminds them of their need for reconciliation in order to stay in communion with God.

- **The priest needed to be reconciled to God before he could serve God....before he could even consecrate himself to the Lord...before he could even dedicate himself to the Lord's service...he needs to lift up this offering.**
- **Priest like everyone else are sinful in need of forgiveness and this daily offering, by the priest indicates their daily need for forgiveness and restored communion with God.**
- **So, if the priest mediates for the people, who mediates for the priest? Look at Hebrews 7:26...for the OT doesn't really answer that question clearly...there are shadows and implication but no specific answer. Jesus is their...and our mediator!**

- **The priest were shadows of The Mediator...Jesus Christ...priest no longer fill that function because as the Hebrews passage says...Jesus is all we need. Jesus would bring reconciliation between God and us by His sacrifice...once for all time...never to have to be done again...**

2. Lev. 6:24-30- Sin/purification offering...

a. After looking at Lev. 4-5:13, what more is going on here?

- (1) This sin offering is for the people.**
- (2) It is to be brought before the LORD at the right time and in the right place... signifying that forgiveness comes from the LORD...the priest may declare someone atoned but they stand in the place of the LORD speaking for Him who actually atones/ justifies/ forgives. And so the very place of the sacrifice is designed to give assurance to the offeror.**
- (3) Twice the text tells us, *"...in the place the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD; it is most holy"* The animal is killed in our place...its blood is shed on our behalf...it receives the penalty of death that we had been given in the garden. This gives a whole new meaning perhaps to Rom. 8:20 and 22- *"For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it...For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now..."***
- (4) The priest and his sons can eat this meat as yet another sign of God's assurance for the people that their sacrifice was acceptable to God. Just like with the grain offering...eaten by the priest...in a holy place...lets the worshiper know that what he has offered is acceptable to God and he is assured of his offering.**
- (5) In vs. 27-28, we see God conveying through the priest to the people the holiness of these atoning sacrifices.**
 - **Anyone who touches these sacrifices become holy...a sacrifice for sin is a holy thing.**
 - **If blood gets on a garment it has to be cleaned in a holy place because the blood of this sacrifice is holy.**
 - **The clay vessel cannot be cleaned so it must be broken after the sacrifice...for the blood and the fluids would seep into the clay.**
 - **The bronze vessel can be cleaned but it must be scoured and rinsed before it can be used again.**
 - **Only the males in the line of Aaron's line are allowed to eat...which conveys the holiness of the sacrifice because no one else could eat of this sacrifice.**
 - **It is a serious thing to deal with sins, because sin is exceedingly serious in God's eye. The atonement is necessary and the provision of God for the atonement of His people is holy which leads to holiness when carried out as God describes.**

- (6) Vs. 30 tells us that the sin offering for everyone is to be totally devoted to the LORD by fire ...nothing of this sin offering can be eaten...just like the grain offering in the consecration/ordination sacrifice in vs. 23. This offering foreshadows the entirety of Jesus' work on the cross and His ascension...as the smoke went up to assure the people of God's acceptance so also Jesus' ascension assures us of God acceptance of His total sacrifice on our behalf.**
- (7) So this section points out clearly the sinfulness of sin and the holiness of the offering that the LORD would eventually ...and now has offered up on our behalf...pointing to it entirety and completeness of the provision for sins which we have in the person and work of Jesus.**

b. Why is God so concerned with this acceptance and assurance thing for His people?

(1) With this question in mind...go to Lev. 10:16-20...

- * Moses is angry with the remaining sons of Aaron because they have not been obedient either for they had not eaten the meat of the offering, thereby robbing the congregation from the sense of assurance that watching the priest eating their sacrifice would have given them.**
- Before Moses goes any further...Aaron tells Moses that his sons have done what they needed to do to be clean after the death of the first 2. But he says...my sons have died...and you want me to sit down to a meal as a sign of restored fellowship with the LORD? And Moses realizing that the mistake was not intentional or with malice to the LORD...gave in and approved.**
- But God was so serious about getting His people the ability to know that their sacrifices were acceptable that even the death of loved ones was not good enough to keep that blessing from His people. He is committed for His people to know to have assurance of their forgiveness of sins.**

(2) Without assurance we wonder aimlessly...if we have no assurance then we are left wondering if we have ever done enough...weakening our resolve ...weakening our witness...not being able to glorify the Father...because we would always feel we have failed.

(3) Look at Hebrews 10:11-12- Here is yet another sign that God has given to us to assure us of the acceptableness of Christ sacrifice for us...He sat down at the right hand of God...never to have to do this again...it is done...it is over...salvation...atonement ...reconciliation is finished. See also Hebrews 12:1-2. This is our sign that His sacrifice for us...His substitutionary atonement for us...was certain and that we have nothing to not be assured about. This is why the resurrection and ascension is so important for our faith...they are both sign that God found His sacrifice acceptable and we are assured of our salvation because of His work. God went to great lengths to prove for us that His sacrifice was acceptable so that we could be assured of our salvation.

Lessons from Leviticus
October 8, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What have we learned so far about why God has such high expectations for His priests?

- a. **They are a direct representative of God to the people.**
- b. **They bear the peoples sins and intercession to God.**

2. Why is God so concerned with this acceptance and assurance thing for His people?

- a. **Without assurance we wonder aimlessly...if we have no assurance then we are left wondering if we have ever done enough...weakening our resolve ...weakening our witness...not being able to glorify the Father...because we would always feel we have failed.**
- b. **Look at Hebrews 10:11-12- Here is yet another sign that God has given to us to assure us of the acceptableness of Christ sacrifice for us...He sat down at the right hand of God...never to have to do this again...it is done...it is over...salvation...atonement ...reconciliation is finished. See also Hebrews 12:1-2. This is our sign that His sacrifice for us...His substitutionary atonement for us...was certain and that we have nothing to not be assured about. This is why the resurrection and ascension is so important for our faith...they are both sign that God found His sacrifice acceptable and we are assured of our salvation because of His work. God went to great lengths to prove for us that His sacrifice was acceptable so that we could be assured of our salvation.**
- c. **Being obedient shows that we do delight in keeping God's law...not because we think that this is what will keep us in good favor with God but because we are His children and we wish to please and honor Him by obeying His Law. This obedience enables us to know that what we are doing is what God commands...and when we do what God commands the assurance that comes with knowing we are doing what God expects and commands enables us to know that our "works" are acceptable to God because our motives are based on our purpose to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. This is more than just a dry run in preparation for heaven/eternity...it enables us to "KNOW" that we are God's and that we "ARE" fulfilling our purpose which motivates us to do more for God's glory...which also has the "side benefit" of enabling us to be a blessing to those around us....which is the fulfilment of God's commands in this life.**

3. Leviticus 7:1-10-

a. What is the title of this section? And... What does the title tell us about this offering?

(1) **Vs. 1- *"This is the law of the guilt offering."* See Lev. 5:14-6:7**

(2) ***"It is most holy."***

b. Knowing all that we know from all of the sacrifices we have looked at, what is the significance of the word “holy” being used in verses 1-6?

(1) Three times this is emphasized to let us know how important this offering is.

(2) To communicate what it does for the offeror...and how God looks at this offering.

c. Verses 1-5 are details we have seen before...why does God seemingly repeat Himself so much?

(1) We have talked about this before- The Lord is a good teacher...

repeat, repeat and repeat is the first rule of good teaching...so that this stuff become 2nd nature...one reason why the Reformers did not change the participation of the Lord's Supper...in response to their hatred for the images of the Mass they could have like the Anabaptists relegated the sacraments to the sideline...but instead they restored the definition of the sacrament from Scripture...and then holding them every time the church met as the Lord seems to command...so that with repetition God's people would come away from every service with all the grace that God meant to give them on that day.

*** The Reformers saw the Roman Catholic Mass as simply another Old Testament sacrifice.**

*** The RC Church taught that like the sacrifices of old this was a way of assurance and atonement...an on-going means of salvation...if the members stop going to Mass they could lose their salvation...both ideas...as a means of salvation and that a believer could lose his salvation are unscriptural and blasphemous.**

(2) As we have said that it demonstrates His steadfast love for His people...His overwhelming desire to provide a path to Himself on a continuing basis....and to provide a way that we can have assurance of our salvation...not salvation itself...remember; the sacrifices were not to save the people ...they revealed God's people's need for repentance and God their Father's divine desire to care and atone for His people whom He had rescued from Egypt...saved them from the bondage to slavery...

(3) As we have also said, it reminds us of the seriousness of sin...God must go into such elaborate details in order to bring about the restoration of the believer with Himself...and/or with his brother whom he has sinned against.

(4) Also, they point to Christ in that by repeated them over and over again we are consciously and unconsciously pointed to Christ and His fulfillment of securing our salvation and our assurance of faith by his death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of God the Father on High.

(5) Like children...forgetful and not forgetful just not wanting to do or we want to do it our way...lazy and sinful.

(6) Emphasizes their importance.

(7) One last thing that a number of commentators point out: All of these detail are secondary to one supreme fact...and that is the death of the animal. When we think of Adam and Eve we spend little time on the death of the animal...but it too is the most important act of God for their deliverance.

*** Remember, before any of the rituals begin...the animal must die.**

*** This reiterates the common theme of atonement: death for sin. Death for sin. Every time they repeated the sacrifice they would be forced to remember this basic fact. Death for their/our sin! It would occur so many times that this doctrine of substitutionary atonement would become second nature to them.**

*** This is what Paul would assume that the Jews in his letter to Romans would remember when he said *"The wages of sin is death..."***

d. Then vs. 6-10 give us some additional information concerning the priest. We see the rights of the officiating priest spelled out better...WHY?

(1) As we have already seen the priest had rights to certain parts of the offerings and they partook in these gifts for 2 main reasons...

*** For the assurance of the believer.**

*** For their own livelihood.**

(2) The flesh of the this offering belonged exclusively to the priest who offered it. He that did the work must have his wages. And he could decide what other priests to share it with...as long as it is shared in a holy place...freely he was given and freely he must give!

*** A place set aside for this act of worship.**

*** Eating especially this eating is seen as an act of worship...in the "old days" ...the act of giving thanks before and/or after the meal consecrated it and caused those involved that were there to worship God for His act of provision.**

(3) The offeror was not entitled to any of this offering.

(4) This was an encouragement to the priest to be diligent in their work at the altar, for they would receive more if they worked well.

(5) This was also to motivate them to be "ready" in their task...clean, prepared, consecrated at all time...men of integrity and blessing. In this they would receive their just reward...spiritually and physically both of which come from God as promise for their diligence and vigilance in their work. SAME IS TRUE for us as the priesthood of all believers...the more we follow the LORD the more we enjoy His blessings.

(6) Vs. 8 is interesting... *"And the priest who offers and man's burnt offering shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering that he has offered."* Jewish tradition says that this giving of the skin was only for this particular offering so that the priest to sell and make money for the coffers of the temple for its physical upkeep. Though there is nothing in this text or any other text that would collaborate or command this... this seems to have been a part of some oral tradition that was handed down through the years claiming that is what they used the "excess" wages for.

4. Leviticus 7:11-38

- a. We have seen the peace offering before (yet another repeat), except there are new things emphasized. Some distinguishing purposes for the peace offering.

(1) As a thanksgiving offering- vs. 12...for some special mercy God has given such as recovery from sickness, safety on a long journey, deliverance from the sea (Jews hated to travel on the ocean so when safely delivered to the shore there was always a reason to give thanks to God), deliverance from slavery...as seen and described in Psalm 107...

(2) In performance of a vow as a vow or freewill offering- vs. 16 ...which man had made in distress...in haste...while this was a lesser sacrifice the man is still held to account for his sin of haste and presumption.

(3) General characteristics of this offering:

*** The peace offering expressed the joy and happiness of renewed fellowship or thankfulness for ongoing fellowship with God.**

- The people actually got to eat some of this meal. ..as they were in fellowship with God. The NT counterpart to this meal is the Lord's Supper in a sense.**

- A concluding sacrifice- It was usually the final act in a series of sacrifices in which reconciliation had been re-established.**

- b. What are some interesting details that stick out in this broader description of the peace offering?

(1) "loaves of leaven bread"- leaven bread was NOT forbidden in this culture in fact it was often the preferred and most used style of bread. It could be eaten with this Fellowship meal...but could not be used in the burnt offering part.(Lev. 2:11) Leaven was not considered "pure" enough for a sacrifice. Once again, God never defines why...just declares what can be used in worship and what cannot....His prerogative!

(2) The meat of this offering (the priest's part and the offeror's part... which was often shared also with the poor Eccl. 8:15) was to be eaten "quickly"... within 2 days. As a peace offering all of it had to be eaten on the day it was offered. Anything left after the 2nd day was to be burnt. From a practical perspective...you would have to wonder why someone would want to eat meat that would have been beginning to spoil except because of a selfish and disrespectful position.

(3) The warning to the one who eats against the LORD's command is defined in Lev. 19:8..as one who shall be tried and convicted and put to death...or were not allowed to have children....they were to be cut off from their people. See also vs. 21 and vs. 27. This type of disobedience pointed to rejection of God and His Word...also exhibited divisive characteristics in the people who were willing to go against the practice for the people...and lastly, showed a great dishonor in presuming that God would not deal with the sins of His people severely when He said He would...which brings us back to the rejection of God's Word.

- In fact, even today...everywhere where the church is out of line with God is because they/we have rejected His Word on this or that issue...harkening back to Satan's question ... "Did God really say?"...and then maybe changing that question a bit to fit**

the circumstance... “Is that what God meant?”... “Wouldn’t we know better?”

- **Some might want to save the meat for another day...but God says not to eat it in response not only to His command but to show we trust Him to provide for us.**
- **This disobedience of breaking His commands was to be dealt with immediately for it caused the whole of the people to be unclean before God...This is why we should be all holding each other accountable today for things like: not coming to Church regularly...not receiving the sacraments regularly...not purposefully being a part and supportive of the Church whenever and wherever it seeks to do God’s work...whenever one another are not utilizing their gifts in the church...when these and others are true we all suffer.**
- **All the benefits of our religious service are lost if we personally don’t seek to improve ourselves by them (*“...working out our salvation with fear and trembling...”*), and conducting ourselves accordingly to God’s Law afterwards. The acts of worship that we are to do are not acceptable to God if they have no influence over our lifestyles in general. What difference does going to Church...going to Bible Study...spending time with fellow Christians, make in our lives? What measureable difference? If our persons and worship are sincere and righteous then they are accepted , if not they are abhorrent to God. See Prov. 15:8.**

Lessons from Leviticus
October 15, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review- Leviticus 7:11-38...specifically starting today at vs. 15 going through 38.

1. What are some interesting details that stick out in this broader description of the peace offering?

a. The meat of this offering (the priest's part and the offeror's part...

which was often shared also with the poor Eccl. 8:15) was to be eaten "quickly"... within 2 days. As a peace offering all of it had to be eaten on the day it was offered. Anything left after the 2nd day was to be burnt. From a practical perspective...you would have to wonder why someone would want to eat meat that would have been beginning to spoil except because of a selfish and disrespectful position.

b. The warning to the one who eats against the LORD's command is defined in Lev. 19:8...as one who shall be tried and convicted and put to death...or were not allowed to have children....they were to be cut off from their people. See also vs. 21 and vs. 27. This type of disobedience pointed to rejection of God and His Word...also exhibited divisive characteristics in the people who were willing to go against the practice for the people...and lastly, showed a great dishonor in presuming that God would not deal with the sins of His people severely when He said He would...which brings us back to the rejection of God's Word.

(1) In fact, even today...everywhere where the church is out of line with God is because they/we have rejected His Word on this or that issue...harkening back to Satan's question ... "Did God really say?"...and then maybe changing that question a bit to fit the circumstance... "Is that what God meant?"... "Wouldn't we know better?"

(2) This disobedience of breaking His commands was to be dealt with immediately for it caused the whole of the people to be unclean before God...This is why we should be all holding each other accountable today for things like: not coming to Church regularly...not receiving the sacraments regularly...not purposefully being a part and supportive of the Church whenever and wherever it seeks to do God's work...whenever one another are not utilizing their gifts in the church...when these and others are true we all suffer.

(3) All the benefits of our religious service are lost if we personally don't seek to improve ourselves by them ("*...working out our salvation with fear and trembling...*"), and conducting ourselves accordingly to God's Law afterwards. The acts of worship that we are to do are not acceptable to God if they have no influence over our lifestyles in general. What difference does going to Church...going to Bible Study...spending time with fellow Christians, make in our lives? What measureable difference? If our persons and worship are sincere and righteous then they are accepted, if not they are abhorrent to God. See Prov. 15:8.

- c. Then there is the “wave/heaving/raising” portion of the offering...
vs. 28-36- After reading this section what would “YOU” say is the purpose for this action? **the breast was held up high and shown to the people and to the LORD in a “waving” motion to show the people that it had been given to the LORD in the offering and since it is waved...it is found acceptable because God’s commands had been fulfilled then given to priest to eat of it in accordance with God’s commands. The right shoulder/thigh was said to have been “heaved up”(not here) because of how heavy it would have been since it was to be choices cut of meat.****
- (1) This was a public recognition of the covenant of God to provide for His people and for His people to be obedient to His commands to give back as He commands.**
 - (2) Which points out to us that God’s people are to give publically and directly to the LORD in our tithing...but that a very good portion is to be provided to God’s priest/ ministers in support of the ministry. So as the people bring this free-will offering to the LORD they are giving to the ministry. These represented a portion of the what God had given them as the tithe does for us.**
 - (3) Jewish tradition teaches that the breast was waved before the LORD by means of the offeror holding up the breast in his hands signifying his cheerful desire to give the offering to the LORD, and a heartfelt desire that it would be accepted...and then the priest lays his hands on the offeror’s hands...as in blessing it. The offeror then moves toward the altar by himself as though he was going to actually present his gift to God. Upon reaching the altar (without touching it), he immediately returns to the priest with the breast and handed it to him. Signifying his giving what God had given to him to the priest and his sons for their well-being. Same action was done for the “right shoulder/thigh” except that it was “heaved up” rather than waved before the LORD, the people, and the priests.**
 - (4) Some commentators make the point that the “breast and the right shoulder/thigh” may represent “affection and actions”... which must be devoted to the LORD by all His people. Christ, our great peace- offering, feasts all of His children with steadfast love and strongest supports so we can carry out the will of our Father in heaven...just like Him. Christ fulfills this peace offering that he made for Himself...not only to atone for our sin, saving us from the curse and the demands of the LAW, but to also purchase on-going blessing...His grace that is new every morning... “grace upon grace”...not one leaves us before another is upon us. By our joyfully receiving and participating in the benefits of Christ’s sacrifice for our redemption we symbolically feast on this sacrifice.**
 - (5) God’s principle is that God’s ministers are to be well taken care of...with the equal truth that they will take good care of God’s people....in Word and prayer and service.**
 - (6) This law has never been revoked.**

(7) We can see the benefit for the minister...Now what then would you think it would signify for all of us...as far as what we receive from God as the priesthood of believers today?

*** This shows us how we are to regularly acknowledge public the provision and goodness of God...so all will know and be able to participate in the blessings God give to each of us...for we are One in Christ...we rejoice in God's provision together for a full rejoicing...so we share everything in this way.**

2. What is the take away from verses 37-38 for them and even for us today?

a. God is getting them ready for the Promised Land...

b. God commands His people to worship Him as he directs and as He describes!

c. We are NEVER at liberty to change anything that God has ordained to our detriment with the LORD.

d. We are NOT to omit anything either or our relationship and communion with the LORD will be hindered.

Lessons from Leviticus
October 29, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What did we say were some reasons why God put such an emphasis on the priest's apparel?
 - a. **They belong to Him and they will represent God as God says. To separate them from the rest of the people.**
 - b. **The engraved stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod worn by the high priest: the high priest appeared before the Lord representing in his own person all the Lord's people who are precious to Him and bearing them before the Lord in intercession.**
 - c. **The spiritual significance of the breastplate of (covenant) rights: the people of God are precious to their high priest (they are next to his heart) and he "reminds" the Lord that they are precious to Him and have covenantal rights before Him.**
 - d. **The spiritual significance of the high priestly robe: The seamless robe represented the integrity (the undivided/seamless devotion of heart God) that the Lord requires for one to approach His holy throne.**
 - e. **The spiritual significance of the turban and the engraved gold plate: in his capacity as the Holy One of God, the high priest is able to provide forgiveness and acceptance with God for the Lord's people.**
2. Why do you suppose that there is no New Testament injunction concerning what God's pastors and other elders should wear?

C. Leviticus 8:14-36

1. Anything new or something you haven't seen before in this section from what we have looked at before?
 - a. **The covenant of the priesthood must be made by sacrifice- See Ps. 50:5. Why? Well, before they can offer up sacrifices for God's people they must offer up this sin offering because they are unclean themselves...they are sinful men who need cleansing. And these offerings have to be made continually for at least a couple of reasons...**
 - (1) **These men continue to sin and God wants to keep them mindful of that...as well as keeping the people mindful of the fact that these are still men of integrity as long as they continue to offer up these sin offerings.**
 - (2) **Hebrews 10:4- says that these sacrifices are really only "symbolic" in that they cannot actual save and forgive ..only God can and does that through faith alone. These rituals point to the One who can, will and does forgive their sins if they have been justified by faith as Abraham was...which is all based in Christ ultimate sacrifice made on the cross as well as the bloodletting through His shame of being scourged for us receiving God's just wrath for us on the cross that we might be cleansed forever.**

b. Sacrifices of each kind must be offered for the priests...every day. Any priest or in this day ministers that are to declare the remission of sins to others should be diligent to keep our own personal list of sins short before God and before the people on an on-going basis. We are to be men of absolute integrity...since we bear God's authority before God's people...and just so we are clear...integrity is defined in God's word...not how integrity is defined by the world or even other Christians...the standard for such words has to come from Scripture alone so that we are all talking about the same understanding and expectation. See Hebrews 10:1-2.

c. "placing blood on the right ear lobe of Aaron and his sons..."-vs. 23- this action essentially "married them to the altar" upon which they are committing themselves until they die to this service to the LORD...directly linked them to their work. This is a vow of total devotion...the animal is totally devoted and with its blood placed on them they are making the same vow.

d. vs. 30- "Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his garments, and also his sons and his sons garments. So he consecrated Aaron and his garments and his sons and his son's garments with him." The anointing of Aaron and his sons with the blood of the ram= the ordination to office and anointing of the Holy Spirit to carry out his ordained ministry.

d. vs. 31-36- Here is where Aaron and his sons begin to take over from Moses...

(1) Can't leave the tabernacle for 7 days...they must learn to endure hardness...to disentangle themselves from the affairs of life- II Tim. 2:3-4. Their job...our job...after being ordained/consecrated to their service, they were to give themselves entirely to it... pastors today have to do the same thing. It is in understanding this type of sacrifice that helps me to take the difficulties that come with this calling... this is the life I have been called to. I do not remember ever thinking that I want to do something else besides being a pastor even when times have gotten hot and difficult...I had a great mentor who laid it out for me what life in the pastorate is like... "If you can do anything else, do that rather than the pastorate."

(2) The 7 days also seems to bring to mind for the priest the days of creation as the priesthood is finally created beyond Moses.

(3) vs. 35- Reveals the importance of doing as God commands for those who have been set apart as God's priests. Why a death threat?

(4) After doing all that was commanded...their consecration was complete...though it is still an ongoing form of sanctification...for these things have to be done regularly...

2. What would you say is the significance, again, of the phrase, "...as the LORD commanded Moses."? (see vs. 8, 13, 17, 21, 29, 34-36)

a. These signified what God had commanded Moses before...right after the Exodus...long time before.

b. By doing as God commands they are giving God glory...this is easy...since we have been told exactly what to do...

- c. **By doing these it signifies the devoting and continuing devoting of themselves and all their services to God.**
 - d. **They were not to be deviated from in the slightest under penalty...but when done correctly everyone received great joy and benefit.**
3. What kind of things should be gleaned by this concerning the ordination and installation of the officers of the church today? For all of us, who Peter calls a "royal priesthood"?
- a. **God expects that this act of ordaining His officers will be "before" the whole church...because there is much to be learned by the people.**
 - b. **This ordination has specific meaning attached to it...and God's people must understand the meanings attached to this ordination because why not all are called to "lead" God's people formally...all God's people are to reflect the lifestyle and worldview of the leaders of the church. See Paul's words from I Tim. 3:14-15.**
 - c. **God alone supplies what His "priests" (elders and His people) need to service and to lead for God's glory. The LORD commanded Moses...while that indicates that he and we do not and cannot change what God says...but it also indicates that we don't have to added to or to make things up because God alone supplies all of what we need to do His will. It has been said, *"We come to God on the terms that He prescribes, and in the way He alone makes possible."***
 - d. **Reflection on the way that God consecrated the priests here reminds us that we have a High Priest who didn't need atonement to be made for Him before He served His people.**
 - e. **Think Rom. 12:1. We see it lived out by these priest...and as leaders and followers we are all called upon to make this vow and commitment to the LORD... anything less is trying to justify our sin before God.**
 - f. **This is not a quick 20, or 45 or 11/2 hour service...this is a 7 day process for ordination...**
 - (1) **A picture that that Christian ministry is a process ...or said a better way...it is not a sprint but rather a marathon... it is a serious thing...**
 - (2) **Also, this 7 days reminds them and us that this life is not lived in "big...let's get on with it" kind of events...but in the mundane... there are lessons to be learned in watching these men for these 7 days...also lessons to be learned in "being" watched so closely... remember the people were there the whole time.**

D. Leviticus 9:1-24

1. What is chapter 9 here for?
 - a. **Needed a chapter 9! ☺ ☺**
 - b. **The whole of chapter 9 explains Chapter 8:36...this is what they did in keeping with the command of the LORD.**
2. How did God make known to priests that all they did was acceptable? **Leviticus 9:23-24**
 - a. **God revealed His glory to them...the priest and the people.**
 - (1) **We are not told just how God revealed His glory...but they all knew that it was what it was for it carried its own evidence...whatever it was.**

- (2) The message here is this: those that diligently abide in the LORD in the way He has commanded to be attended to shall see His glory in a way that it will be known...and they will be satisfied in Him.**
- b. God started the perpetual fire...that the priests are to keep going as a sign of devotion and honor to God.**
- (1) This fire did consume...(read “eat up” in the original) the sacrifices.**
- (2) This fire signified the turning away of God’s wrath from them... God’s wrath is a consuming fire the scriptures tell us. It could have rightly consumed the people...but the sacrifice was the appropriate substitution that God required for that day... accepting their sacrifice= atonement for their sins.**
- (3) This fire, also, signified God’s entering into covenant and communion with His people...they ate their part of the sacrifice and the fire...God, Himself... “ate up” part of the sacrifice. See Rev. 3:20 and think about it from this perspective.**
- (4) This fire also communicated good things to come...**
- * Remember the Spirit descended upon the disciples in fire... Acts 2:3.**
- The holy fire was also to kindle a holy zeal in God’s people to do as He commands with delight.**
 - This holy zeal also will burn away the continuing sin of the elect...as a blessing from God to consecrate His people- I John 4:13.**
 - This symbolizes God’s grace...this fire that burns continually represents that continual state of grace that all believers stand in before God...Rom. 5:2.**
 - Leads to hope and joy and worship... “...they shouted and fell on their knees.” See also Prov. 10:28..This is the fear of God the Scriptures speak about. A sinful fear drives us away, a gracious fear...a biblical fear of God makes us bow before Him.**
- 3. Just cause: According to these chapters (6:8-9:24...along with Ex. 28-29)) how did Aaron and his sons come about holding this position?**
- a. Just to be clear, Aaron and his sons do not assume this role on their own...as so many are inclined to do today...**
- b. They are, obviously appointed and consecrated by God Himself.**
- c. They weren’t even asked what they thought...they were ready willing and able to serve and they did without hesitation when called.**

Lessons from Leviticus
November 12, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. How did God make known to priests that all they did was acceptable? **Leviticus 9:23-24**
 - a. **God revealed His glory to them...the priest and the people.**
 - (1) **We are not told just how God revealed His glory...but they all knew that it was what it was for it carried its own evidence...whatever it was.**
 - (2) **The message here is this: those that diligently abide in the LORD in the way He has commanded to be attended to shall see His glory in a way that it will be known...and they will be satisfied in Him.**
 - b. **God started the perpetual fire...that the priests are to keep going as a sign of devotion and honor to God.**
2. Just cause: According to these chapters (6:8-9:24...along with Ex. 28-29)) how did Aaron and his sons come about holding this position?
 - a. **Just to be clear, Aaron and his sons do not assume this role on their own...as so many are inclined to do today...**
 - b. **They are, obviously appointed and consecrated by God Himself.**
 - c. **They weren't even asked what they thought...they were ready willing and able to serve and they did so without hesitation when called.**

C. Leviticus 10

1. What is the LORD communicating here in these first 7 verses of Chapter 10?
 - a. **His ways will be upheld...for He is just...**
 - b. **This is a very public process...both their sins and their successes...**
 - c. **So public that it included the Church and the world...see vs. 3, "*Among those who are near me I will be sanctified and before all the people I will be glorified.*" Those who are near me (read sanctified will uphold me as Holy among the Church and among the world!**
 - d. **Nothing should be taken lightly otherwise God will be dishonored...**
 - e. **It matters very much to God how His leaders obey Him...**
 - f. **There are consequences to inappropriate behavior...**
 - g. **God will be holy and so will His priests.**
 - h. **God is upholding the promise he made to Aaron back in 8:35- "*...that you do not die.*" Since they did not do as God commanded them to do but instead sought to things their own way for their own gain and glory, so God killed them as a just punishment for their sin. As His priest they are held to a higher standard...which He had told them about.**
 - i. **He will not tolerate disobedience.**
 - j. **These are just as important today for today's leaders then they were then...ours is a very public role.**
2. Looking at the text; when do you think this occurred?
 - a. **The very first day of the administration of the priesthood.**

- b. During the 7 day period...right after they had been ordained...is what most biblical scholars say. This was not a period after they had been at this for a while and may have forgotten what they were to do... this appears to be fresh off the presses.**
3. Why do you suppose that God did not give Nadab and Abihu a chance to repent?
4. If, God knew before hand, that these 2 brothers were not His own, why did He go to all the trouble to ordain them?
- a. Think Judas within the ranks of the first disciples)**
 - b. God uses even unbelievers to carry out His will. His judgment is certain and His people need to understand the consequences when we set out to deceive ...to mock and ...to ridicule God and His Word.**
5. In addition, just to be clear: What would you say was the sin of Nadab and Abihu for which God killed them?
- a. Some have said it was misuse of their authority. They did what they wanted to do...they sought to show their own power and control over God's worship.**
 - b. Others find some early leanings toward the pagan religions and practices that we find there.**
 - c. Some suggested that they may have been celebrating too much and were drunk....so they were not fit to carry out the priestly functions. See the Lord's injunction in verses 8-10...which really seems to be a clarifying addendum to what he had already told them so that they would not be distracted by anything enabling them to focus on their duties...there would be a time for wine later during the celebratory meals and other times when not on duty there would be times for wine or even stronger drink.**
 - d. But what we have here is that they were condemned and quickly dealt with because as God's priests before Him and His people... they had presumptuously added to what God had said. A sin that would plague the priesthood going forward. Think ... a sin of commission. They did what God hadn't commanded them to do...they presumed to add to God's word.**
 - (1) By doing this they held Moses and the LORD in contempt for Moses had given the exact instructions which the LORD had given to him to give to Aaron and his sons...**
 - (2) Hence they were responsible and accountable for their actions... deserving God's justice.**
 - (3) They also held Aaron, their father, in contempt, for it seems that they were only to attend to their father as he did all the sacrifices as Moses had done. They were not during this time or this particular day to do these themselves...but they did...they apparently were unwilling to wait for further instruction from their father and took up their censers and did what Aaron was suppose to do.**
 - e. Twice in the Scriptures it is said that these 2 brothers died childless...(Num. 3:4; I Chr. 24:2) which goes to the fullness of God's judgment of excommunication and capital punishment which was in place for all those who broke God's law.**
 - f. When we worship God outside what He dictates we reveal how prideful we are as if we know what is best.**

6. What are the “strange fires” of today?

- a. ***“If Luther were to rise from the dead, he would be shocked at the ‘strange things’ which are done in the name of the Lord...and those things that are done under the cover of his own name.”- Bishop Buthezi- 1st Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa’s Central Diocese.***
- b. **Health and wealth gospel...**
- c. **Justification by works...if we make the right choices...if we decide for Christ...if we do what we want as long as it doesn’t hurt anyone...if we live the way we want and just profess the name of Christ God will forgive us and we will still go to heaven...**
- d. **We can worship any way we chose...to get people in the door. Any one believer or non can lead in worship...anyone who feels like they want to do it is okay...because we don’t want them to feel bad...let’s make them a leader so they will stay on at the church...everyone can bear the name pastor...pastor of this...pastor of that...**
- e. **Scripture is not enough...we really don’t believe God’s Word is God’s Word if we can so quickly seek to leave it behind or even desire to change it.**
- f. **Also... we must make the gospel “warm and winsome”...the declaration of God’s Word is not enough unless we make it attractive.**
- g. **Putting our focus on fellowship...and not “fellowship” as defined in Scripture...but “fellowship” as defined in the world....instead of true worship as has been defined and dictated by the LORD for His people.**
- h. **There are many roads to heaven...all religions and faith systems are true in themselves ...not one is more true... We live in an age of relativism.**

7. Why do you suppose that Moses and the LORD did not want them to grieve outwardly or inwardly over the death of these 2 men... Aaron’s sons...Moses’ nephews?

- a. **First we see, *“And Aaron held his peace.”* This was in reference to what Moses had just told him.**
 - (1) **His sons deserved to die...this would and must silence him...for they, God’s priests, were cut off from among God’s people because of their sinfulness before God and the people...an act of necessary justice that God had said would occur. Acts of justice are not to be complained about but submitted to.**
 - (2) **As hard as this is, he must understand that this is God’s prerogative especially under the circumstances... and it was necessary based on God’s Word and God must always keep His Word.**
 - (3) **Some have suggested that this might have been a sign of compassion for Aaron who probably knew of these sins and yet didn’t know whether he wanted to do what the law required.**
- b. **Because direct disobedience is blasphemy and if they grieved outwardly it might look as though they weren’t trusting in God’s judgment and His justice...and complicit with the crimes they committed.**
- c. **They still had a job to do...they were it, at this point in time...if they were anywhere near the dead they would be unclean and that just wouldn’t do for there was no one else to do their job.**
- d. **There are times that the sacrifices are huge that must be made by the leadership for the sake of the congregation and/or for the sake of God’s glory. They are usually the exception to the rule.**

e. See I Thess. 4:13...we may grieve as those with hope...but there was no hope for these boys...God revealed that to Aaron and the remaining brothers. We don't get to know that ...thankfully...but Aaron and Eleazar and Ithamar did know that their brothers were lost and that there is an election and that there is a non-election even among the people of God...

Lessons from Leviticus
November 19, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review- Lev. 10:1-7

1. What would you say was the sin of Nadab and Abihu for which God killed them?

a. But what we have here is that they were condemned and quickly dealt with because as God's priests before Him and His people... they had presumptuously added to what God had said. A sin that would plague the priesthood going forward. Think ... a sin of commission. They did what God hadn't commanded them to do...they presumed to add to God's word.

(1) By doing this they held Moses and the LORD in contempt for Moses had given the exact instructions which the LORD had given to him to give to Aaron and his sons...

(2) Hence they were responsible and accountable for their actions... deserving God's justice.

(3) They also held Aaron, their father, in contempt, for it seems that they were only to attend to their father as he did all the sacrifices as Moses had done. They were not during this time or this particular day to do these themselves...but they did...they apparently were unwilling to wait for further instruction from their father and took up their censers and did what Aaron was supposed to do.

b. When we worship God outside what He dictates we reveal how prideful we are as if we know what is best.

2. What are the "strange fires" of our day?

a. *"If Luther were to rise from the dead, he would be shocked at the 'strange things' which are done in the name of the Lord...and those things that are done under the cover of his own name."*- Bishop Buthezi- 1st Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa's Central Diocese.

b. Health and wealth gospel...

c. Justification by works...if we make the right choices...if we decide for Christ...if we do what we want as long as it doesn't hurt anyone...if we live the way we want and just profess the name of Christ God will forgive us and we will still go to heaven...

d. We can worship any way we chose...to get people in the door. Any one believer or non can lead in worship...anyone who feels like they want to do it is okay...because we don't want them to feel bad...let's make them a leader so they will stay on at the church...everyone can bear the name pastor...pastor of this...pastor of that...

e. Scripture is not enough...we really don't believe God's Word is God's Word if we can so quickly seek to leave it behind or even desire to change it.

f. Also... we must make the gospel "warm and winsome"...the declaration of God's Word is not enough unless we make it attractive.

g. Putting our focus on fellowship...and not "fellowship" as defined in Scripture...but "fellowship" as defined in the world....instead of true worship as has been defined and dictated by the LORD for His people.

h. There are many roads to heaven...all religions and faith systems are true in themselves ...not one is more true... We live in an age of relativism.

3. Why didn't God give them the opportunity to seek repentance?
 - a. **They had just gone over this with God...they had just been ordained Moses had been quite clear concerning their duties before the LORD.**
 - b. **They simply started out disobeying God...by adding to His commands...by presuming upon God's grace to do what they wanted...discipline was swift and immediate because God said it would be...especially for those who "KNOW" better.**

C. Leviticus 10:8-20

1. Verse 8-10, God spoke specifically to Aaron about some specific things. What are they and what are their significance in light of what has just happened?
 - a. **No drinking of wine or strong drink... which usually meant distilled drink like a whiskey or a rye or rum. Why?**
 - (1) **There was a distinct possibility that that Nadab and Abihu had overdone the celebratory drinking that goes with the sacrifices.**
 - (2) **Possibly so that Aaron and the remaining boys couldn't drown themselves in their sorrows.**
 - b. Is this an injunction against drinking alcoholic beverages all together as some say? (This passage is used to support the thinking that at least the leadership should never drinking in many Baptist and other denominations.) **So this might actually be an injunction against 2 things:**
 - (1) **Drinking before beginning your service to the LORD...teaching and/or proclaiming His Word...because there will be drinking in the different ceremonies...this can't be an injunction against drinking.**
 - (2) **An injunction against over drinking...the Bible is clear all the way through concerning the sins of over drinking and what that can lead to. God's leaders...God's children...are not allowed to lose control...we are to be self-controlled...Aaron wasn't allowed to lose control even after the death of his first 2 sons.**
 - (3) **This is not an injunction against drinking as many would seek to say... God has made it abundantly clear throughout the Bible the wine and strong drink were given to men as a blessing from God...the mere fact that men all too often abuse this privileged and blessing does not take away from the fact that God does not give an injunction against wine or strong drink...he simply tells us when we can't and that we shouldn't overdo it.**
2. Now we come to the brothers that were left. What does it appear that they are doing now ...after God had just killed their brothers for being disobedient?
3. What were all the things that they did wrong concerning the sacrifice that Moses had instructed them to participate in?
 - a. **Moses was instructing them that in affliction it is best to continue our duty and devotion towards the LORD who brought upon us the affliction ...otherwise we are rejecting His work in our life.**
 - b. **By not eating their portion the people would be left wondering if their sins had been forgive...if God was accepting their offering.**
 - c. **By burning the whole animal it "appeared" that they were once again making their own decisions concerning doing what God had commanded.**

- d. **Not even family trauma is more important than your service to the word and your service of God's people... when the man wished to bury his parents even Jesus said come follow me...let the dead bury the dead.**
4. Lest we only consider, what seems to be God's harshness...which actually reveals God's holiness, where do we see God's grace in this event?
- a. **vs. 6-11- God continues to give them instruction that they may live...He continues to tell them what to do so that would not continue to break God's law.**
 - b. **vs. 12-15- Even though Nadab and Abihu have grievously sinned before God and the people... the Lord is still promising these blessings and provision for Aaron and his sons forever.**
 - (1) **In our way of thinking...the people could have said to all of Aaron's family... *"Look you have transgressed God's law which affects us all so we, the congregation, want you and your family gone."* But they were not the ones who chose them and they are not the ones who could get rid of them even if they might have thought like this...which is doubtful...they were probably more worried about what God was going to do to them because of the priests sins. God instead shows them His grace...and He reaffirms that all His promises are still true.**
 - (2) **God is showing that His love...His choice...is not conditioned on our works but on His sovereign decision. His grace is not conditional on our works...good or bad.**
 - c. **vs. 16-18- God does not kill them for presuming upon God's law as He did Nadab and Abihu. No fire proceeds from the altar to kill them. Think – a sin of omission...but according to Aaron they did it as to not offend God.**
 - d. **God gives these priest and us as well a clear message...that in our worship "heart matters". That is, why you do what you do...out of duty or expedience or out of love for God and His Word. Thankfully our God is holy and he is also a discerner of the heart...all of this in the midst of human tragedy.**
5. Just so we are clear, in vs. 20, what is it that Moses approved?
- a. **The ESV study Bible seems to make the case that: Moses realized that Aaron and his remaining sons were not motivated by rebellion when they did not eat or by disregard for the holiness of God...**
 - b. **Other's have said that Aaron considered that he should not eat of their portion of the sacrifice because in his grief he might not be in the right frame of mind...but as God's Word indicates throughout it is not up to us to keep ourselves from God's graces unless we ARE sinful ...so by refraining from God's grace in the offering it looked as if they might be. We are under obligation to participate in God's means of grace unless we are rebellious or we are otherwise divinely prevented from them.**

- c. Of course...it is important to remember that Moses could not approve this unless it had already been approved by God...this was not some arbitrary approval by Moses...Moses received his ability to forgive and accept from God alone. So God is approving of Aarons excuse...for it seems that Aaron's spirit was willing to do God's will, but his flesh was weak... It appears from this acceptance that God sees Aaron's heart and determines to accept him and his remaining sons back. God's grace towards His own in action!**
- 6. What are some of the things that we might take into our daily lives from chapter 10?**
- a. We need to constantly be reflecting on what is acceptable/holy to God? Anything not of God is to be done away with in our lives. We need to consider that even good things like wine and strong drink (but not limited to these) can be overused and no longer be acceptable to God...**
 - b. God is speaking to Moses and Aaron... then Moses speaks to Aaron...God is going to use our brothers and sisters in Christ to hold us accountable...it is the leadership's responsibility to hold one another accountable.**
 - c. Something that wasn't said but something equally important to these: God's Word indicates throughout it is not up to us to keep ourselves from God's graces unless we ARE sinful openly rebellious...We are under obligation to participate in God's means of grace unless we are rebellious or we are otherwise divinely prevented from them.**
 - d. Yet, another thing: God will have mercy on whom He chooses to have mercy...and He will show compassion on whom He chooses to show His compassion...and He will do this when he chooses to do this...not because of anything we do or don't do but because of His great love and commitment to His covenant which binds Him to His chosen people forever.**
 - e. One more thing: God gives these priest and us as well a clear message... that in our worship "our heart matters". That is, *"Why do you do what you do...do we do these out of duty or expedience... or out of love for God and His Word?"* Thankfully our God is holy and He is also a discerner of the heart...all of this even sometimes in the midst of human tragedy.**

Lessons from Leviticus
November 26, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Considering Aaron's silence here is a voice from the past weighing in...from Charles Bridges (1794-1869), a leader in the Evangelical Party within the Church of England in the mid-1800's)- *"God's Faithfulness in Afflicting His People is certain. This assurance of the Lord's perfect justice, wisdom, and intimate knowledge of our respective cases, leads us to yield to His appointments in dutiful silence. Thus Aaron, under his most afflictive domestic calamity, 'held his peace'"* (Lev 10:1-3).
2. What are some of the things that we might take into our daily lives from chapter 10?
 - a. **We need to constantly be reflecting on what is acceptable/holy to God? Anything not of God is to be done away with in our lives. We need to consider that even good things like wine and strong drink (but not limited to these) can be overused and no longer be acceptable to God...**
 - b. **God is speaking to Moses and Aaron... then Moses speaks to Aaron...God is going to use our brothers and sisters in Christ to hold us accountable...it is the leadership's responsibility to hold one another accountable.**
 - c. **Something that wasn't said but something equally important to these: God's Word indicates throughout it is not up to us to keep ourselves from God's graces unless we ARE sinful openly rebellious...We are under obligation to participate in God's means of grace unless we are rebellious or we are otherwise divinely prevented from them.**
 - d. **Yet, another thing: God will have mercy on whom He chooses to have mercy...and He will show compassion on whom He chooses to show His compassion...and He will do this when he chooses to do this...not because of anything we do or don't do but because of His great love and commitment to His covenant which binds Him to His chosen people forever.**
 - e. **One more thing: God gives these priest and us as well a clear message... that in our worship "our heart matters". That is, "Why do you do what you do...do we do these out of duty or expedience... or out of love for God and His Word?" Thankfully our God is holy and He is also a discerner of the heart...all of this even sometimes in the midst of human tragedy.**

C. Leviticus chapter 11 and 12.

1. With Aaron being the High priest at this point, what reasons can you think of that God would call upon both Moses and Aaron to speak to the people the same message about clean and unclean animals, insects and birds? (vs. 1-2)
 - a. **Moses had more experience and credibility with the people.**
 - b. **This had been a teaching...eating "all" creatures that move upon the earth" since Noah's time and this would take as many bodies as possible to "retrain" the people.**
 - c. **The credibility of the priesthood had been stained from the get go...so Moses' involvement will restore the confidence in the office as they speak one message with one voice...from their positions of authority granted to them by God.**

2. How would you define the difference between “clean” and “unclean”?
 - a. **“Clean” means fit for God’s presence... “unclean” means unfit for God’s presence.**
 - b. **Anyone who was unclean or had come into contact with anything unclean was unfit for worship.**
 - c. **“Clean” is defined by God for He is clean and Holy.**

3. In Hebrews 9:9-10, the writer to the Hebrews describes briefly the ceremonial law discerning what is clean and what is unclean just like the chapters before us 11-15. It is obviously a summary statement so based on this, how would you define the ceremonial law and its purpose? **Fundamentally these laws are moral and spiritual in nature and are designed to create a distinction between Israel and the surrounding Canaanites.**

4. What had God commanded in Gen. 9:3...and what is significant about this command?
 - a. **He commanded Noah that he could kill and eat “every moving thing”**
 - b. **Before people could only eat plants.**
 - c. **In the same way that God had given Adam and his offspring the plants now He gives them to eat of the lesser creation than man...any and all.**

5. Since God had done this for all mankind...why now is he restricting the diet of the Israelites this way?
 - a. **It should be enough that God commands it...but God loving His people tells them why?**
 - b. **In God’s eye they were a clean people...He had chosen them...He had delivered them to be His own...and so they must be different than the rest of the world....so they will not be able to eat what everyone else eats.**
 - c. **By restricting their diet...God is curtailing fellowship with the surrounding peoples...for in those days most fellowship occurred around a meal. This is the place where friendships used to be formed...contracts signed...relationships bonded.**
 - d. **These restriction had an odious effect on their neighbors because they are flaunting their difference before them making them feel wrong in all that they do even in what they eat. God is building a societal barrier between His people and the people surrounding them.**
 - e. **God is so detailed in how He chooses to protect His people...seeking to protect them from adopting the views of the surrounding people by keeping them separate on purpose.**

6. When else do we see God giving restrictions against what we should eat before this, setting up this act of obedience and holiness in His people?
 - a. **Gen. 2:16-17... By the way how did that injunction work out? The great thing about God is His loving kindness towards His people...death reigned because of Adam’s sin ...but God...said that He would send One who would defeat sin and death in Gen. 3:15..and along the way He is still teaching His people holiness and obedience never giving up on us.**
 - b. **Gen. 9: 4- Can’t eat blood...and we have seen that injunction many times even here in the Book of Leviticus...setting the people up already for what they cannot eat...how they are to be obedient before the Lord.**

c. So it isn't as if God is springing all of these requirements on them here ...He has been referring to many of these ...He has been growing them and giving them little bits so they could be growing in obedience all along preparing them for this day.

7. When were these "food laws" abrogated? Why?-

a. Mark 7:14-23; Acts 10: 9-15, Rom. 14:

b. Because the restriction concerning staying separate from our neighbors has been lifted...we are under obligation to give the gospel out...which requires that we be in the world but not of the world...opening up our opportunity to have our neighbors in our homes...at our tables...so they can see and hear the gospel.

8. What is He communicating vss. 44-47...for them and for us today who are no longer under these specific ceremonial laws concerning what we can eat? In other words, what is the principles that can be lifted out of this chapter for us to remain holy today?

a. He is communicating His command that His people WILL be Holy as He is holy! He is and will continue to teach them that they must participate in their sanctification by obeying His Word so that they can grow into the holiness God has given to them. So we must reflect on how are we to be holy in this ungodly world? Obedience is paramount!

b. They are ...we are to maintain a constant observance of God's law...and we can know that we have been justified...and so with that knowledge we can live as God prescribes...we can reflect on our behavior...even our habits concerning eating and drinking to determine if they are acceptable before God because He does not condone drunkenness or gluttony.

c. They are...we are...to understand that even something as simple and mundane as eating and drinking is to be done to the glory of God. (See I Cor. 10:31) Is there a moral quality which is distinct about us, which bears witness to us, to the world, that we are God's?

d. They are...we are... to purposefully be and look different than the world around us.

e. Because God has delivered them and us we should want to do whatever He says to do.

f. Also, these laws are not given to them or us as a dietary guide for health and hygiene...while there may be some helpful information in them for us...that was not their stated purpose.

Lessons from Leviticus
December 3, 2017

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Chapters 11-15 define clean and unclean specifically for the people. From what we have seen so far in chapter 11 how would you define “clean” and “unclean”?
 - a. **“Clean” means fit for God’s presence... “unclean” means unfit for God’s presence. “Clean” is defined by God for He is clean and Holy.**
 - b. **Anyone who was unclean or had come into contact with anything unclean was unfit for worship.**
2. What were some of the reasons that for God restricting the diet of the Israelites this way?
 - a. **It should be enough that God commands it...but God loving His people tells them why?**
 - b. **In God’s eye they were a clean people...He had chosen them...He had delivered them to be His own...and so they must be different than the rest of the world....so they will not be able to eat what everyone else eats.**
 - c. **By restricting their diet...God is curtailing fellowship with the surrounding peoples...for in those days most fellowship occurred around a meal. This is the place where friendships used to be formed...contracts signed...relationships bonded.**
 - d. **These restriction had an odious effect on their neighbors because they are flaunting their difference before them making them feel wrong in all that they do even in what they eat. God is building a societal barrier between His people and the people surrounding them.**
 - e. **God is so detailed in how He chooses to protect His people...seeking to protect them from adopting the views of the surrounding people by keeping them separate on purpose.**
 - f. **I Cor. 6:19-20**

C. Chapter 12:1-8

1. Why does 12:1-8 need to be here in the midst of this discussion about cleanness and uncleanness, especially concerning this is speaking to and about covenant mothers who have delivered covenant children?
 - a. **This ceremonial uncleanness was to signify the pollution of sin which we are all conceived and born into.**
 - b. **Briefly let me say that pregnancy, childbirth, and post-pregnancy were a very dangerous physical state for a woman to be in. Childbirth was such a common experience in the life of the people then ...but also one of the most dangerous...as infant and maternal mortality rates were extremely high...and this was so up to around 100 plus years ago...and is still true in many countries today. Even in our own country where there is great medical advancement...pregnancy and delivery is still dangerous.**
 - (1) **One common reason for declaring a man or a woman to be in the state of ritual uncleanness was because it indicated that a person was in less than ideal physical condition, and childbirth was one of those states. And that fact is a key to our understanding this passage.**

- (2) This passage is not denigrating the wonderful privilege of motherhood. The physical discharges after the birth of a child referred to in this passage rendered a woman ceremonially unclean because they indicated an abnormal physical state: a physical state in which the woman was less than whole. After a period of ritual purification and sacrifice, she could be restored to the fellowship of God's people in worship by being declared whole again.**
- (3) Notice over and over in this passage what it doesn't say: it is not saying that the child is unclean, and it is not saying the woman is in sin. But rather it is saying that the flow of blood or the discharges from the woman that are part of the process of childbirth simply make her ceremonially unclean. Why? Because they indicated a dangerous physical condition, an abnormal physical condition, one of less than wholeness, and after a period of ritual purification and sacrifice, she could be restored to the fellowship of God's people in worship.**
- c. There doesn't seem to be any reason given for the double time for cleanness for male and female children...**
- (1) As you might imagine, a liberal commentator will quickly seize on this and say, "This is a classic example of male chauvinism! Males are valued more highly than females, and therefore the ritual purification only takes half the time."**
- (2) Some commentators have said, "Well, the ancients believed that those discharges of blood that occur after childbirth last longer after the birth of a female child than a male child."**
- (3) Others have suggested that the female child caused the woman to be ritually unclean twice as long because one day that female child would be subject to the same purification laws. Perhaps...But my basic answer is, "I don't know."**
- d. Reveals God's law and our obedience in our sanctification. God is sovereign and we are responsible to do as He says...**
- e. At the end of this time with the proper sacrifice it is God who makes the unclean clean...the first time and every subsequent time for those of us who are in Christ Jesus.**
- f. Now she does NOT offer the sacrifice because she was immoral/sinful in anyway but because she was physically unwhole, and the experience of being in the presence of the Lord requires our complete personal holiness. We will actually get to some other uncomfortable passages later in the Book of Leviticus when male bodily discharges make men to be ritually unclean so that they can't come into the presence of the Lord. The point is, physical wholeness is a part of the wholeness that is required for the experienced of the presence of the Lord. And because she is in a weakened physical state, a danger to herself especially expressed in this process of bodily discharge, she is counted as ceremonially unclean. The important lesson in that is that God cares about our physical state as well.**
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- g. Also, this recognizes the curse and God's work in overcoming the curse...because once the childbirth pain is gone and the woman is fully recovered she can once again praise God for keeping His promises and for restoring her to Himself....and to her family.**

2. Look at verse 8 and compare it with Luke 2: 22-24. What does this tell us about God and His people?

- a. **That the parents of our LORD were extremely poor...for this offering was for the poorest among them....the wise men had not yet come bringing with them the treasures that they bore for the child.**
- b. **This offering was still in affect when Christ was born and it was still being carried out by those who were devote among the people...for Jewish history tells us that the majority of the people had not brought the sacrifices of the LORD for some time as a people.**
- c. **God provides a way for even the poorest to worship Him...**
- d. **Holiness involves the whole of ourselves, body and soul; and these laws that point to a distinction between physical cleanness and uncleanness remind us that before we can fellowship with God forever, God will transform not merely our souls or spirits, but our bodies.**
- e. **This Old Testament passage reminds us that in order to stand in the presence of the Lord we are expected to reflect the fullness of personal wholeness in morality, in spirit, and in body. And so, the distinctions that are made because of physical cleanness or uncleanness point to this grand truth: holiness involves the whole of ourselves, body and soul. That's one reason, by the way, why we cannot claim to worship God in our hearts while we defile ourselves in our bodies. The whole of the New Testament is against the idea that somehow we can worship God in our heart and yet in our bodies defy His Law and the standards of holiness.**

D. Chapters 13-14

1. Chapter 13 deals with how to judge someone with leprosy and chapter 14 directs the priest in the method of cleansing one who has been deemed leprous.

2. How would they have understood the term "leprosy"?

- a. **The Septuagint Greek word for this was "aphe lepras" = "morbid scalliness"**
- b. **The Hebrew word "tsara'at"= a smiting or a stroke...in the sense of being providentially inflicted. This disease was regarded as an awful punishment from the Lord (2 Kings 5:7 ; 2 Chr 26:20)Also... it was a generic name for "any" scaly skin condition or mold and mildew on clothing and/or walls.**
 - (1) psoriasis
 - (2) eczema
 - (3) leukoderma
 - (4) leprosy- Hansen's disease- This disease "begins with specks on the eyelids and on the palms, gradually spreading over the body, bleaching the hair white wherever they appear, crusting the affected parts with white scales, and causing terrible sores and swellings. From the skin the disease eats inward to the bones, rotting the whole body piecemeal." The disease itself does not kill...it seems the weakness that comes is what eventually kills.
- c. **In chapter 13, there are six different circumstances under which it might develop itself,**
 - (1) **without any apparent cause (Leviticus 2-8);**

- (2) its reappearance (9-17);
 - (3) from an inflammation (18-28);
 - (4) on the head or chin (29-37)... "itching disease";
 - (5) in white polished spots (38,39);
 - (6) at the back or in the front of the head (40-44).
 - d. Lepers were required to live outside the camp or city (Numbers 5:1-4 ; 12:10-15, etc.).
 - e. In Christ's day no leper could live in a walled town, though he might in an open village. But wherever he was he was required to have his outer garment rent as a sign of deep grief, to go bareheaded, and to cover his beard with his mantle, as if in lamentation at his own virtual death. He had further to warn passers-by to keep away from him, by calling out, "Unclean! unclean!" nor could he speak to any one, or receive or return a salutation, since in the East this involves an embrace."
 - f. Interesting enough, it appears that this disease (and/or diseases) was understood not to be contagious and this is evident from the regulations regarding it (Leviticus 13:12 Leviticus 13:13 and 36)
 - g. So it wasn't a matter of "catching" the disease but rather becoming unclean that was at stake...since only those who had been inflicted by God had this happen to them.
 - h. References to leprosy have a different emphasis in the New Testament. They stress God's desire to heal. Jesus freely touched people with leprosy. While people with leprosy traditionally suffered banishment from family and neighbors, Jesus broke from the tradition. He treated lepers with compassion, touching and healing them. Although we can't know all the reasons that God allows disease into our lives, biblical leprosy is a powerful symbol reminding us of sin's spread and its horrible consequences. Like leprosy, sin starts out small but can then spread, leading to other sins and causing great damage to our relationship with God and others.
 - i. Leprosy or Hansen's disease does not appear to be a disease of the skin as is talked about here...rather it seems to be a disease of the nervous system. ...because the leprosy bacterium attack the nerves...destroying nerve endings so the person doesn't feel pain.
2. In these 2 chapters there is a lot of details concerning cases of leprous disease and what the priest is required to do to cleanse such a person or such a person's garment or house. What can we take away from this today for our own edification?
- a. "It's okay to be bald and/or balding!"
 - b. The priest must take time in making his judgement...so too the elders must not make hasty judgments concerning people. (7 days the diseased person is shut up so the priest can analyze what he is looking at before making a rendering/judgment. One of the issues that Jesus had with the leaders of His day is that they didn't take their calling seriously...by this time anyone determined to be leprous for whatever reason they were cast out from the town, the people, and the temple...but they were not as a rule followed up on as the Scriptures command and direct the leaders/priest to do on behalf of the people.

- c. The priest...the elders should be the authority that we run to or are taken to when sin seems to run deep...rather than going somewhere else first...or to those who will simply approve of whatever we say and do.**
- d. We must own our sin when it is found out...not try to run from it or deny it...which will simply have the effect of possibly infecting others. A sickness left undetected or untreated can and will pollute others... just like sin left unchecked...personal, private sins can develop into public sins.**
- e. We also must be willing to step away from a wicked and sinful person.**
- f. Even things are corrupt if we use them in a corrupt manner.**
- g. Even leprosy/sin can be cleaned by the right atonement.**
- h. When we do things as God says we reveal God's sovereignty and our personal responsibility to be Holy as He is Holy and we are made free.**

E. Chapter 15-

1. This chapter seems to be here to deal with men and women concerning the things in life that often happen for men or for women and deemed to be unclean.
 - a. Diseases of a possibly promiscuous lifestyle of the man...which would include everything that is his that he had touched since contracting the disease.**
 - b. Nocturnal emissions...**
 - c. Concerning menstruation in women...for some of the same reasons we gave concerning the blood loss pre-delivery, at delivery and post-delivery.**
 - d. But also incontinence...urinary and fecal...both of which would render the person and their things unclean.**
 - e. Things not as common as those already mentioned but things that happen enough to warrant God speaking about them and how to be cleansed from them so we can be restored.**

Lessons from Leviticus
January 7, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is the point of all of the discussions that we have had on God's wanting to keep His people "clean"?
2. Now in the NT in the book of Hebrews we see its author making the case that, as Christians... post-Christ's death/resurrection and ascension...the sacrificial regulations no longer apply to us...actually they don't apply to anyone any longer...Jew or Gentile for in Christ they were done away with "once and for all time." This message was especially true for the Jewish Christians who were being told that they were to believe in Christ and also do the sacrifices and holy days in order to truly be saved.

The writer of Hebrews is making the point that for these Hebrew Christians that there never was any lasting value to these Levitical sacrifices that is why they had to be continually offered up. If there had been value they would not have had a need to continually offer them up. Because there was a better sacrifice...Christ Jesus' which makes us perfect by His righteousness...because God put Him forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith. This was done "once for all" time to bear the sins of many...one and done as we say today.

C. Chapter 16 – The Day of Atonement (read all of Chapter 16)

1. Given what we just read...what day in the New Testament is like this day? (It is the Day that essentially does away with the need for this Day of Atonement.) **Good Friday.** What about this day is reminiscent of Good Friday?
2. What are some things that we see as NT believers that is important for us in our day and age?
 - a. **First thing we see, is that as NT believers we have the same responsibilities as the believers in the OT toward worshiping God as He prescribes. We are one people...worshiping the same God...in the way He prescribes...the actual methods may vary but the main points is that we are to worship Him as He prescribes not as we want. See 16:1-3.**
 - b. **Jesus took upon Himself all the sins of all His children as our final scape goat...and while He was crucified outside the city...buried outside the city...in a grave not His own...he was not lost for he rose again unto life...and was seen again by hundreds of people...who were looking for Him...the One who took away the sins of all His people.**
3. In verses 29 and 31 we read that God commands the priest, "...you shall afflict yourselves..." What is He communicating here for these leaders and for us who are all the priesthood of believers?
 - a. **The note in the study Bible probably outlines this best when it says, "The ordinary Israelites were to show penitence for their sins by not working on the Sabbath, by fasting and possibly by wearing sackcloth."**

- b. In other words, doing due diligence in preparing ourselves for worship... to come into the presence of the Most High God. Denying ourselves certain pleasures that only take away from our focus. Doing what we should to help ourselves and each other prepare... Hebrews 10:22-25.**
- c. The Sabbath Day and the Day of Atonement that God established were so important that these Days brought the death penalty upon any who refused to celebrate and bring the sacrifices and worship to the Lord. (See Lev. 23:28-30)**

4. So to sum up, what is the overarching reason or reasons for the Day of Atonement?

- a. Even though God had ordained regular burnt offerings and sin offerings to atone for individual sins , propitiate His wrath and cleanse His people...it is clear even from the book of Leviticus that even these were not sufficient.**
- b. The Day of Atonement was a “catch-all” day of repentance and sacrifice for the nation since so many sins were left unconfessed... either from lack of memory or simply not thinking it was a sin... by the priest and people alike.**
- c. What, if anything, is applicable to us today?**

D. Leviticus 17

1. When do we first see sacrifice being used by God as a substitutionary atonement?

- a. Gen. 3:21**
- b. Gen. 4:4**
- c. But the actual command to do this among the people was spelled out by Moses and was to be a perpetual system until Shiloh/ Messiah comes.**

2. What is the purpose for the command found vs. 2-9?

- a. Any animal that is approved as a sacrificial animal to be a sacrificed at the altar or eaten at home must be slaughtered at the tent/temple. Outside the priest direct supervision no slaughtering can take place.**
- b. Why?**
 - (1) Otherwise the people don't know why you are slaughtering an animal...leading them to wonder...see vs. 7. They are not to even give a hint of misconduct or they are guilty of misconduct/sin!**
 - (2) Everything is focused around God and His Word and His Church...a contemporary example is with Christian who have taken it upon themselves to baptize their own children at home away from the church...or taking communion on your own outside of the church or with a representative part of the body for a shut it.**
 - (3) So this command is set up so the people will worship only God.**

3. Again, what was the purpose for all of these sacrifices?

- a. The sacrifices listed here with all its blood shedding and the once for all time sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross both support the purpose... “...that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin...” Heb. 9:22**
- b. Both of these are the provision of God's free grace and love for us not the cause of His love...that is just like Paul says in Romans...it is not because we keep the law that God loves us...He loves us so we can keep the law. See I John 4:10-12.**

- c. **In no sense does the sacrifice of blood cause God to love us. The love of God provided the sacrifice as a means through which sinners could be forgiven and are forgiven in Christ (it is a done deal) and transformed to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.**
 - d. **This is not love in the way we think of love: Our loves and hopes are always directed toward the attractive and good...what makes us feel good...but God's love is directed toward what is unattractive; us, because of our sin. We love things or people in this life because they have value or are beautiful to us...but we are beautiful to God only because He chooses to love us. There is a big difference...and atonement makes us beautiful to God.**
 - e. **Anselm, (an early 12th Century Church Father) said, *"Since God is an infinite Person, sin against Him involves the sinner in infinite guilt. But no mere human, being finite, can purge away this infinite guilt. Two things would be required at the same time to do so. First, the sin must be paid for in the same manner in which it was committed (human sin would equal a human sacrifice)...and as such animal sacrifices are not sufficient. Second, the human person who purges that infinite guilt must be infinite Himself in order to have such limitless effects. And that is precisely who the Lord Jesus is: an infinite person...infinite God in true human person. Animal blood no doubt temporarily covered sin (at the moment), but only the blood of Jesus Christ could totally remove sins."***
3. Again, why all this talk about the blood?
- a. **Leviticus gives us the most comprehensive explanation of these sacrifices and the reason for all of this bloodshed is given in 17:11.**
 - b. **But it also alludes to what it means about drinking of blood. Look at verse 13 and 14....draining of the blood after you hunt and kill your animal. Does this "completely" drain the meat of all blood? No...so what is left is okay...there is no indication of cooking the food until it is crisp to make sure there is no blood in it. The injunction deals with the actual accepted practice of drinking blood which WILL be a problem for Israel later as they compromise and run off after the God's of other nations.**
4. You gotta love it...God even defines the hunt (vs. 13-16)...we can hunt but we must do it His way as with all things. So even hunting is to be done by God's rules....hunting of all that is not used in the sacrifice.

Lessons from Leviticus
January 21, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Chapter 18 overview: with all the sins God could have started with why sexual sins first when seeking to teach further on the practice of holiness?
 - a. **These are the ones we individually and culturally are most consumed by...question that assessment? Then you have to wonder why God discusses this so often in relation to His peoples purity.**
 - b. **Actually...not the first one mentioned if you take into account the end of chapter 17...it is there that we have the injunction against drinking/eating blood talked about because how God's people "use" blood also goes to our practice of holiness according to God...because He expects us to be different in all things from the culture around us ...and in this case the Canaanite culture for them...a culture who consumed blood and misused blood because they had no respect for life.**
2. What is the point of 18: 24-30? **The same as 1-5... I am the LORD your God...you WILL live as I say or there will be consequences...!**

C. Chapter 19

1. This is one of the best known chapters in the Book of Leviticus, in part because it is here that we see phrases like, *"You shall be Holy, as I the LORD your God am holy"* (see also Lev. 11:44-45) and *"...love your neighbor as yourself..."*. It is part of this final section of Leviticus that is concerned with the practice of holiness letting us know what practical godliness looks like in daily life. Just like in chapter 18, the practice of holiness was dealt with along the lines of sexual purity over and against a rampantly sexually immoral culture, so also the passage before deals with how one goes about loving one's neighbor and those strangers who dwell in our midst as a way to show our loyalty to God.
2. In verses 1-2, (verse 2 specifically) why is God having Moses communicate to His people...and what is it specifically that has been communicated to us again in the NT?
 - a. **Moses is God's direct spokesmen to all the people including Aaron...who will be vested with carrying out Moses' words from God...but the authority that Moses has is still in place while he lives...this will soon enough change where all of this authority will move over to the priesthood.**
 - b. **The people of God are commanded to be holy because of what God is like. We are to be holy because He is holy...because God's people are connected to Him through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.**
 - c. **Gen. 1:26-27 we are told that man was created in the image of God...and as such we reflect the glory of God...so as our God is holy...His redeemed people are to be holy as well...**
 - d. **As we see more clearly in the NT, by giving us His righteousness we can be holy and we are being made holy and we will be holy on THAT DAY!**

- e. **It is clear throughout the Bible that God's people are to bear witness to the world to what the LORD GOD is like...they are to see Him in and through us. We are His ambassadors to reflect Him in all we do...He is holy and we must reflect that holiness into the world...and we can now through Christ Jesus.**
3. In verses 3-18, we see God putting this into practical perspective for us. What specific biblical document is he highlighting in these verses?
- a. **The 10 Commandments...specifically both tablets of the Commandments.**
- b. So what is holiness to look like according to this section in our day and age?
- (1) **Our holiness is to be seen in how we revere/honor our parents. Vs. 3**
 - (2) **Our holiness is to be seen in how we "keep" His Sabbath. Vs. 3, 5-8**
Once again...in light of the biblical meaning that we have often talked about with concern for the word "keep"...what should this, practically, look like?
 - **Our holiness is seen in our not turning to idols...that is our holiness is seen in our worshiping the One True God in the way that the One True God says to worship Him. Vs. 4**
 - **Our holiness is seen in us abiding by God's prescribed ways of worshiping Him. Vs. 5-8**
 - (3) **Our holiness is seen in how we think of and take care of the poor among us. Vs. 9-10**
 - (4) **Our holiness is seen in how we uphold God's name in the world...by word and deed. As His direct representatives when people look at us...hear us...they are to see and hear the Lord God. We, too often, forget, we are not our own any longer...we are Christ's and our practice of holiness reveals we are Christ's or it reveals that we are the worlds. Vs. 11-12**
 - (5) **Our holiness will be seen in how we deal with one another...vs 11-18. What does this look like today?**
 - **Our holiness is seen is how we deal with the "handicapped" among us. Vs.14**
 - **Our holiness is seen in how we meter out justice...we are not to show partiality or be prejudice. See James 2:9. Vs. 15**
 - **Jesus said, the poor you will always have with you...was he thinking of this provision so that we would not show partiality/prejudice against anyone? Vs./ 15**
 - **We are to have our "brothers" back in all situations that we can. Vs. 16**
 - **We are not to hold grudges, we are not allowed to "hate" a brother...we are to be willing to reason with him frankly...firmly...truthfully...no matter where the chips may fall...not to be "right" but so that justice between brothers is accomplished...mat not lead to reconciliation but it must lead to understanding of some kind so that we can do vs. 16. Vs. 17**
 - **We are to love our neighbor as our self: "I Am the LORD." vs. 18**

(6) When the text speaks of neighbor, it defines it as your fellow countrymen, brothers and sisters, then...the sojourners in our midst...if you will...so it reflects on the church as a family. So, day by day, what are our specific responsibilities towards our neighbor, according to this text?

- **No stealing**
- **No false dealing...making things good for yourselves at the expense of others...**
- **No lying to one another**
- **No lording over your neighbor or robbing him ...speaking of being fair with one another...**
- **No talking badly against your family...**
- **Always have the back of family member**
- **No hating our brother in our hearts...we should set things right...if they can be, hence the term "reason frankly"**
- **No vengeance or grudge to be held against a brother or a sister...**
- **We shall love our neighbor as ourselves... What does that mean? That we must love ourselves well so that we are able to love other? No!!! It means we are to love others as God loves!**

Lessons from Leviticus
January 28, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review- Re-read Lev. 19:1-18

1. What is the overriding principle that God is seeking to teach His people here?

To be holy as He is holy...

2. According to these first 18 verses...how, specifically does He say we are to show this holiness that is required of us?

(1) No stealing

(2) No false dealing...making things good for yourselves at the expense of others...

(3) No lying to one another

(4) No lording over your neighbor or robbing him ...speaking of being fair with one another...

(5) No talking badly against your family...

(6) Always have the back of family member

(7) No hating our brother in our hearts...we should set things right...if they can be, hence the term "reason frankly"

(8) No vengeance or grudge to be held against a brother or a sister...

(9) We shall love our neighbor as ourselves... What does that mean? That we must love ourselves well so that we are able to love other? No!!! It means we are to love others as God loves!

C. Chapter 19 continued:

4. What are some of the main points of verses 19-36?

a. Overriding principle: We see specifically holiness in terms of separation from all that is unholy...namely the culture around them.

b. Vs. 19...is an interesting injunction...given that we cross breed animals all the time...we often have more than one crop on a farm... and we all are wearing mixed fiber garments...For them at that time they were not to even look like the people in the land in which they would be dwelling...remember they are on their way to the Promised Land...which is Canaanite in culture. SOOO...what does this text say to us today since we are no longer under these laws?

(1) I used to attend a church/denomination that dictated the type of clothing men and women, boys and girls could wear.

(2) Some people teach that materials like denim are too worldly.

(3) Jewelry is also worldly...some even say that wedding bands are too worldly. And they base this on I Peter 3:1-6 in the NT.

c. Verses 20-31...deal with again specific ways the people are to practice holiness/godliness in a degenerate culture.

(1) In that culture slave women were often taken advantage of sexually...vs. 20-22 were designed to protect them...the vulnerable. The custom was to scourge both in this case but not death...then the man was to also sacrifice for his atonement. This distinction may not show as clearly as other places how the Bible upholds women...it makes distinction between behaviors of slaves and free...BUT, in Christ there is no distinction made...Co. 3:11.

(2) Even the harvest is different...

d. Verses 30-36 deal with how we are to specifically deal with one another...family and stranger/slave. (The word “stranger” appears to be the same word or a derivative of the same word in Hebrew for slaves...they went into Egypt as strangers and came out as slaves.

e. What do these communicate to us today?

- **They are teaching obedience, restraint and fruitfulness... dependence on the Lord in verse 23-25.**
- **We are to be happy with the life and the body God has given us... we are not to seek to know the future or to disfigure our bodies in anyway because that reflects a connection more with the culture than it does the ways of God who calls on us to remain pure and distinct from the culture around us. Everything we decide to do today must be run through the grid of God's Word rather than our personal preferences. Vs. 26-28,31. We are not to define ourselves by our desires but by God's standard of holiness.**
- **We must maintain honor and respect for the women in our midst...doing everything to keep their dignity in tact...protecting them from the practices of the world that only seeks to sexualize them in clothing and in worldview. Verse 29-30. And given vs 30 is connected with verse 29 in an interesting way...what else is being communicated than what we saw in verse 3?**
- **We must respect the sanctity of human life...young and old...this is a way that we fear God by standing up and protecting the elderly in our midst...just like the poor and the orphaned.**
- **We must treat the “non-believer” with respect and honor as we can without compromising the Word of God.**
- **In all our dealing with people of all kinds we are to be fair and just and balanced in our dealing....dealing with all with the same standards or not dealing with them at all. And truth be told we are NOT allowed to not to deal with them. God dealt with us this way...we deserved death and His wrath...and yet He treats us as His children...we are to treat all image-bearers that way when we can. Why? Because He said so.**
- **And we are going to do this even though the world around us treats us unfairly...but we are to be different.**

5. Multiple times in these 37 verses we read “I am the LORD” or “I am the LORD your God”...why?

a. This is the rational as to why the people of God are to live as God commands.

b. The people of God are called to be holy because our God is holy...Yahweh our covenant God is our God who has saved us...delivered us from the bondage of sin and the condemnation of God's eternal wrath...this should motivate us to practice holiness.

- c. These actually punctuate His commands...do this because this is what I do...do this because this is what I command you to do...and if you are to be practicing holiness this is what practical holiness will look like.**
- d. This also communicates that this is not someone else's opinion...but this is God's/Yahweh's expectation since He has delivered us and given us all that we need to practice such holiness even in a dark and cruel world.**

Lessons from Leviticus
Feb. 18, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is the overarching message of chapter 19?
 - a. ***"...say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.'"***
Lev. 19:1
 - b. **God's command that His people be distinguished from all the other peoples on the earth...in this case by particular laws and customs that would teach them about a real separation from the world and the flesh for the purpose of teaching a heart, mind and soul devotion to our God.**
 - c. **See also I Peter 1:13-16- God makes His point by giving 3 reasons:**
(1) That the grace of God in calling us.
(2) From His command... *"...it is written..."*
(3) And by His example...He is holy.
2. Multiple times in these 37 verses we read "I am the LORD" or "I am the LORD your God"...why?
 - a. **This is the rational as to why the people of God are to live as God commands.**
 - b. **The people of God are called to be holy because our God is holy...Yahweh our covenant God is our God who has saved us...delivered us from the bondage of sin and the condemnation of God's eternal wrath...this should motivate us to practice holiness.**
 - c. **These actually punctuate His commands...do this because this is what I do...do this because this is what I command you to do...and if you are to be practicing holiness this is what practical holiness will look like.**
 - d. **This also communicates that this is not someone else's opinion...but this is God's/Yahweh's expectation since He has delivered us and given us all that we need to practice such holiness even in a dark and cruel world.**
3. In all that we have looked at so far ...what are some of the motivations that God has given for us to live our lives practicing holiness?
 - a. **Because we will make man in our image...in our likeness...**
 - b. **Because *"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt..."***
 - c. **His command... *"Be holy for I the LORD your God am holy."***
(1) We are made in His image.
(2) We are to reflect that image to the world around us.
(3) So our very pursuit of holiness is a confirming witness that we and are God are different from this fallen world.
 - d. **God has revealed His grace to us...so in gratitude the Bible says we are to live and practice holiness. We ought to want to live as God prescribes for us to live. God Himself has said in so many words... *"I have saved you so follow me...walk in my ways."***
 - e. **Lev. 20:24-26**

C. Chapter 20

1. As we consider this chapter especially verses 1-21, and 27 we have heard most of this before in chapter 18 and 19...why the repeated commands?

- a. **To make His point...once may not have been enough so He repeats Himself...as He will do again once they are in the land...See. Phil. 3:1 and what Paul says about repeating ...also, vs. 6-7...and vs. 26.**
- b. **This type of influence will be so strong on His people...God knows that they will not do as He says as far as removing entirely the scourge on the Promised Land....and so leaving these folks around He knows they will be influenced to live and act in the same evil ways that the Canaanites do.**

c. **He explains the penalty for these sins:**

(1) "...put to death..."-Capital punishment for (No sacrifices will suffice for these)..Death penalty:

- **Sacrificing children to Molech...or broader...for false worship. Vs. 1-6...we are not to get wrapped up in the religions of the world....they are not true and they will make us unholy. Do only as I have commanded you. No sacrifice can be made for this sin...no forgiveness.**
- **For being a medium/witch/wizard or practicing and running with such people.**
- **For cursing one's father and mother...**
- **Adultery**
- **Incest**
- **Homosexuality**
- **Other unnatural lusts**
- **I Cor. 6:9-10... BUT...the good news is verse 11...God will save His people from every nation, tongue, tribe and lifestyle...**

(2) "...cut off from among his/her people..."-a secondary form of capital punishment for them...for:

- **For not holding someone accountable for their sin of child sacrifice, for going to see a medium, for disrespecting the family sexually but not necessarily through intercourse...for "whoring after them"...being an adulterer spiritually....we do this one today when we don't believe God's Word...when we live like we don't believe God's Word or that it doesn't really make any difference in our lives.**
- **They are to be excommunicated from the family...temple worship...the community...the nation... God Himself-"shunned".**
- **Castrated so they could not have children**
- **God suffering them to die childless...which was a curse for people who were unable to have children...these were very public sins...so everyone would know....and their line would not continue.**
- **It could also mean the death penalty...depending upon the context...(see verse 6)**
- **Not keeping within the define parameters of marriage may forfeit the blessings of marriage.**
- **Not showing proper respect of his wife...see vs. 18..can lead to dire consequences.**

- **For today...the NT uses similar language when talking about excommunicating someone from the church for such public sins...I Cor. 5.**
 - d. **Whichever... God makes it clear...He is putting them to death or separating them from the assembly of His holy people. And that His people have a responsibility to carry out His penalties and punishments or they as well will be cut off...for these sins are community sins and they affect the community in God's eyes...**
 - e. **Understanding the wickedness of this is nothing new...consider Job 31:9-11.**
4. What is the overall message of verses 22-26?
- a. **God seems to be saying, "Now, just so you are getting my point, if you are unfaithful to my call to holiness I want you to know that I'll take you out of this land." The promise of exile is a real promise/warning...if the people are not faithful to the Lord's commands.**
 - b. **You are mine and you will do as I say and your station in life ...a delivered child of God...demands. Their/our duty is inferred by the dignity given to us by God our Father and King. We must:**
 - (1) Keep and do all His statutes and rules so that the land in which He is sending them does not vomit them out.**
 - (2) We must not walk in the customs of the nations that are left there. I am driving them out because they did/do all these things.**
5. Now, you can answer the question when asked, "Are there some sins that are more serious than others?" How would you answer that now based on this chapter?
- a. **We start by saying all too often... "All sins are equally serious and deserve death." Which is right but it doesn't "really" answer the question...since we don't really want to answer the actual question.**
 - b. **According to this text the answers is just like WCF Catechism question #83- "Are all transgressions of the law equally heinous?" answer, "Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others."... as we see here...some deserve death immediately others banishment and barrenness...**
 - c. **These are part of what Jesus called the weightier matters of the law...Matt. 23:23**

Lessons from Leviticus
Feb. 25, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is the point of the penalties that God has placed upon these particular sins of chapter 20?
 - a. **Wants to let us know that some sins ARE more heinous than others.**
 - b. **Wants us to know that there are severe consequences for the sins we commit.**
 - c. **Wants us to know that His standards concerning life and worship are not to be compromised.**
 - d. **Wants us to know that His will and His statutes are absolute and are not to be challenged.**
2. What is the overall message of verses 22-26?
 - a. **God seems to be saying, "Now, just so you are getting my point, if you are unfaithful to my call to holiness I want you to know that I'll take you out of this land." The promise of exile is a real promise/warning...if the people are not faithful to the Lord's commands.**
 - b. **You are mine and you will do as I say and your station in life ...a delivered child of God...demands. Their/our duty is inferred by the dignity given to us by God our Father and King. We must:**
 - (1) **Keep and do all His statutes and rules so that the land in which He is sending them does not vomit them out.**
 - (2) **We must not walk in the customs of the nations that are left there. I am driving them out because they did/do all these things.**
3. So...are there sins that are more heinous than other? And how would you support your answer?

C. Holiness: What's the point?

1. **God is 3 times holy. "*Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts; the earth is full of is glory.*" (Isaiah 6:3) (Yahweh, Tzevaot),or, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is, and is to come.*" (Rev. 4:8)Emphasizing the depth and breadth of God's holiness informing us that there is nothing like Him anywhere!**
 - a. **"Qadowsh"= Hebrew for "to cut".**
 - (1) **To be holy means to be cut off, separate from everything else. It means to be in a class of your own... "a cut above".**
 - (2) **To be holy also means to be completely morally pure...all the time and in every way.**
 - (3) **Ex. 15:11; I Sam. 2:2**
 - b. **God's holiness is NOT an aspect of who He is...name and titles do the ...but this 3 fold declaration makes it His very essence.**
 - (1) **Yahweh= covenantal and personal name of the God was is creator sustainer and giver of life...a promise maker and keeper because His very character demands it.**
 - (2) **Tzevaot= Sabaoth= armies. Lord of His heavenly armies...commander in chief!**

- (3) *Hagios*= can also define God's people =saints. Most sacred, pure, awful, consecrated,,,worthy of veneration...set apart.**
- (4) *Kyrios*= Lord...master...sovereign...controller...supreme in authority.**
- (5) *Theos*= GOD- Father, Son and Holy Spirit....the word "very" or "extreme" is understood to go along with it...it is unsaid but alongside...registering His supreme divinity... the One True God.**
- (6) Pantokpator = Almighty one...almighty Father...Sustainer of the World...omnipotent One.**

Lessons from Leviticus
March 4, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Holiness: What's the point? We began to look at this last time...

2. **God is 3 times holy. *"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts; the earth is full of is glory."* (Isaiah 6:3) (Yahweh, Tzevaot),or, *"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is, and is to come."* (Rev. 4:8)Emphasizing the depth and breadth of God's holiness informing us that there is nothing like Him anywhere!**

c. ***"Qadowsh"*= Hebrew for "to cut".**

(4) **To be holy means to be cut off, separate from everything else. It means to be in a class of your own... "a cut above".**

(5) **To be holy also means to be completely morally pure...all the time and in every way.**

(6) **Ex. 15:11; I Sam. 2:2**

d. **God's holiness is NOT an aspect of who He is...name and titles do the ...but this 3 fold declaration makes it His very essence.**

(7) ***Yahweh*= covenantal and personal name of the God was is creator sustainer and giver of life...a promise maker and keeper because His very character demands it.**

(8) ***Tzevaot*= Sabaoth= armies. Lord of His heavenly armies...commander in chief!**

(9) ***Hagios*= can also define God's people =saints. Most sacred, pure, awful, consecrated,,,worthy of veneration...set apart.**

(10) ***Kyrios*= Lord...master...sovereign...controller...supreme in authority.**

(11) ***Theos*= GOD- Father, Son and Holy Spirit....the word "very" or "extreme" is understood to go along with it...it is unsaid but alongside...registering His supreme divinity... the One True God.**

(12) ***Pantokpator* = Almighty one...almighty Father...Sustainer of the World...omnipotent One.**

e. **How is the holiness of God revealed? In everything that He does. He is holy in every attribute and every action.**

f. ***"There really is nothing in the universe more terrifying and more threatening to our sense of self as the holiness of God. If it is true than what we think of ourselves as being "good" is wrong and we do not like to be wrong especially about ourselves."* (unknown source) R.C. Sproul has said, *"Left to ourselves none of us would invent the God of the Bible, the being who is a threat to our sense of security more primal and more fundamental than any act of nature."***

g. **In keeping His covenant promises.**

(1) **In His judgment...When His people break His covenant there are covenant consequences...see Hosea 5:1-14**

(2) **In His Redemption...the restoration of those who truly believe, who seek to maintain His covenant or those who are restored to this covenant through a penitent heart changed by God Himself...See Hosea 5:15.**

3. What does this holiness provide for us.
 - a. **Because of our sin...being unholy...God's holiness reveals our sin and our need for God and His holiness. Because of God's holiness we realize that our sin is more than a list of bad behaviors or mistakes or more than simply breaking someone's abstract rules. We need a Savior who can do what we cannot...rescue ourselves from our own sin...So God's holiness is a rebuke of our sinfulness and a revealer of our need for holiness.**
 - b. **Comfort- God's holiness is over all things...nothing rules but God. Since it is His very essence... then everything is under His sovereign holiness...everything that happens is supposed to happen just as it does...whether we like it or not.**
 - c. **Holiness defines our calling-Lev. 11:44; I Peter 1:14-16.**
 - (1) **The Bible speaks as though it expects us to be Holy.**
 - (2) **The Bible speaks and says we "are" already holy!...Holy is our identity...the identity of those who are God's. I Peter 1:15-16**
 - (3) **The Bible speaks of our holiness as a way to define our purpose in glorifying God...only that which is holy because Christ is holy and we are in Christ...can bring this holy God glory.**
 - (4) **The Bible speaks of this holiness as a positive gift that we have been given...not as something to fear or consider to be impossible.**
 - (5) **We have been purchased by the blood of Christ and as such we are no longer our own in Christ Jesus. We have been set apart for God's purposes to do His Holy/perfect will ... we have been made holy and we are becoming holy. So with this we have been called...just like these Israelites...we have been called to holiness...wherever we are, with whomever we are with, in whatever we are doing. Holiness and the pursuit of holiness matters...**
 - d. **Through the work of the Jesus Christ on the cross...and the on-going work of the Spirit...gifts given to us and for us by this 3 times Holy God...we can pursue holiness...which brings God glory.**
 - e. **Holiness separates us as a peculiar people...a different people...a treasured possession...a people that stand out as we live in this world. Ex. 19:5-6; I Peter 2:9-10.**
 - (1) **Peculiar people- different- separated-wholly loved. For Harry Potter fans, think Luna Lovegood type of peculiar in that she was the type of character in the series who repelled some people but drew others in...she drew in the "right ones" if you will.**
 - **Luna had "odd" perspectives because she ran everything through the standards of her father...her whole worldview was run through her father's standard...she defended those views even when it seemed to the rest of the world that they were completely off the mark.**
 - **Luna could see where others could not because her worldview was shaped differently and she was confident in this view.**
 - **As a peculiar people we are called upon to hold a "different view" an "odd view" from the world...one that will drive some away but one according to Scripture can draw the "right ones" to the Lord.**

- (2) **Treasured possession-** does it get any better than to see ourselves the way God sees us...as His treasured possession. He sent His own Son to pay the ransom so we might be released from the bondage of sin....because we are so treasured by Him as His own.
- f. **See Ps. 99...** a 3fold Holy God exists here as well...
- (1) **This Psalm tells us that when we are focused on His holiness we live richer lives...for we were created to bring God glory and when we focus on His holiness we aren't focusing on ourselves...**
- (2) **When we focus on His holiness we focus on Him who we were created for...**
- (3) **When we focus on His holiness we are strengthened, encouraged and extremely hopeful for we see God and what He is doing...by fearing Him...worshiping Him correctly, our identity is confirmed...our purpose is confirmed...and we have peace even in trouble.**
- g. **God speaks to His children about what holiness looks like before He ever lays out commandments to pursue holiness,**
- (1) **He says in Deut. 10:12-16- *"And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you..."* That's what we want to know. What is that "one thing" that will define Israel as the people of God...us as the people of God, for surely in this one thing we should hope to find some clue as to what the Lord requires of us.**
- (2) **God answers His own question: *"...what does the LORD require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD..."* Oh well...that's 4 things...but they describe the first *"...to fear the LORD your God..."*, because He is Holy, Holy, Holy! This is what holiness looks like for those of us who are His!**

Lessons from Leviticus
March 11, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What have you come to appreciate about God's holiness from what we have talked about?
2. What are some things that holiness provides for us...since God had made us holy and is making us holy?
 - a. **Comfort- God's holiness is over all things.**
 - b. **Holiness defines our calling.**
 - c. **Holiness separates us as a peculiar people...a different people...a treasured possession...a people that stand out as we live in this world. Ex. 19:5-6; I Peter 2:9-10.**
 - d. **Deut. 10:12-16- *"And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD."* - This is what is define us as His people...a holy people LOOK like this!**

C. A personal check up using Leviticus as our guide. How do we see God? Hard or Holy?

1. After all of these rules and regulations how do you suppose the people saw God?
 - a. See now, Matthew 25:24- *"The man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man . . .'"*
 - (1)**This is not just a phenomenon covered in the parable as a good illustration...this would have been true of a certain percentage of the people at the time that God gave all His rules to train His people in holiness and to keep His people holy.**
 - (2)**The man who received one talent from his master buried it in the ground because he believed his master was a hard man, harvesting where he had not sown and gathering where he had not scattered seed (Matthew 25:24). Make no mistake, if we see God as "hard," rather than holy, it will affect everything about the way we serve Him . . .**
 - ***Our work will be unrewarding.***
 - ***Our service will be slavery.***
 - ***Our labor will be lukewarm.***
 - ***Our giving will be without gladness.***
 - ***Our toil as trying as it is tiresome.***

- b. If we see God as “hard,” we will serve Him out of fear rather than joy, just like the servant in the parable, who was sternly rebuked by his master.
 - (1) Fearful service is faithless service, which brings no glory to God. So we must make the distinction between hardness and holiness. God is not a hard taskmaster; He is holy, and in His holiness God demands that we do the best we can with what He has given us.**
 - (2) He is with us always...He has not left us to our own devices...He has supplied the precious Holy Spirit...He has justified us by faith...He has secured our salvation...so He is not a hard taskmaster...since He has given us everything we need to be holy as He is holy and to become holy on That Day.**
 - 2. Sooo...have you/we confused holiness with hardness regarding your personal relationship with God?
 - a. **You can know immediately if you have by checking your attitude in your service to the Almighty.**
 - (1) If you see your service as a joyless and heavy burden, it is because for some reason God seems hard to you.**
 - (2) But if God is holy to you, you will see your service as a huge blessing that will return multiple rewards to you now and which will echo in eternity as well.**
 - b. **This kind of thing distinguishes between those who are “called” to a ministry...and those who take up a task...especially in leadership. True leaders are called in any area of life. We find joy and affirmation even during the difficult times when we are called. Those who are called to a task can and probably will burnout...for God is seen as a taskmaster so God’s people are seen as a hinderance after a while.**
 - c. **But those who are called see that even though things get hard that there is purpose in their suffering...for they are called to suffer so that God’s people won’t have to...they understand that this is part of their calling and they stay on the front line knowing that until they are taken that they are the ones God has entrusted and privileged to this position for the good of His people and for His own glory....and all of this is because those who are called know that God is HOLY, HOLY, HOLY...and that is a good thing and they delight in serving Him as the first to servants did in the parable.**
 - d. **God understood that this was the by-product of living a life pursuing holiness...He is holy that we are and would be holy!**
- D. Leviticus 21- 22 Priesthood and general rule concerning holy things and acceptable offerings.
- 1. What is the bottom line that God is saying and expecting of His priests? Why?
 - a. **To be holy at all cost. To be an example of holiness to the people of God. Therefore it was required that they should at a greater distance than others from the things that can and will defile, thus diminishing the honor of the priesthood.**
 - (1) A note of explanation concerning vss. 1 and 10-11...**
 - **Vs. 1 deals almost exclusively with the priests generally...mourning for the dead ...they should not be overly distressed in public for the dead ...except for those closest to them for them they can make themselves unclean.**

- **Vs. 10-11- speaks specifically of the High Priest and how he is to mourn the dead...he is NOT allowed to show the usual signs of mourning, like uncovering his head or rent his clothes, or going into a dead body...or attend a funeral, no matter who's it is...the High Priest to show that he is above the emotion...not in a "better than thou" attitude but as one being held to a higher standard before the people.**

(2) If any of the other priests were polluted there would be others to take up their tasks and calling...but not so the High Priest.

- b. See Luke 10:25-37- So strictly by the letter of the Law did the Priest and the Levite do as they had been commanded? But...still what's the point of the parable?

(1) It really doesn't have anything to do with the priest...but the Good Samaritan. We spend an inordinate amount of time on the priest and the Levite...and they are only an example of us when we find excuses not to help those in need.

(2) The Samaritan is to be our main focus...the letter of the Law tells us to not touch that which is unclean...but combining that with the Spirit of the Law we are to love our neighbor as well...so Jesus tells the lawyer and us which is the best by answering the question "Who is my neighbor."

2. What are some of the things that this communicates for the leadership in the church today?

Lessons from Leviticus
March 25, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What were some of the benefits that we looked at last week when the people actually followed through on God's commands?
 - a. **God does this because He knows how we will waste the time He has given to us...so the benefits ARE the feasts...**
 - b. **So another benefit is that we are called upon to remember what God has done so we can take comfort in the day that God will act towards His own with steadfast love and that His promises for a future are something else we can look forward to by those who fear the Lord.**
 - c. **Life...**
 - (1) **Physical life-Resting and we will live...**
 - (2) **Spiritual life- our life's are guaranteed to be enhanced by following God's commands and by desiring to be with God's people in worship...in the holy convocation the Hebrew says= a gathering for public worship...in these cases it was a national call since this was a theocracy at the time....It was not a suggestion...but a command with clearly defined benefits. See Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15.**
 - (3) **Emotional/Communal- being together with God and His people supports and strengthen our day to day life.**
2. According to what we read last week, who is it specifically that is to take care of the needs of the poor and sojourner? **The people...this responsibility has been given to the people...to the Church and this was never taken away by the way.**
3. Who are the sojourner in the Scriptures?
 - a. **People who while not ethnically Jewish but have given allegiance to Israel and their God...proselytes...people who have given allegiance religiously, philosophically, ceremonially and legally to Israel. They were usually circumcised...**
 - b. **There is a clear distinction for "foreigners" in the Scriptures- foreigners simply living in their midst...who would not had the rights and privileges of the community...like they could not receive the Passover or participate in any of the feast in worship to the Lord.**
 - c. **Closest thing we have to it today would be "naturalized citizen". Ex. 12:19; Deut. 29:10-13...and these people have "almost" equal rights under the covenant...and the differences are only minor...like who can eat the meat of a cow who simply keels over and dies.**

C. Chapter 23 continued:

1. Back to the general overview for a moment.
 - a. We see in one of the section the word affliction being bantered about ...the Day of atonement. What is meant by this word in context? **Affliction= fasting...**
 - (1) **To obey our God**
 - (2) **To separate ourselves from the dependence we have upon food from sun up to sun down...**

(3) A time of sanctification which is a time of provision...for we are closer to our Lord.

b. All of this also informs us how God sees His people in community-

(1) Formed and sustain in celebration.

(2) The different days of celebration like days of Sabbath are days given to bond God's people even closer to one another and to God.

(3) The fasting...as on the Day of Atonement is to hold one another accountable...in a day of mutual suffering which enables them to know that they are not alone in affliction.

2. How important is the creation narrative to many of the feast days? How can you tell?

a. **7 days**

b. **Again, yet another good reason to have a clear position on creation.**

A. Now let's begin to look at specific verses.

1. What would you say is meant by the words "appointed feasts" in verses 1-2? (He says it twice in 2 verses).

a. **These are commanded by God for His people to observe...not a suggestion.**

b. **In the 2nd one, He even goes so far as to say, "...my appointed feasts."...this verifies the importance of it for us and for our ability to honor Him.**

c. **"Holy convocation"- worship days...a holy summons, that always included of reading the written word in later years but now would be for the verbal word given to Moses to give to the people.**

2. Now let's look at verse 3. This one is a creation ordinance...also, one of His top ten...He has talked about its place in the life of the Israelites continuously throughout His word thus far. Why would God start here with such an obvious command?

a. **This is the most basic and most foundational of all God's holy days...it's the Sabbath of the Lord.**

b. **On it you shall do "no work"...sometimes understood to mean "creative-constructive work"...categories of labor people are normally paid for. Wilderness definition was also that the people gathered food the day before enough for the Sabbath as well...so someone would have had to prepare the meal, though some ancient Jewish traditions have the women making the bread the day before and cooking the quail the day before...but overall, it seems that the emphasis to be more on commercial work. No ordinary or necessary work...work but only by necessity...which would never include any type of regular weekly work on the Sabbath.**

c. **A weekly cycle of a Sabbath rest to remind God's people :**

(1) That He is the God of time.

(2) That He is the God who will provide since there is no work to be done on that day...commerce or any other work that is not related to specifically worshipping God.

d. The blessing of the Sabbath:

(1) Gen. 2:3- *"So God blessed the 7th day and made it holy (sanctified it), because on it God rested from all His work that He had done."*

- **Instituting the Sabbath was God's first act after the earth had been made fit for human habitation.**
- **The fact that we are told God "sanctified" it proves conclusively that here we have the original institution of the Sabbath, the divine appointment of it for man's use and observance...as exemplified by the Creator...especially with the giving of the 4th Commandment which ties these 2 together forever.**
- ***"On it (the 7th day) God rested from all His work which He had done in creation."* And this brings out and calls attention to the basic feature and primal element in the Sabbath: it is a resting from the activities commonly pursued during the six working days.**
- **Let us fix it firmly in our minds that rest is not inertia (inactivity, an unchanged state, status quo). The Lord Jesus has entered into His rest, if you will, (like God the Father did but He is also always upholding and sustaining and maintaining and working His plan); yet He is not inactive, for He always lives to make intercession...Him and the Spirit of God are actively doing this even in there rest...so the Sabbath made for man would be effectual. And when the saints shall enter their eternal rest, they shall not be inactive; for it is written, *"And His servants shall worship/ serve Him"* (Rev 22:3)**
- **Genesis 2:3 tells us this day was blessed by God: *"And God blessed the seventh day."* The reason why God blessed the seventh day was not because it was the seventh, but because *"in it He had rested."* Hence, when the Sabbath law was written upon the tables of stone, God did not say, "Remember the seventh day to keep it holy," but, *"Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy."* Ex. 20:8-11**
- **The observance of a Sabbath Day is part of the eternal Law of God. It is not a mere temporary Jewish ordinance. It is not a man-made institution of priesthood. It is not an unauthorized imposition by the Church. It is one of the everlasting rules ...read creation ordinance...that God has revealed for the guidance of all mankind.**

(2) They had been slaves for over 430 years and now through the Sabbath Day, God, is giving them rest making it mandatory for them to take off 4 1/3rd weeks just of Sabbath Days. A time of rest totally devoted to God... "the Sabbath is for man."

(3) But, this day was not simply set aside for rest...something that God understood that all of us need ...but also a day set aside specifically for us to give back to God...1 in 7 that we are tithing back to God. Every day is His as we know and will see with the feast days...but fundamentally all He commands from us basically is one day in 7...to worship Him and to rest from our normal tasks.

- e. Why does God give us the Sabbath commandment?
- (1) He give us a weekly cycle: Renew, Refresh, Reflect and Refocus.**
 - (2) It tells us that God wants desires and expects to be worshiped.**
 - (3) It communicates clearly how important our keeping the Sabbath/Lord's Day is to God.**
 - (4) Each of the commandments tell us something of God's nature, something that He holds dear.**
 - (5) He rested on the 7th day so the principle of rest is not only verified but commanded in Eden...He rested from His work of creation not from everything else that needs to be done...though...in a way it has all been concluded in God's economy...**
 - (6) He set aside a day for rest and gave it to us as a gift...the Sabbath was made for man...not man for the Sabbath.**
 - (7) God delights in what He made and He expects that we will delight unimpeded in the One who made us.**

Lessons from Leviticus
April 1, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. The Bible talks a lot about “sojourners” even equating true believers to them. How are we like them?
 - a. **We have been made “naturalized citizens” of the countries we are a part of...**
 - b. **BUT...we are no longer blood related...for we have been cleansed by the Blood of Christ as our entrance into the heavenly kingdom.**
2. Why does God give us the Sabbath commandment?
 - a. **He gave them rest from slavery.**
 - b. **He gives us a weekly cycle: Renew, Refresh, Reflect and Refocus.**
 - a. **It tells us that God wants desires and expects to be worshiped.**
 - b. **It communicates clearly how important our keeping the Sabbath/Lord’s Day is to God.**
 - c. **Each of the commandments tell us something of God’s nature, something that He holds dear. –**
 - (1) **He will be worshiped!**
 - (2) **He is the One to be worshiped above all!**
 - (3) **He is the Only One to be worshiped!**
 - d. **He rested on the 7th day so the principle of rest is not only verified but commanded in Eden...He rested from His work of creation... not from everything else that needs to be done...**
 - e. **He set aside a day for rest and gave it to us as a gift...the Sabbath was made for man...not man for the Sabbath.**
 - f. **God delights in what He made and He expects that we will delight unimpeded in the One who made us.**

C. Leviticus 23 continued: With all of this in mind:

1. Why should we go to church today on Sunday? What do we miss if we don’t go? Is it a requirement of all believers?
 - a. **We have the creation ordinance and command of God as our guide to its importance... Ex. 20:8-10, 31:14, 35:2; Num. 15:32-36;**
 - b. **We have the practice of the disciples after Christ’s resurrection and ascension-**
 - (1) **Matthew 5:17-19-**
 - What does this have to do with the Lord’s Day?
 - **It clearly states that the law has not been done away with especially those of creation and the moral law ...which worship and rest fall into both categories. Jesus came to “fulfill the Law”...or “to fill out the law”...to complete the Law...to develop it to its full reach and development...**
 - (2) **Matthew 12:8- “lord of the Sabbath”...what does this tell us?**
 - **He created it and He can and will use it to His advantage.**

- **When he died on Good Friday...interestingly, He “rested” on the Jewish Sabbath...as His Father had done...but rose again on the 1st day of the week full of life and completion of God’s plan making the 1st day of the week now the day of worship for the Christian.**
 - **After God incarnate had declared His work on our behalf “finished,” He honored the Sabbath once more...for the whole day, just as He had at the beginning of creation. In the tomb, God rested. G. K. Chesterton writes in “The Everlasting Man” that this Sabbath Jesus spent in the earth was the last Sabbath of the old creation, which was marred by Adam’s sin.**
- (3) Acts 2:42-47- give the common practice of how they began their day...devoting it to the Lord.**
- (4) Acts 20:1-7-**
- **Speaks of the “common” practice among Jesus’ disciples to meet for worship on the 1st day of the week for worship and rest ...not Saturday.**
 - **Also, speaks of a few of the purposes -...meeting together to receive the Word and the sacraments...”breaking of bread”. It also appears that celebrating the Lord’s Supper every Lord’s Day was the common practice of the Church then.**
 - **Paul also seems to be showing us that He was unwilling to continue his journey until they had met on the Lord’s Day and broke bread together... the Lord’s Day seemed to take precedent over even ministry.**
- (5) I Cor. 16:1-2- practice on the Lord’s Day of collecting offerings for the poor and needy....when everyone was assembled together for worship.**
- (6) Hebrews 10: 23-25- designates the day’s importance ...the Sabbath’s/Lord’s Day importance for the believer. Describe its importance according to these words!**
- **It is future focused...on The Day of Christ’s return**
 - **Though they had worship in small groups and individually...it was not enough. God never meant for “one thing” to be enough...for His people of the OT He provided not only the Sabbath but many Sabbath “like” celebrations/ Feast Days that they might worship Him together as well.**
 - **We/they MUST come together for the Day is near.**
- (7) Revelation 1:10...makes it clear again that this was the practice of the Church...as the Church’s Apostle and their pastor this was when He came together to teach the church...though at this point he has been exiled from his church.**
- (8) This practice firmly established has been with the Church ever since and it is to be maintained in love and obedience by His people until He returns.**

2. WCF 21-

- a. VII. As it is the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment binding all men in all ages, He has particularly appointed one day in seven, for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him:[34] which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week: and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week,[35] which, in Scripture, is called the Lord's Day,[36] and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath.[37]
- b. VIII. This Sabbath is to be kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations,[38] but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy

- 3. A.W. Pink makes an interesting point in his work entitled The Holy Sabbath:
"Before we proceed further, let it be said that Genesis 2 contains nothing whatever that enables us to determine which day of our week this primal '7th day' was. We have absolutely no means of knowing whether that original 7th day fell on a Saturday, a Sunday, or any other day of the week, for the simple reason that we are quite unable to ascertain on which day that first week began. All we do know....and it is all that is necessary for us to know...is that the 7th day was the day that followed 6 days of God's manual work." And he goes on, "Before a single page of human history is chronicled, before a single act of Adam is described, the Holy Spirit places before us the institution of the Sabbath? Does this not then signify, plainly, that the observance of the Sabbath...the sanctifying of a 7th day...is a primary duty! Moreover, are we not thereby plainly warned that failure to keep the Sabbath Day/ Lord's Day...to imitate our Father...is a sin of the first magnitude!"
- 4. William Swan Plumer in The Law of God states, *"When, for his sins, man was driven out of Paradise/Eden, God permitted him to carry with him two institutions, established for his good before the fall. Which of these institutions is the greatest mercy to our world, or which is dearest to the heart of a good man, I will not undertake to say. One of them is marriage, the other the Sabbath day."* I would add to that, one other institution created and gifted to man before the Fall...work/vocation!
- 5. Sooo...how are the Sabbath and the Lord's Day similar from the Bible's perspective?
 - a. **One day in 7 to give back to God...for worship and rest.**
 - b. **They are meant to grow us and strengthen us as we pursue holiness.**
 - c. **They are meant to prepare us for the week ahead so that we might continue in the same frame of mind as we had on the 1st day of the week so that each day we can "rest" in the Lord.**

6. How are they different? In other words, what was accomplished by Jesus' death and resurrection?
 - a. **Jesus' death and resurrection took away the penalty for sin...He was the propitiation....so with His death the consequence of "death or being cut off" was lifted since He paid all the penalties for all our sins for all time.**
 - b. **But His death and resurrection did NOT do away with the requirement of worship on the now 1st day of the week.**

7. One more thing: There exist within the Reformed tradition 2 views of how the Sabbath/Lord's day may be observed.
 - a. **The Continental View- the Sabbath should at all cost be kept by every believer, but there is no prohibition in Scripture against recreation. Recreation being how we rest, relax and fellowship on the Sabbath.**
 - b. **The Puritan View- (which won out at Westminster)- the Sabbath day was to be taken up in worship, in the study of the things of God, and in doing errands of mercy...ONLY! No recreation of any kind.**
 - (1) **Their support for this is Isaiah 58:13 giving more definition to Ex. 20:8-10. They chose to interpret the word "pleasure" in this text to mean that all things outside of the approved things on the Sabbath were prohibited. There are a few things at play here that make this interpretation problematic:**
 - **First, if this interpretation is true then it would be an addition to Sabbath restrictions that had not previously been known to the people. God could do this if he chose to but that is not how He normally worked through the prophets.**
 - **The prophets served very much like the Reformers not calling the people to something new so much as calling them back to what God had already prescribed in His covenant.**
 - **The Hebrew term "pleasure" here has to be seen within the context of Israel first and then brought into today. The Israelites knew the law, they chose to ignore it in some cases...not a matter of ignorance so much as a willful act...in other cases they violated it commercially. They didn't want to lose profits by closing down businesses on the Sabbath...they didn't want to give their fields rest on the Sabbaths established because that would take away from "their" fortunes...their "pleasures".**
 - **You see the "pleasures" that Isaiah spoke about here was doing business on the Sabbath and the feasts so they wouldn't see a downturn in profits. They were doing as they pleased as far as making money of the Sabbath and this displeased God. So this text has nothing to do with recreation but with doing business on the Sabbath at the expense of their faith.**
 - c. **The original intent was "rest" so it is hard to see that this wouldn't include recreations and fellowship with family and friend as we rest in the Lord's gift away from regular worldly affairs usually considered as regular daily labor...**

8. So one more thing: What does Jesus mean when He says, *“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath?”* (See Mark 2:23-28 for immediate context)
- a. ***“The Sabbath was made for the profit and for the comfort of our souls.”- Jonathan Edwards***
 - b. **We short change ourselves when we don’t see the Christian Sabbath/ Lord’s Day as a gift from the Lord...in the same way He gifted us with the sacraments...for our benefit and His glory.**
 - c. **It very name... “The Lord’s Day” (Rev. 1:10)...should cause us to understand the special relationship it has to Christ and its design for us, His people.**
 - d. **Communicates to the world that the One and Only and True God cares for His people and when His people keep the Lord’s Day it shows the world their belief in there God is true....it upholds the visibility of Christianity in the world.**
 - e. **God has and is bestowing a blessing on all of His who keep the Christian Sabbath/ Lord’s Day correctly.**
 - f. **When we rest on the Sabbath, we do so not in the old creation, but in the new—not in the world marred by Adam, but in the world being renewed in Christ. We trust not in politics or princes or earthly decrees, but in Him who became, Himself, our Sabbath rest.**
9. Israel has many other holidays that will come along throughout time...some of which God simply allows like Purim and Chanukah to keep remembering, thankful and praising Him for His provision. What we have here is an additional 3 weeks of mandatory “days off” throughout the year...bringing this total to 7 ½ weeks. Before us are what are called the 7 main Jewish holidays:
- a. Passover
 - b. Unleavened Bread
 - c. First Fruits
 - d. Pentecost
 - e. Trumpets/ Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year
 - f. Day of Atonement
 - g. Feast of Booths/Tabernacles
 - h. The first 3 occur in the months we would call March and April...Pentecost marks the summer harvest and occurs late May or early June...and the last 3 occur in September and October...

Lessons from Leviticus
April 8, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What, if anything, did you learn about the Sabbath/Lord's Day connection that you didn't know before?
2. What would you say is the difference between the Puritan and Continental views of the Lord's Day...the Christian Sabbath?

C. Leviticus 23 continued:

10. Israel has many other holidays that will come along throughout time...some of which God simply allows like Purim and Chanukah to keep them remembering, thankful and praising Him for His provision. What we have here is an additional 3 weeks of mandatory "days off" throughout the year...bringing this total to 7 ½ weeks. Before us are what are called the 7 main Jewish holidays:

- i. Passover
- j. Unleavened Bread
- k. First Fruits
- l. Pentecost
- m. Trumpets/ Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year
- n. Day of Atonement
- o. Feast of Booths/Tabernacles
- p. The first 3 occur in the months we would call March and April...Pentecost marks the summer harvest and occurs late May or early June...and the last 3 occur in September and October...

11. Leviticus 23:4-8- The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

- a. Passover is for one day...sundown of the day prior till sun down of the day of Passover.
- b. The Feast of unleavened bread is held for the next 7 days.
- c. The festivals were communal and commemorative in nature.
 - (1) Communal in that the nation was drawn together to worship God as He prescribed together. For the nation was the covenant community of God.
 - (2) They were commemorative in that they kept alive the story of God's past deliverance and the wilderness wanderings.
 - (3) On the other hand the festivals became meaningless rituals by the time of the Exile.
- d. Look to Exodus 12:1-27
 - (1) What are we told about the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread?
 - **Abib or Nisan begins the Jewish festival or ecclesiastical year (Church calendar as we might say today) but is the 7th month of the month of the civil year.**
 - **A new religious calendar is established for the Hebrews because of the Exodus.**
 - **Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread start on the 14th day of this 1st ecclesiastical month and the Feast of unleavened Bread last for 7 days after that.**

- **The first day...Passover and the last day of The Feast were to be treated as if they were a regular Sabbath Days...where no regular work could be performed.**
- **These holy days were to remind the people of what God did to bring them out of Egypt...to deliver them. Hence a Feast of Deliverance.**
- **In this Exodus 12 passage provision was made for food preparation on the Sabbath. ..which seemingly was not a freedom after they were in the wilderness. Ex. 16: 23-26**
- **More information is seen in many places like the very next chapter which talks about the Feast of Unleavened Bread Ex. 13:3-16.**

(2) What does the text tell us about who all were to be involved in this celebration.

- **This is a whole family celebration...that is everyone who can eat regular food is to participate.**
- **Even the smallest of children were expected to participate...that is if they were weaned. Even to the point of asking the question as to why we do this?**
- **Interesting fact: the child did not have to have any prior knowledge or understanding of this event...but they are still expected to participate even if they needed to be prompted into asking the question by the father.**
- **Understanding and knowledge were not required because one of the purposes of the Passover and the Feast was to educate the people reminding them of His goodness in providing for them in their Exodus from Egypt. Little ones were to grow up always knowing the story so they would teach their children and their children after them of what God did.**

e. Look at Deut. 16:1-8

(1) What additional information or changes do we find here as the children of Israel prepare to enter the Promised Land?

- **The offering will now be made at “the Place” that the LORD will choose...no longer in families. The place is “code” for His sanctuary...the tabernacle...and later the Temple. Not in any towns or in homes but only at the place where God chooses to give for that purpose...the place where He chooses to associate His name.**
- **This is one reason why we are to only hold the sacraments within an assemblage of God’s people...where God has placed His name.**

(2) What is the same emphasis however seen in both of these texts?

- **Worship the LORD as He prescribes.**
- **Remember and teach the subsequent generations of the marvelous works of the LORD for His people.**
- **Passover is a day of remembrance...the Feast of Unleavened Bread is for the purpose of cleansing God’s people of corruption. In most cases, yeast was seen as being equivalent to being unclean and hypocritical as Jesus said of the teaching of the Pharisees in Matt. 16:6-12.**

- **Other places Jesus simply uses the word to talk about the growth of the kingdom...it is unobservable.**
 - **Unleavened Bread, eaten over a period of time, symbolized a holy walk with the Lord. Christians are to live a life of purity.**
- f. Is there anything new or different in our text this morning...Lev. 23:4-8?
- (1) Since it is possible for these beginning and ending days to fall on non-Sabbath Days...the work prohibition seems to be loosened up a bit... “no ordinary work”= “no heavy work”...or hard labor on these days...unless by necessity...but other things could be done as well...like preparing food for consumption.**
 - (2) A food offering to the Lord...what was that? For the priests.**
- g. Where or how is this Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread fulfilled in and by Christ?
- (1) In the B'rit Hadashah (Hebrew words given to the New Testament= New Covenant) we see Jesus calling Himself the Passover Lamb- Matthew 26:27; John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; Hebrews 10.**
 - (2) As the blood of the Passover lamb protected Israel from the plague on the firstborn...so Christ's sacrifice as our Passover Lamb...the lamb that was slain...saves His people from the wrath of God.**
 - (3) Israel removed all yeast from their homes during the feast of Unleavened Bread...Christians should avoid contamination by expelling immoral members from the congregation...and Christians should be individually repenting of even the hints of sin.**
 - (4) Today Christians (who house the Spirit of God) are marked with the blood of Christ delivered from sin.**
 - (5) Jesus calls Himself the “Bread of Life”...unleavened bread spiritually. And, of course, he was born in Bethlehem which means “the House of Bread”.**
 - (6) In the matzah bread that is served in the Passover meal there are often ridges...like stripes...to symbolize that hardships of Egypt but also as a symbol of the Messiah' work on our behalf...that “by His stripes we are healed.” Also...in the ceremony itself...there matzah bread is broken ...and a piece is hidden under a cloth throughout the ceremony and then it is resurrected at the end...Jesus was actually buried at the beginning of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread which began at sundown of the Passover after He was taken down from the Cross on Good Friday... he was wrapped in a cloth and “hidden”...where He rested on the Sabbath Day...and then on the 3rd morning He rises to Life ...just as he said He would.**
 - (7) By Receiving the Lord's Supper...we acknowledge Jesus' work on our behalf on the Cross...but unlike the Passover the Lord's Supper also causes us to reflect on the present as we seek to be holy and pure before Him and it looks to the future as we continue doing this until He returns...as a means of grace.**
 - **In passing the bread to the disciples and telling them that this is His body He is presenting Himself as the Passover lamb to be eaten.**
 - **In passing the wine He expressed to His disciples the blood of the Passover Lamb shed to deliver God's elect.**
 - **Rev. 5:12... “the Lamb that was slain...”**

- **John's Gospel also points out that none of Jesus' bones were broken in His crucifixion ...and this is perhaps an allusion to the requirement that none of the Passover lamb's bones were to be broken... Ex. 12:46.**

h. WCF Chapter 27- V.

(1) *The sacraments of the Old Testament in regard to the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited were, for substance, the same as those of the new. How so?*

- **They point to Christ.**
- **They reveal gifts that God had given to His Church as ways to worship Him.**
- **They cause us to remember what God has done...the sacraments of the NT cause us to also reflect on today and tomorrow more than the OT.**

(2) See I Cor. 10:1-4.

i.

Lessons from Leviticus
April 15, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What was something new did you learned about the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread?
2. The WCF Chapter 27- v. says, "*The sacraments of the Old Testament in regard to the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited were, for substance, the same as those of the new.*" Thinking about the Passover and the Lord's Supper, specifically, how is this so?
 - a. **They point to Christ.**
 - b. **They reveal gifts that God had given to His Church as ways to worship Him.**
 - c. **They cause us to remember what God has done...the sacraments of the NT cause us to also reflect on today and tomorrow more than the OT.**

C. Leviticus 23 continued...the Appointed Feasts of God for His people. Vs. 9-14

1. Feast of First Fruits (Yom Habikkurim= Day of First fruits roughly translated from the Hebrew...this would be the first harvest of the year in the Spring- Mar.- Apr.)
 - a. This feast is held on the first day of the week...our Sunday...following the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread if it worked out that way. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was for 7 days...within that time often the 1st Day of the week would fall in the middle of the Feast itself.
 - b. After hearing these verses...what would you surmise would be some of the purposes for this feast?
 - (1) **To give thanks to God for giving them this land and such a fine harvest...that they had not sown ...and then every harvest after this which they have sown with their hands.**
 - (2) **They were to bring the "first fruits" of their crops to the priest to be waved before the Lord as a wave offering.**
 - c. What do you suppose would be the New Testament equivalent?
 - (1) **Easter- Jesus raised on the First Day of the week which fell 3 days after His sacrificial death...so He is known as the first born or first-fruit.**
 - (2) **And the Church then is also considered the "first fruit"....as we were resurrected when Christ resurrected still looking forward to that complete fulfilment.**
 - (3) **See I Cor. 15:23**
 - (4) **See Matthew 27:53- Is this possibly Jesus gratefully showing us the truth of the resurrection we will experience as well...by resurrecting these people .**
2. Pentecost (Shavu'ot) Feast of the Summer Harvest- vss. 15-22-(2nd harvest of the year- May-June)
 - a. Pentecost occurs on a Sunday (1st day of the week) exactly 50 days after the Day of First Fruits.

- b. All of this detail...anything stand out as different from others things that we have read concerning these feasts?

(1) Vs. 17- 2 loaves brought out from their homes as wave offerings that are baked with LEAVEN...and they are called first fruits. What is going on with this?

- **This would be bread baked from this harvest...this 2nd harvest, but...**
- **Since these loaves were baked with leaven they would have represented sinful man but since they are first fruit they are sinful man that has been redeemed or resurrected.**
- **It seems that God was painting a picture of His Church...redeemed sinners.**
- **Extra information: some Jewish scholars believe that the 2 loaves were originally meant to remind the people of God having given the Commandments on 2 tablets. Then this “first fruit” wave offering would be symbolic of God having given them the building blocks for thanksgiving on tablets made of stone...plain stone which God made holy by writing on them.**

(2) Vs. 22- the poor and the sojourner/ foreigner were to be taken care of with the abundance of the harvest...the extra...was the abundance of God's provision.

- **I know it says sojourner, but the Hebrew could easily read the foreigner that sojourns in your midst...or it could be speaking of the sojourner that we have talked about before giving them a benefit... a social benefit... if they are poor as well.**
- **Interesting, that Jesus and His men ate from gleaning the fields... on a Sabbath no less.**

- c. What connection might we make with Pentecost in Jesus' time?

(1) Pentecost was 50 days after Christ's resurrection was when Christ sent the Holy Spirit.

(2) Jesus after His resurrected rejoined His disciples and taught them for 40plus days and then commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit would come. Acts 1:3, 2:1

(3) The Holy Spirit came on that day...Peter preached on the OT Pentecost , quoting from Joel and the psalms and the Spirit illumined the minds of Christ's followers and gathered a harvest of over 3000 people...redeemed sinners.

(4) Interested not so fun fact...this is the same number plus or minus that had been killed on the day the Law came down from Sinai by the Levites on behalf of Moses' request.

(5) Jesus was crucified on Passover, buried at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, raised on the Day of the First fruit wave offering and then sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost to a great harvest... Coincidence???

3. The Feast of Trumpets- (Yom Teru'ah= Day of Trumpets.)- vss. 23-25

- a. This is also considered to be Rosh Hashanah...the Jewish New Year around September 19th-21st= 1st day of Tishri. Some Jewish scholars say this is the Day that God created the World... others say that this is the day that God gave the Law....1st day of the Jewish New Year.

- b. The use of the Shofar...the ram's horn was also used to call the people to Sabbath...Friday afternoon at Sundown. The High priest blew the trumpet to remind the faithful to stop harvesting so they could prepare for worship.
 - c. Can you see or think of any connection for us today?
 - (1) I Cor. 15:51-52**
 - (2) I Thess. 4:16-17**
 - (3) Trumpets of the Book of Revelation**
 - (4) Messianic Jews say this day has not occurred yet ...not until in their view that the trumpet for the Rapture is blown...others speaks of the trumpets on the Last day that calls down God's judgments.**
4. Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)- vss. 26-32
- a. 10th day of Tishri- September 29-30 of our calendar on some years. (This year... 2018...Rosh Hashanah is Sept. 10 and Yom Kippur is the 19th.)
 - b. A day..24 hours... from evening to evening...of fasting and confession for the Jew even up to today. They were to stay awake the whole time for the covenant relationship depended upon it. If they broke the fast or the confession within that 24 hour period they would be cast out never to be identified with the children of Israel again at the least.
 - c. This is the day that the High priest would enter the Holy of Holies making a sacrifice on his own behalf and then a sacrifice on behalf of the people.
 - d. This is still thought of as the highest of all Holy days.
 - e. Does this festival have any connection to the Church?
 - (1) On one hand, NO- Christ was our substitutionary atonement...paying the sins of all His children. Because of Christ's work on our behalf we owe no atonement...no sacrifice any longer.**
 - (2) But, on the other hand, perhaps...if we wanted to try and fit something in...when Christ come's again our salvation will be made complete...on that Day Atonement will be fulfilled. Look at Zech. 12:10, 13:1...also maybe Rom. 11:26 speaking of all Israel...the whole Church...the children of the promise.**
5. Feast of Booths/tabernacles- (Sukkot)- vss. 33-36,39-43
- a. This was a remembrance of God providing for His people in the wilderness wanderings period.
 - b. The Israelites would live in huts ...to remember during the 7 days of the festival.
 - c. The sojourners were exempt from having to stay in the huts since they were not part of the wilderness wanderers and they may have been used as guests...for in all festivals it was customary to invite guests of non-Jewish origins...to share God's abundance. But these guests must be clean.
 - d. Feast of Ingathering...the 3rd harvest of the year...the largest was accomplished just before this begun. This probably represented the ingathering of the quail and manna as well during the wandering period.
 - e. A 7 day feast...We don't celebrate like this at all. Waving branches during this celebration with fruit abundant...once again thanking God for His provision of the harvest.
 - f. In John 7 and 8 we see Jesus keeping this feast...It is His very presence with us, through His Holy Spirit in which He quenches our great thirst and he provide light in the darkness wanderings of this life.

6. Israel has many other holidays that will come along throughout time...some of which God simply allows like Purim and Chanukah to keep them remembering, thankful and praising Him for His provision. What we have here is an additional 3 weeks of mandatory “days off” throughout the year...bringing this total to 7 ½ weeks. Before us are what are called the 7 main Jewish holidays:
- q. Passover
 - r. Unleavened Bread
 - s. First Fruits
 - t. Pentecost
 - u. Trumpets/ Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year
 - v. Day of Atonement
 - w. Feast of Booths/Tabernacles
 - x. The first 3 occur in the months we would call March and April...Pentecost marks the summer harvest and occurs late May or early June...and the last 3 occur in September and October...
7. Concerning the Sabbath:
- a. Is a sabbath day (a day of solemn rest) still commanded today? Why and How?
 - b. How might the Lord’s Day fit into this sabbath requirement?
 - c. Since this is no longer any penalty for not going to Church on the Christian Sabbath/ Lord’s Day...what is the motivator for us to go?

Lessons from Leviticus
April 22, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Concerning the Sabbath:

- a. Is a sabbath day (a day of solemn rest) still commanded today? If so, how would you support your position?
- b. How does the Lord's Day fit into this sabbath requirement?
- c. Since there is no longer any penalty for not going to Church on the Christian Sabbath/ Lord's Day...what is the motivator for us to go?

2. Next we looked at the 7 "appointed feasts" by God for Israel. What we have here is an additional 3 weeks of mandatory "days off" throughout the year...bringing this total to 7 ½ weeks. Before us are what are called the 7 main Jewish holidays:

- a. Passover- 1 day
- b. Unleavened Bread- 7 days—
- c. First Fruits- 1 day
- d. Pentecost- 1day
- e. Trumpets/ Rosh Hashanah – Jewish New Year- 1 day
- f. Day of Atonement- 1 day
- g. Feast of Booths/Tabernacles- 8 days
- h. The first 3 occur in the months we would call March and April...Pentecost marks the summer harvest and occurs late May or early June...and the last 3 occur in September and October...

(1) What do they have to teach us who are not Jewish in ethnicity?

- **God delivers His people by His methods.**
- **God provided for His people throughout time.**
- **God expects His people to rest and to worship Him.**
- **God expects that we will take advantage of this time do be obedient to His commands.**

(2) What are some of the ways that these relate to us today?

- **Jesus MADE atonement for us...we could not...at the Cross...but our ultimate Day of Atonement will be at His return.**
- **Jesus was crucified on Passover, buried at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, raised on the Day of the First fruit wave offering and then sent the Holy Spirit on Pentecost to a great harvest of believers...**

(3) All of these are now summed up in the Lord's Supper and Baptism. So, is God still communicating the same message to His people today? How?

C. Leviticus 24

1. Let's look at 24:1-9.

- a. Again, what is/are the significance that this chapter once again begins with the words, *"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, command the people (sons) of Israel to..."*(vs. 1-2)?

(1) **These are not Moses' words.** Why is this fact even important?

- **Because men tend to idolize people and things.**

- **If we can say they are Moses' words then they don't apply to us thousands of years later.**
 - (2) These words haven't been invented by the priests.**
 - (3) They are God's Words to Moses to His people...and everything that is to be done is the result of God's direct command to His people.**
 - (4) Today we who have been saved by faith are to respond in obedience to every word that comes from the mouth of God.**
 - (5) The Bible is to be our final rule for faith and practice...the authority that teaches us what to believe and how to live before the face of God.**
- b. Why such concern about 2 simple items like oil and bread that was to be supplied by the people given the nature of the extraordinary commands that have been given so far from chapters 1-23?
- (1) These simple or common duties might be neglected if not pointed out by God.**
 - (2) Those who are faithful in the small matters will be given more...keeping God's word no matter how mundane or "flashy".**
 - (3) We must not avoid the regular and possibly mundane duties that God has given to us...**
 - **Going to church...worshiping the LORD.**
 - **Meeting with God's people.**
 - **Giving tithes of offerings.**
 - **Participating in the sacraments whenever administered.**
 - **Raising up a family who loves the LORD.**
 - **Being content right where God has placed us...in the home...in the work place...in retirement.**
 - **Working with such integrity that God is praised even by non-believers...He really lives out his faith ...is a praise to God for the gift of faith...whether they realize it or not.**
- c. Not only are the people commanded to bring in the oil and bread but they are commanded to make sure the fire continues to burn and the bread continually supplied as a food offering and a memorial. What is the take away for us?
- (1) God is very practical...**
 - **The lights need to be kept lit so the priest could do his duties correctly before the LORD.**
 - **They needed to eat...to live and perform their duties.**
 - (2) This light, symbolically then, shows the way into the presence of God.**
 - (3) Luke 2:32- Jesus is that Light. John 1:4-9, 8:12...Jesus Himself is the only way of access into God the Father's presence.**
 - (4) Matt. 5:14-16- reminds us that as we are in Christ , now we are also the light of the world to be used by God to illumine those in darkness that our Father might be glorified.**
 - (5) Giving of the bread reminded the people of their communion with God as they took care of the priest's needs who in turn received those offerings in the holy place and eating them there and then standing before God on behalf of the people.**

- (6) **This bread in the tent of meeting was there to also remind the people of God's on-going provision for them....providing for their daily bread.**
- (7) **Also to remind them of their need to tithe from God's provision for them.**
- (8) **John 6- The feeding of the 5000 with 12 baskets left over...**
 - **Jesus also tells us in vs. 35 and 51...that He is the bread of life. If we want to know the providence and provision of God...if we want to know communion with God we must "know" Him.**
 - **The communion table is the direct type of this show bread table found in Lev. 24.**
- (9) **Candle in the window...we will leave the light on for you...are phrases that represent to us a way to find our way home...**
- (10) **A set table when the guest comes into your house communicates to them that you have been anticipating...looking forward...to sharing a meal with them.**
- (11) **Go to Psalm 23:5-6. What do we see here for our great comfort and hope?**
 - **It is God who has set the table for us in the presence of His enemies...God provision was always with them.**
 - **As we enter we are anointed and prepared for this provision...**
 - **So much provision that it overflows**
 - **Certainly goodness and mercy follows us all the days of our life...remember this promise of the LORD's provision is made in the presence of His enemies....So there will be jealousy and there will be excitement concerning the Lord's provision and God will either be more rejected or glorified ...probably both.**
 - **And we will dwell in His house...with Him forever!**

2. Lev. 24:10-23

- a. All of Leviticus is meant to highlight the holiness of God...His transcendence and how He desires His people to be transcendent of the cultures around them by walking in His way. So, thinking back; what are some of the ways that God has revealed His holiness and His expectation of holiness from His people?
 - (1) **Through the strict commands regarding the sacrifices and offerings.**
 - (2) **Through strict commands concerning even the appointed festivals...times of rest and celebration and worship.**
 - (3) **Through the strict commands of how the priest are to perform their priestly duties...assuring the people of God that they have been accepted in fellowship and communion with God.**
- b. What is the point(s) of the story recounted to Moses in vss. 10-12?
 - (1) **God and His holiness which can be defined by His Name- Yahweh- is not to be taken for granted at any time. Blasphemer means that he openly and mockingly broke the 3rd Commandment....and the cursing was not becoming of an Israelite devoted to the LORD.**

- (2) In the midst of all of God telling the people and the priests that He will be treated as holy comes this story of a ½ Egyptian and ½ Danite blaspheming the name of the LORD and cursing...things that take away from God's holiness and the holiness of His people.
 - (3) Even though this sin had been going on in the midst of the camp of Israel...God was still showing His mercy towards His people by continuing to give His law of holiness to His people.
 - (4) Even though this man is a half -blood which seems to designate that neither of his parents would have taught him about the LORD...since Egyptians were pagans for the most part and Danites will have trouble with idolatry there was no mob justice incurred here.
 - (5) The people had begun to understand that God is the supreme judge and that they must come to Him...the HOLY One...who alone can meter out truth justice at this time. They set the blasphemer aside to await God's judgment... *"till the will of the LORD should be clear to them."*
 - (6) While He will judge the blasphemer and curser He will not judge the whole of the peoples.
- c. What is the point of such a harsh punishment in verses 13-16?
- (1) The LORD gave the directive that the people were waiting for obediently.
 - (2) Vs. 14 is interesting... *"Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him."*
 - He had to be separated from the congregation physically...the sentence would not be in the midst of God's holy people.
 - Now, where have you heard the next statement before? Just before the bull or the ram or birds were sacrificed. What was the reason to place your hand on the head of your sacrifice just before cutting its throat? To transfer their sins to the object to be sacrificed. What do these people have to be sinful about? They were ridding themselves symbolically of the guilt they had by just hearing the man take the Name of the LORD in vain. When the sin is a public one that sin hangs on all corporately until that sinful behavior is dealt with.
 - And in this case, the total judgment was the death penalty...for taking the LORD's name in vain and cursing was tantamount to a capital offense. How is it that God could demand such a penalty simply for misusing His name? He is God soooo...He and His name is transcendent... Blaspheming the Name is equal to heaping scorn and derision on the God who made you...and in the case of Israel on the God who had delivered you... therefore, according to God it deserved the death penalty.
 - One last thing...everyone sojourner and native is subject to this judgment.
 - (3) Vs. 15-16- makes it clear that anyone who does this sin bears the responsibility and accountability for it on themselves.
 - (4) 4 times the death penalty is stated in one way or another for emphasis here...

(5) The whole congregation must stone him! Since this is a sin that will affect the whole.

d. Why the extra but not new information about capital punishment in vss. 17-22?

(1) The people are wondering what they should do ...they sought the LORD...but God reiterates that He has given them the power to take put someone to death if that person commits murder. Gen. 9.

(2) He reiterates His law that He had previously given to them because, obviously, it wasn't being taught correctly or people weren't being held to account for their sins. But one might say...this was only one case...but it is a representative case of other cases.

(3) Vs. 17 and 18 stand to tell us the God and by extension, we, should value human life as more precious than animal life (see also vs. 21)...but even so if we kill someone's animal we must make restitution.... "...make it good"... as in the case of killing one of his livestock.

(4) This text speaks of the famous Lex Talionis- the Law of Talionis: or an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

- **Which meant that the punishment should be proportionate to the crime.**
- **This was not to incite vengeance, but rather to check vengeance.**

(5) These rules apply to all people who claim the name of God...sojourner and native born. Equal justice for all under the law.

e. What does vs. 23 tell us?

(1) Without hesitation they did as God had commanded.

(2) They were obedient to God in even this...no second guessing.

3. Just for thought:

a. What was Jesus accused of by the elders of Israel which landed Him before the high priest and ultimately got Him the death penalty?

(1) Blasphemy.

(2) Yet the real irony is that the ones who were declaring Him to be a blasphemer were in fact the true blasphemers.

(3) Jesus died. Why? Because blasphemy deserved death... and He was dying for all of us blasphemers. Because whatever command we break, we revile the name of the Lord.

b. How do we see God's holiness in this?

Lessons from Leviticus
April 29, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Just a quick glance back to all the Sabbaths and feasts. What do they have to teach us who are not Jewish in ethnicity?
 - a. **A remembrance of the works of God...for our continuing edification.**
 - b. **Point to Christ.**
 - c. **God delivers His people by His methods. Form and function are prescribed and they are for communal obedience.**
 - d. **Physically teaching us elements of our worship...like tithing...and open devotion to our God...and to structure our daily lives around worship of God...so that nothing else takes a preeminent place in our lives. So much time away from work and pleasures that might distract us is not good for us as people...we are to maintain a balance to be sure but one the lends itself in God's favor...**
2. In verses 1-9 we see oil and bread highlighted. What are their significance for us today?
 - a. **We must not avoid the regular and possibly mundane duties that God has given to us...**
 - (1) **Going to church...worshiping the LORD.**
 - (2) **Meeting with God's people....even outside of church.**
 - (3) **Giving tithes of offerings.**
 - (4) **Participating in the sacraments whenever administered.**
 - (5) **Raising up a family who loves the LORD.**
 - (6) **Being content right where God has placed us...in the home...in the work place...in retirement.**
 - (7) **Working with such integrity that God is praised even by non-believers...He really lives out his faith ..is a praise to God for the gift of faith...whether they realize it or not.**
 - b. **Keeping our own lights lit for the Lord and being people who provide bread...the bread of Life= God's word... and bread to those in need. Word and deed ministry...is not either or but both/and.**
 - c. **God delivers His people by His methods. Form and function are prescribed and they are for communal obedience.**

C. Chapter 24 Continued:

4. Lev. 24:10-16

- f. All of Leviticus is meant to highlight the holiness of God...His transcendence and how He desires His people to be transcendent of the cultures around them by walking in His way. So, thinking back; what are some of the ways that God has revealed His holiness and His expectation of holiness from His people?
 - (4) **Through His righteousness seen in His providence.**
 - (5) **Through His continuity and word and deed.**
 - (6) **Through the strict commands regarding the sacrifices and offerings.**
 - (7) **Through strict commands concerning even the appointed festivals...times of rest and celebration and worship.**

- (8) Through the strict commands of how the priest are to perform their priestly duties...assuring the people of God that they have been accepted in fellowship and communion with God.
- (9) Even though these are strict "laws, rules, ordinances" that we are required to follow...they do not save us...they, for those who believe, bring us assurance of faith as we are obedient to God's Word....They law shows us our sinfulness...and reveals God's holiness...not just His standard for holiness...but His actual holiness.
- g. What is the point(s) of the story recounted to Moses in vss. 10-12?
- (7) **God and His holiness which can be defined by His Name- Yahweh- is not to be taken for granted at any time.**
- (8) Blasphemer means that he openly and mockingly broke the 3rd Commandment....and the cursing was not becoming of an Israelite devoted to the LORD.
- (9) In the midst of all of God telling the people and the priests that He will be treated as holy comes this story of this young man of mixed heritage blaspheming the name of the LORD and cursing...things that take away from God's holiness and the holiness of His people.
- (10) Even though this sin had been going on in the midst of the camp of Israel...God was still showing His mercy towards His people by continuing to give His law of holiness to His people.
- (11) Even though this man seems to designated the way he is showing that neither of his parents would have taught him about the LORD...since Egyptians were pagans for the most part and Danites will have trouble with idolatry... there was no mob justice incurred here.
- (12) The people had begun to understand that God is the supreme judge and that they must come to Him...the HOLY One...who alone can meter out truth justice at this time. They set the blasphemer aside to await God's judgment... *"till the will of the LORD should be clear to them."*
- (13) They had not yet arrived into the Promised Land so They naturally would seek the Lord's Face through Moses on such matters.
- (14) While He will judge the blasphemer and curser He will not judge the whole of the peoples.
- h. What is the point of such a harsh punishment in verses 13-16?
- (6) The LORD heard and gave the directive that the people were waiting for obediently.
- (7) Vs. 14 is interesting... *"Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him."*
- He had to be separated from the congregation physically...the sentence would not be in the midst of God's holy people.
 - Now, where have you heard the next statement before? **Just before the bull or the ram or birds were sacrificed.**
 - What was the reason to place your hand on the head of your sacrifice just before cutting its throat? **To transfer their sins to the object to be sacrificed.**

- What do these people have to be sinful about? **They were ridding themselves symbolically of the guilt they had by just hearing the man take the Name of the LORD in vain.**
 - **When the sin is a public one that sin hangs on all corporately until that sinful behavior is dealt with.**
 - **And in this case, the total judgment was the death penalty...for taking the LORD's name in vain and cursing was tantamount to a capital offense.**
 - How is it that God could demand such a penalty simply for misusing His name? **He is God soooo...He and His name is transcendent... Blaspheming the Name is equal to heaping scorn and derision on the God who made you...and in the case of Israel on the God who had delivered you... therefore, according to God it deserved the death penalty.**
 - **One last thing...everyone sojourner and native is subject to this judgment...so everyone bears this together just by their presence because it would have been impossible for so many people to actually stone this man.**
- (8) Vs. 15-16- makes it clear that anyone who does this sin bears the responsibility and accountability for it on themselves.**
- (9) 4 times the death penalty is stated in one way or another for emphasis here...**
- (10) The whole congregation must stone him! Since this is a sin that will affect the whole.**

Lessons from Leviticus
May 13, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

C. Chapter 24:17-22

1. Why the extra but not new information about capital punishment in vss. 17-22?

a. **Reiterates the importance of life...but especially the sanctity of human life!**

b. **As humans we forget...God repeats to communicate importance.**

c. **The people are wondering what they should do ...**

d. **He reiterates His law that He had previously given to them because,**

(1) **Maybe, it wasn't being taught correctly or...**

(2) **They had not yet entered into the Promised Land so they may have felt they didn't have the authority or freedom yet. And even when they do...**

- **They still should seek the Lord before carrying out any final judgment...**

- **Just as in church discipline today...cases are not so clear cut that a judgment can be made without being in much prayer about the case...for our own need to seek forgiveness for our own sinfulness and for the forgiveness of the accused.**

(3) **One might say...this was only one case! But is it really?....The Bible seems often to point out a particular sin or sinful action to highlight that this one sin is a representative case of other cases.**

e. **Vs. 17 and 18 stand to tell us that God and by extension, we, should value human life as more precious than animal life (see also vs.**

21)...but even so if we kill someone's animal we must make restitution.... *"...make it good"*... as in the case of killing one of his livestock we are to give a replacement of equal or better value.

f. **These rules apply to all people who claim the name of God...sojourner and native born. Equal justice for all under the law.**

2. How do we see God's holiness in this?

a. **He sets a standard and reiterates it.**

b. **He shows His authority.**

c. **He also shows His grace in this...His righteousness...His faithfulness...His mercy.**

D. Chapter 25: 1-22

1. Now generally speaking; what are we supposed to do with all of this Levitical Code that doesn't pertain to us?

a. **On one hand it has passed away...the ceremonial law is no longer binding upon us.**

b. **Christ did away with them on the Cross...so they are no longer binding on us as they were them.**

c. **But on the other hand, there are principles for us to glean (pun intended).**

2. Looking at these verses, what are some of the principles that God wants us to learn here?

a. **Principle #1- Everything comes from God and as such belongs to Him.**
Vs. 2.

(1) Just like parents: God provides for His children.

- **As His children we are taught how to deal with the things of the Lord.**
- **Since they are a gift we are expected to treat them as they were meant to be treated.**
- **And since they were a gift it should be incumbent upon us to treat such gifts with a particular respect. Someone else sacrificed that we might have it.**

(2) In Exodus, God had promised to give His people a land flowing with milk and honey...and He did. A land that was not their own...it was a land that when they entered it belonged to someone else.

- **They were never to forget...God gave them the land...they had not earned it or deserved it. It came from God's hand as a gift to them.**
- **That it is still His land. It was vital for these people to know that they are only tenants on God's land...hence all the parables and images of vineyards and crops.**
- **Given all of this He can say when it is to rest...just like He does here.**
- **They/ we are only stewards of God's things...to work and keep them just as Adam was commanded in the garden.**

b. **Principle #2- Stewardship is still to be maintained today by us. See vs. 3-4, 18-22.**

(1) Everything we have we need to remember that God has given it to us and we are to hold it in trust for we will have to give an account for God's things...(remember the parable of the Talents)...

(2) When we think of "holding something in trust" what are we talking about?

- **Fiduciary trust...manage monies and assets that are not your own in the way that that person would manage their own funds...not what we might do...but what they would do.**
- **A person's representative...representing them...not ourselves.**
- ***"...working and keeping"* the garden...God's things as He would...not as we would. Where is God's garden? Wherever and with whomever He places in the presence of. We are to be the kind of stewards of what God has given us always seeking to return whatever He has given back; better or with more.**

(3) What are some of those things we are to hold in trust for God?

- **Our time**
- **God's Word**
- **Our salvation**
- **Our homes- our children...our spouses.**
- **Our livelihoods/jobs...our resources..."waste not, want not".**

- **Our integrity- defined as a righteous man...to be truly a person of integrity we must be imputed with Christ's righteousness...for outside of that we will not and cannot be truly people of integrity as the Bible defines integrity...see Proverbs.**
- **Our environment**
- **Even things like our government**
- **For none of this is really ours...it is all God's and we are to "work and Keep" it as He has commanded us...even as He would not as we would.**

Lessons from Leviticus
May 20, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review- Chapter 25: 1-4, 18-22

3. Now generally speaking; what are we supposed to do with all of this Levitical Code that doesn't pertain to us?

- d. On one hand it has passed away...the ceremonial law is no longer binding upon us.**
- e. Christ did away with them on the Cross...so they are no longer binding on us as they were them.**
- f. But on the other hand, there are principles for us to glean (pun intended).**

4. Looking at these verses, what are some of the principles that God wants us to learn here?

c. Principle #1- Everything comes from God and as such belongs to Him. Vs. 2.

(3) Just like parents: God provides for His children.

- As His children we are taught how to deal with the things of the Lord.**
- Since they are a gift we are expected to treat them as they were meant to be treated.**
- And since they were a gift it should be incumbent upon us to treat such gifts with a particular respect. Someone else sacrificed that we might have it.**

(4) In Exodus, God had promised to give His people a land flowing with milk and honey...and He did. A land that was not their own...it was a land that when they entered it belonged to someone else.

- They were never to forget...God gave them the land...they had not earned it or deserved it. It came from God's hand as a gift to them.**
- That it is still His land. It was vital for these people to know that they are only tenants on God's land...hence all the parables and images of vineyards and crops.**
- Given all of this He can say when it is to rest...just like He does here.**
- They/ we are only stewards of God's things...to work and keep them just as Adam was commanded in the garden.**

d. Principle #2- Stewardship is still to be maintained today by us. See vs. 3-4, 18-22.

(4) Everything we have we need to remember that God has given it to us and we are to hold it in trust for we will have to give an account for God's things... (Remember the parable of the Talents)...

(5) When we think of “holding something in trust” what are we talking about?

- **Fiduciary trust...manage monies and assets that are not your own in the way that that person would manage their own funds...not what we might do...but what they would do.**
- **A person’s representative...representing them...not ourselves.**
- **“...working and keeping” the garden...God’s things as He would ...not as we would. Where is God’s garden? Wherever and with whomever He places in the presence of. We are to be the kind of stewards of what God has given us always seeking to return whatever He has given back; better or with more.**

(6) What are some of those things we are to hold in trust for God?

- **Our time**
- **God’s Word**
- **Our salvation**
- **Our bodies- Rom. 12;1**
- **Our homes- our children...our spouses.**
- **Our livelihoods/jobs... our resources...”waste not, want not”.**
- **Our integrity- defined as a righteous man...to be truly a person of integrity we must be imputed with Christ’s righteousness...for outside of that we will not and cannot be truly people of integrity as the Bible defines integrity...see Proverbs.**
- **Our environment**
- **Even things like our government**
- **For none of this is really ours...it is all God’s and we are to “work and Keep” it as He has commanded us...even as He would not as we would.**

C. Looking at the rest of these verses, what are some of the principles that God wants us to learn here?

1. Principle #3- We are to be dependent upon God for our needs and wants.

See 5-6, 18-22. How is this principle seen in this text?

a. In how they will eat in the 7th year...God will provide for them.

(1) Whatever spontaneously grows in that 7th year or the 50th year they can eat...and

(2) Obviously God is expecting there will be much for He delights in showering His people with great blessings when we are obedient.

b. He even says that if they obey Him He will give them even more abundant crops the year before this Sabbath year and the Jubilee year.

c. But this is most “unnatural” for us...because what is “natural” is to do for ourselves...and not to believe that God would be able to do what He says. You know that is true because you were probably wondering how the people were going to eat in that Sabbath year or the Jubilee year that we read about.

d. We are to work hard for 6 years...49 years...with integrity and faith...just like we are to work hard for 6 days before we rest for our Sabbath.

e. They knew how this worked...they had experienced God’s abundant care in the wilderness with the manna and the quail.

2. **Principle #4- We are to share with our neighbors...hospitality and generosity is to be exhibited.**
 - a. During the 6 years they were farming the land they were free to use it well, store up your grain, sell your product, barter with it, pretty much whatever you wanted as long as it was ethical and right.
 - b. But in the 7th year they couldn't do any of that...because in that the 7th and 50th year everyone was allowed glean off the countryside...cross familial lines to glean from the resting land. Everyone will share everything that God has given to them...God's command.
 - c. The early Christians looked out for one another...holding everything in common...if someone needed something and you had it you could share with your brothers and sisters in need. This is not about putting your family in jeopardy but sharing balancing things out to the good of everyone.
 - d. The mandate we see in Scripture is to take care of the family...then brothers and sisters in Christ who are also family and then reach out to those who may or may not be family...this is an expectation.
3. **Principle #5- That this life is NOT all there is...not the final resting place.**
 - a. Every 7th and 50th year there will be no work done in the land to give it rest but also to help them remember that this land was once NOT their land...and it is still NOT their land...it is God's. He calls the shots and makes the rules.
 - b. This land represented something bigger.
 - c. This land was just a taste of the last Promised land where rest doesn't have to be "engineered" by God...it simply always will be.
 - d. See Hebrews 4:8!- The Sabbath, the Sabbath year and the Jubilee pointed forward and were ways that God reminded the children of Israel that this life is NOT all there is...don't get too comfortable with what you think is yours...
 - e. Malcom Muggeridge once said- *"The only ultimate tragedy is that man makes this earth his home."*
 - f. This is something we need to remember: No matter how "rich" or "slim" God's blessings are in this life...this life is not all there is...and we need to be looking forward to the next life that God promised.
 - g. Leviticus 25:1-22, is here to remind us today that what we have right now is not the end of the story or our journey...we are just pilgrims in this life and we are not to make it our home.

D. Leviticus 25:23-28

1. What was the point of these verses for them?
 - a. From the Reformation study Bible- *"Although God gave Israel the land as one of His good gifts to be enjoyed (Deut. 6:10-12; 8:10-13), He still retained final ownership and so might terminate the "lease" should the people prove to be undesirable tenants. They did not possess the land as an inalienable right...(they were stewards...to "hold it in trust") but within the structures of a covenantal relationship with God. The land, then, was not private property to be bought and sold. It symbolized life with God....His provision...His abundance in obedience...His to do with whatever He chose."*

- b. He provided a home for His people ...and in the law of the time... “the spoils” went to the victor...and God was the victor! And He was the original owner as well.**
 - c. The idea was that the land would be handed down from one generation of the same family to the next generation...and they were under the same “obligation” to keep the land in trust...to be good stewards of the land...just as the forefathers vowed to do as well...because the land is God!**
 - d. God is stressing that everything they have is His and He has made them stewards of what is His...because he is also stressing that this is not our final home...a temporary home as we await for our true home that Jesus has gone to get ready for us. John 14:1-3.**
 - e. Ultimately through a kinsmen redeemer or God’s decrees... at the Jubilee... the land reverts back to the family...so it stays where it is supposed to.**
2. What is the principle(s) that we can derive from this teaching?
- a. Family is ultimate...we should be aware of our family...their needs and failures and successes...family= immediate and extended, like our church family.**
 - b. Everything we have as well...comes from God.**
 - c. We are God’s stewards to “hold it in trust” what He calls on us to care for until He comes again. And there will be consequences both good and bad in how we steward God’s stuff.**
 - d. We are pilgrims and sojourners in this land...looking forward to a “better city”... when Christ returns.**
 - e. The kinsmen redeemer and Christ fulfill a similar function.**

Lessons from Leviticus
May 27, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What was the point of Leviticus 25:23-28 for them?

- f. From the Reformation study Bible- *“Although God gave Israel the land as one of His good gifts to be enjoyed (Deut. 6:10-12; 8:10-13), He still retained final ownership and so might terminate the “lease” should the people prove to be undesirable tenants. They did not possess the land as an inalienable right...(they were stewards...to “hold it in trust”) but within the structures of a covenantal relationship with God. “***
- g. He provided a home for His people ...and in the law of the time... “the spoils” went to the victor...and God was the victor! And He was the original owner as well.**
- h. The idea was that the land would be handed down from one generation of the same family to the next generation...and they were under the same “obligation” to keep the land in trust...to be good stewards of the land...just as the forefathers vowed to do as well...because the land is God!**
- i. God is stressing that everything they have is His and He has made them stewards of what is His...because He is also stressing that this is not our final home...a temporary home as we await for our true home that Jesus has gone to get ready for us. John 14:1-3.**
- j. Ultimately through a kinsmen redeemer or God’s decrees... at the Jubilee... the land reverts back to the family...so it stays where it is supposed to.**

2. What is the principle(s) that we can derive from this teaching?

- f. Family is ultimate...we should be aware of our family...their needs and failures and successes...family= immediate and extended, like our church family.**
- g. Everything we have as well...comes from God.**
- h. We are God’s stewards to “hold it in trust” what He calls on us to care for until He comes again. And there will be consequences both good and bad in how we steward God’s stuff.**
- i. We are pilgrims and sojourners in this land...looking forward to a “better city”... when Christ returns.**
- j. The kinsmen redeemer and Christ fulfills a similar function .**
- k. We are to respond to God’s commands with the intention of carrying them out.**

C. Leviticus 25: 29-34

1. Again, what was the point(s) of these commands for them?

- a. We will always have a home...**
- b. Laws concerning living in the city where all you had was a home and maybe some building...but not land as in the first.**

- (1) These were possibly put in place for the stranger and sojourner (non-blood Israelites). The Sojourner and the stranger especially could not purchase land in Palestine that would be “theirs”...for whatever land they purchased would automatically revert back to its Jewish owner at the Jubilee.
 - (2) But also for those Israelites who, for whatever reason, might give up their family inheritances...
 - c. In fact, the laws above do not apply to homes in walled cities.
 - d. The Levites have special dispensation since what they had been given was theirs into perpetuity by God's command.
 - (1) It was for the interest of the people that the Levites be taken care of well and not be treated or the things they have been given treated with dishonor.
 - (2) Actually, their fields were not to be sold at all (Num. 35:2-5)... so if they are sold they automatically can be redeemed back at any time or in the year of Jubilee.
2. What is the principle(s) that we can derive from this teaching?
- a. Just like today...there is a grace period after selling a house...though ours is a hold lot shorter in time.
 - b. Redemption is real as it keeps getting repeated for emphasis and reminder...
 - c. We are to treat everyone with the integrity of the Lord. There is a right way and a wrong way to treat everyone...once again more “black and white” truth... God's truth is plain...clear...easy to understand concerning how we are to care for one another.
 - d. We are to treat God's servant with special grace.

Lessons from Leviticus
June 3, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Continue in chapter 25:35-55

1. Again... what was the point(s) of these commands for them in verses 35-43?

a. Speaks clearly about how they were to treat their immediate family...vs. 35-38.

(1) See also Malachi 2:10

(2) Treat one another with “kindness”- God defined kindness.

(3) “if your brother cannot maintain himself”- “if your brother’s hand fails”- When he has done all that he can do and just can’t get ahead of whatever ...debt, physical illness, Etc....then we must step in in any way we can.

(4) The expectation is that they will continue to work at overcoming their dilemma.

b. But also...how they were supposed to treat their fellow countrymen and women...like the brothers that they are...(or cousins). Vs. 39-43.

(1) Generosity is to be shown to those who are willing to work...compassion and kindness to those who are incapable of working.

(2) These folks are capable of working but just can’t get ahead so they must be help...with a hand up not just a handout.

(3) NT truth... Those who won’t work, don’t eat...(paraphrase)

(4) At no time were Israelites to consider other Israelites as slaves for themselves...or others. They were to take care of one another as family...even if that family (extended at best) owed you money or they couldn’t pay their debts...you made a way for them to do so.

(5) And even if they don’t pay it back...in the Jubilee year everyone...of the land... Israelites by birth... get their debt done away with and they get to start over. See also Deut. 15:12-15.

(6) God’s generosity is also to be held in trust by God’s people so we are to emulate His generosity...first to our immediate family and then our extended family from the tribe and clan. The “big idea” is that if God cares for the Levites, and if God cares for the poor, and if everything belongs to God, then God’s people should be compassionate and generous in their care of the poor and destitute. See Prov. 19:17

(7) The Bible constantly reminds us of our duty toward to “poor” among us. This word for poor in both the Hebrew and Greek stresses “abject poverty”...it is not the struggling to make ends meet kind of poor...this is a person who is completely destitute and helpless to do anything about it...

- **Think the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. Jesus describes Lazarus as a “poor man”= he was laid at the gate because he was an incurable cripple and was absolutely helpless to do anything about his situation. His desire was to be fed by the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table...**

■ **Interesting...he wasn’t asking for much...this was his only desire according to Jesus.**

■ He wasn't asking for a redistribution of wealth...he was only desiring enough to barely live.

- Also the parable of the Great Banquet... Jesus says, *"... invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."* We are to give with no desire for repayment....this is generosity...God' gives to us knowing we have nothing to give in return that can add to Him in anyway... but He gives abundantly.

(8) Prov. 14:31

(9) Deut. 15:9-11

(10) This is more like indentured servanthood (working off a debt)...instead of slavery in the full force of the word...for Israelites were not allowed to "look down upon or to rule over their brothers and sisters...(cousins)".

c. vs. 44-46 specifically. What do we see here concerning slavery?

(1) Slaves could be from plunder, purchased and bequeathed as property by Israel from the surrounding nations...

(2) Even from the sojourners in their midst they could buy and sell slaves....

(3) As offensive as this idea of slavery is let's consider a couple of things:

- The alternative for these people was immediate death since God had decreed that many other peoples were to be "devoted" to Him...people men, women and children...along with all their livestock and cities.
- This does NOT fit into our sensitivities of this day and age...but God's purposes of judgment just like His purposes in blessing had many layers.
- The words used communicate something we don't like to think about either...vs. 46, *"You may bequeath them to your sons after you to inherit as a possession forever."* This means in so many words that these slaves must be treated in such a way that they CAN be passed on to your progeny.
- They are still "image-bearers" of God even though this was their punishment for being pagans...so they must still be treated well...while they have no rights among the people they are to be cared for accordingly.

(4) One last thing: What was the purpose for this slavery? At least 2 fold.

- As judgment for their sinfulness...and yet they still lived so we see God's grace toward them.
- As a continual way of making His people holy. Treating these people well would move God's people on in their pursuit of holiness...living the way God commands...doing His will...even in this... would glorify God.

Lessons from Leviticus
June 10, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What was the purpose for this slavery in vss. 44-46? (The church today needs to really know the difference between the slave trade from our history and God's law pertaining to slavery):

a. One of the purposes...and perhaps the best reason is that it is a continual way of making His people holy.

(1) Treating these people well would move God's people on in their pursuit of holiness...living the way God commands...doing His will...even in this... would glorify God.

(2) The people of Israel were to treat their slave(s) with the same dignity that they were to treat one another...as all humans are made in God's image.

(3) There could be no forced labor or slavery in Israel. Mistreatment could bring about the death penalty for God's people.

b. Because of sin, like divorce, slavery was allowed out of necessity because of the socioeconomic situations often found in OT times.

(1) Because circumstances were such that the laws requiring care for the poor were not enough, because of sin, slavery was allowed to enable people to be cared for.

(2) Rather than condemning slavery as a practice God strictly regulates how it is to be carried out.

(3) In ancient agrarian societies, it was often extremely difficult to provide for oneself and one's family. Many slaves in Old Testament Israel had sold themselves to prevent starvation; others had been sold by their family so the family wouldn't starve.

c. As judgment for their sinfulness...and yet they still lived so we see God's grace toward them.

d. When making war against a city, Israel was to first extend an offer of peace, in which the city's inhabitants could voluntarily bind themselves over as slaves to Israel.

(1) There were only 2 options...life or death. Life if they chose the offer of peace...and then voluntarily into slavery/servanthood or death.

- **This is not that much different than how God looks at His own.**
- **We all deserve death by His hand but through His Son He gives life to His chosen children. We are saved from God the Father's justice by God's the Son's taking the justice we deserve upon Himself and granting us mercy.**

(2) This was more like serfdom than slavery.

(3) Think High Middle Ages feudal system- serf/peasant=

- **serfs occupied a parcel of land and were required to work that land for the "lord" or king of that territory.**
- **They were "entitled" to protection, justice and the right to cultivate certain fields within the "lord's" territory.**
- **In fact the "lord's" were legally bound to care for their serfs/peasants as long as the serfs kept up their end of the "bargain".**

- e. Also, there seems to be nothing in the Old Testament Law that prohibits an Israelite slave from running away. Slavery was advantageous for the poor, and, apparently, if they thought they could do better elsewhere, they could leave.
 - f. Interestingly...to the regret of our English versions of the Bible: at this time; The Hebrew language had no vocabulary of slavery, only of servanthood....sooo... servanthood existed in Israel precisely because poverty existed: no poverty, no servants in Israel. And if servants lived in Israel, this was voluntary (typically poverty-induced) – not forced.
 - g. Slavery as we know it would not have existed had people followed the provisions of God's Law. This breakdown comes from an article at Monergism.com.
 - (1) Anti-Harm Laws:(Exodus 21:26,27).
 - If a servant/slave was injure red they could be released and set free...even if it was an accident.
 - God did not allow physical abuse of servants. If a “master’s” disciplining of his servant resulted in immediate death, that “master” was to be put to death for murder (Exodus 21:20) –
 - The Mosaic Law, however, held masters to legal account for their treatment of their own servants – not simply another person’s servants. Sources say, - *“No other ancient near Eastern law has been found that holds a master to account for the treatment of his own slaves”.*
 - (2) Anti-Kidnapping Laws: Exodus 21:16; cp. Deuteronomy 24:7
 - Another unique feature of the Mosaic Law is its condemnation of kidnapping a person to sell as a slave – an act punishable by death .
 - Kidnapping, of course, is how slavery of Africans could get off the ground worldwide.
 - (3) Anti-Return Laws: Deuteronomy 23:15,16
 - Israel was required to offer safe harbor (asylum)to foreign runaway slaves.
 - Sources state that the otherwise universal law regarding runaway slaves was that they must be sent back, with severe penalties for those who failed to comply...but Israel was to offer safe harbor first...no matter the consequences."
 - h. So, it was a capital crime...death penalty... for slave trader and slave purchaser...in the fashion that we think of today.
 - i. In the end, it would be historically inaccurate and dishonest to attempt to equate the African slave trade to the forms of slavery and servanthood we hear about in the Bible.
2. What points are being made for them in verses 47-55?
- a. It seems as though it was understood that if an Israelite was so low that he had to sell himself to a sojourner that when it was possible a kinsmen-redeemer would step forward to purchase their brother, nephew, cousin, clans man....from them.
 - b. But they might be redeemed by a kinsmen- redeemer.
 - c. Or...on the off chance that he would be able to redeem himself.

- d. If they are purchased by a kinsmen –redeemer then when Jubilee comes they will be set free.**
3. What are some of the things that God has stressed so far in chapter 25:1-55 that are still true for us today?
- a. Everything comes from God and as such everything belongs to Him.**
 - b. We are dependent upon God for all that we have.**
 - c. God has given to His people His things for us to steward and to hold in trust for Him acting as His agent for how He would do things.**
 - d. This life is not all there is...not our final home.**
 - e. We are to share with and care for the poor ...family and neighbors. In fact, our faith is revealed in how well we take care of the poor.**
 - f. We are to treat everyone with integrity...we are God's representatives.**
 - g. So... These passages stress the privilege of being God's people in contrast to those who aren't. –**
 - h. But the care of even the slaves has been clearly laid out in Ex. 21-24 and Lev. 17-18. This principle is repeated several times in the OT.**
4. Why is God so insistent that this law to be kept?
- a. God's people are God's people. We are ONLY GOD'S SERVANTS- vs. 55...bond slaves from the NT...so we do not have the right NOT to keep His law.**
 - b. God's people cannot permanently belong to another master. Jesus said in extending this truth... *"No man can serve 2 masters."* (Matt. 6:24) And Paul speaking to freed slaves encourages them not to become slaves again, that they might freely serve their true Master. (see Philemon)**

Lessons from Leviticus
June 17, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

5. What are some of the things that God has stressed so far in chapter 25:1-55 that are still true for us today?
 - i. **Everything comes from God and as such everything belongs to Him.**
 - j. **We are dependent upon God for all that we have.**
 - k. **God has given to His people His things for us to steward and to hold in trust for Him acting as His agent for how He would do things.**
 - l. **This life is not all there is...not our final home.**
 - m. **We are to share with and care for the poor ...family and neighbors. In fact, our faith is revealed in how well we take care of the poor.**
 - n. **We are to treat everyone with integrity...we are God's representatives.**
 - o. **So... These passages stress the privilege of being God's people in contrast to those who aren't. –**
 - p. **But the care of even the slaves has been clearly laid out in Ex. 21-24 and Lev. 17-18. This principle is repeated several times in the OT.**
6. Why is God so insistent that this law to be kept?
 - c. **God's people are God's people. We are ONLY GOD'S SERVANTS- vs. 55...bond slaves from the NT...so we do not have the right NOT to keep His law.**
 - d. **We must keep the Law as believer's ...and as such then we receive benefits of keeping the Law...benefits of assurance, comfort, hope and the continual benefit of God's presence.**
 - e. **God's people cannot permanently belong to another master. Jesus said in extending this truth... *"No man can serve 2 masters."* (Matt. 6:24) And Paul speaking to freed slaves encourages them not to become slaves again, that they might freely serve their true Master. (see Philemon)**

C. Leviticus 26:1-13

1. Which specific Commandments are in the mind of God here in verses 1-2?
 - a. **1, 2 and 4, specifically.**
 - b. Why does God make such a "big deal" about making idols and idol worship, here and all throughout Scripture?
 - (1) **There was no sin more provoking to God and no sin that His people were more prone to....which after they were involved brought only God's wrath down on them in the form of exile...**
 - **the Northern Kingdom after they made the two golden calves...**
 - **the Southern Kingdom with all the pagans high places and Asherah poles and such.**
 - **The sin of idolatry is the one sin above all else that the Prophets of God rebuke the people for...since all other sins come from this...even more than their profaning the Sabbath.**
 - (2) **He is a righteously jealous God...What is He jealous for?**
 - **Most of the time we answer this question with God's desire to protect His people from the prevailing sins...but while that is a component of this it is not the main idea.**

- When thinking of this we know it is hard for us to fathom a jealous God because jealousy is so destructive in men and women.
 - Our God is not jealous or envious as we understand the sin of jealousy because He has no needs...nothing to be jealous or envious of.
 - But, at the same time, knowing God is good and righteous and faithful...our redeemed seeks a positive understanding, so with our limitations the first thing we come upon is the righteous jealousy of a husband or a wife for the sake of the good of their other loved ones. A jealousy that seeks to protect them from unrighteous activity, people= influences for the sake of the family.
 - But...all this does is show our limitedness in understanding God's nature...proving once again that He is God and we are not.
 - For what He is truly jealous of is His Holy Name...
 - Exodus 20:5, 34:10-16; Deut. 4:24, 5:9 *"... (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God), ..."* The literal translation of the Hebrew reads something like... *"Because Yahweh is jealous of His name, He is a jealous God."* The first time Moses went up Mt. Sinai to get the Commandments God said then when talking about the 2nd Commandment, *"You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God..."*
 - He reveals His own passion for His holy name...
 - He seeks His own glory...through His creation...through His elect...and so He is jealous...righteously jealous of those things that leads us into temptation.
 - And this is seen in His zeal for the devotion of His people with whom He has covenanted with...and He will not have His people worship, serve or bow down before anything that is not Him. Our God is possessive of the worship and service that belongs to Him alone
- (3) God ALONE is God...He ALONE deserve to be worshiped! To represent Him as a being/image made by hands takes away from His being infinitely Spirit.
- (4) He reminds us that when we do we are breaking every commandment and the covenant that He set up for our redemption and for us to receive His blessings.
- (5) It reveals our heart...that we do not love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our might...which is the greatest commandment...and it then becomes the greatest sin when we do not do this...because not to love God this way means that something or someone else has taken His place and as such we deserve God's divine wrath.
- (6) Jesus alone is the true image of God ... Hebrews 1:1-3. We are made in God's image...but Christ alone is His exact image.

2. What blessings do we see for those who walk in His Way in verses 3-13?
 - a. **Rains in season which will enable the land to yield its “fruit.” And t will be in an overabundance ...vs. 3-5.**
 - b. **He will give peace/shalom in the land ...vs. 6-8**
 - (1) The people will be able to rest unafraid...**
 - (2) Economy will thrive**
 - (3) Be able to worship freely**
 - (4) Wild animals will even be abated towards the people...**
 - (5) There will be no war.**
 - (6) And if war should arise God will give the decisive victory.**

Lessons from Leviticus
June 24, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review- Leviticus 26:1-2

1. Which specific Commandments are in the mind of God here in verses 1-2? **1, 2 and 4, specifically.**
2. Why does God make such a “big deal” about making idols and idol worship, here and all throughout Scripture?
 - a. **There was no sin more provoking to God and no sin that His people were more prone to....which after they were involved brought only God’s wrath down on them in the form of exile...**
 - b. **He is a righteously jealous God.**
 - c. **God ALONE is God...He ALONE deserve to be worshiped!**
 - d. **It reveals our heart...that we do not love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our might...which is the greatest commandment...and it then becomes the greatest sin when we do not do this...because not to love God this way means that something or someone else has taken His place and as such we deserve God’s divine wrath.**
 - e. **Jesus alone is the true image of God ... Hebrews 1:1-3. We are made in God’s image...but Christ alone is His exact image.**

C. Leviticus 26:3-13

3. What blessings do we see for those who walk in His Way in verses 3-13?
 - c. **Rains in season which will enable the land to yield its “fruit.” And it will be in an overabundance ...vs. 3-5.**
 - d. **He will give peace/shalom in the land ...vs. 6-8**
 - (7) **The people will be able to rest unafraid...**
 - (8) **Economy will thrive**
 - (9) **Be able to worship freely**
 - (10) **Wild animals will even be abated towards the people...**
 - (11) **There will be no war.**
 - (12) **And if war should arise God will give the decisive victory.**
 - (13) **Even with all this “peace” there is still potential for conflict ...because conflict is essential for us to depend upon God.**
 - e. **God’s covenant will be on display- vs. 9-13**
 - (1) **It will be evident that God’s people are His people.**
 - (2) **They will be assured of His presence.**
 - (3) **Numbers 6:24-27**
 - (4) **He will multiply them on the earth...confirming His covenant with them to make their number as much as the sand on the sea shore.**
 - (5) **There will be so much abundance that they will have to make room for the old...but the old will NOT be wasted. See Malachi 3:10.**
 - (6) **His covenant promise confirmed...vs. 11-13**
 - **If you question any of my resolve on these blessings remember I brought/delivered you out of Egypt**
 - **...And put them in a state of relative ease on their way...**
 - **...to the Promised Land that He is giving to them.**

(7) He has broken the bondage to slavery so that they might walk as a separate nation among all the nations...vs. 13b.

- f. As God's people perform their side of the covenant God will not fail to do His.**
4. What are some of the dynamic equivalents of blessings for us today?
- a. God's Covenant was confirmed in Christ's coming, dying, resurrecting and ascending to the right hand of the Father in heaven.**
 - b. John 14:15, 23-24**
 - c. John 15:16- fruitfulness in Christ.**
 - d. Rev. 2:1...God through Christ walking among His people.**
 - e. In Christ...God has purchased us...redeemed us from our bondage to sin so that we can be His people forever.**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 1, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review- Lev. 26:3-13

1. What were some of the blessings God pointed out to Moses to point out to His people when they walk in His statutes and observe and did His commandments?
2. What were some of the dynamic equivalents of these very specific blessing for us today?

C. Leviticus 26:14-39

1. God had just talked about the abundant blessings that they would receive by being obedient to His covenant, but now He switches gears and sets before them the curses that would make them as miserable if they were disobedient. Look at Amos 3:1-3. What is the prophet telling the people of Israel in these verses?
 - a. **As God's chosen children they should have known better so...**
 - b. **Therefore He will punish them soonest and severest to seek to bring them to repentance or to further solidify their condemnation.**
 - c. **God told them He would do exactly what he said He would do...obedience =blessing- disobedience +curses/judgment.**
 - d. **See Hebrews 12:5-11**
2. What do verses 14-15 tell us about the people?
 - a. **Their sin is described.**
 - b. **These are not sins of ignorance.**
 - c. **These are sins that they presumptuously committed...**
 - (1) **Decided ahead of time to do...premeditated sins...**
 - (2) **Sins that they obstinately persist in...**
 - **As if no one is watching...**
 - **As if no one cares...**
 - **As if God is not their God.**
 - (3) **Sins that they think God will just overlook...**
 - **We are after all His children...**
 - **"God knows my heart"...in other words, He knows what I mean when I do what I do...I really love Him but I can't help myself...He will forgive because that is the way He is...**
 - d. **They show laziness in keeping God's commands...**
 - (1) **It is to be assumed that they began by being careless in:**
 - **They would not listen.**
 - **They did not do any or all of His commands...other stuff got in the way, maybe...life got busy...**
 - (2) **Their neglect turned into carelessness and carelessness turned into lack of desire to keep doing...then they go from careless to...**
 - e. **They show contempt for God's commands:**
 - (1) **They despise God's statutes.**
 - (2) **They hate God's rules...His judgments about their lifestyles...their choices to follow other gods...and such.**

- (3) They hate the authority associated with the commandments.**
 - (4) They had contempt for His corrections...His punishments.**
 - (5) It is to be noted: given all that God has said and has done for His people, even their disobedience would not have been their complete undoing if they had not been obstinate and impenitent.**
 - (6) Their contempt for God's Word needed not lead them to ruin, if they had not had a total disregard for the importance of God correction and the justice of God. They scoffed even at God's severe providence that was given to lead some to repentance.**
 - (7) And they then break God's covenant...by basically disowning Him...as the Northern Kingdom did and Judah would eventually do.**
- f. See Exodus 23:20-22; Deut. 8:19-20, 11:26-28, 28: 15-68**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 8, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review- Leviticus 26:14-15

3. What do verses 14-15 tell us about the people?

g. Their sin is described.

h. These are not sins of ignorance.

i. These are sins that they presumptuously committed...

(4) Decided ahead of time to do...premeditated sins...

(5) Sins that they obstinately persist in...

- **As if no one is watching...**

- **As if no one cares...**

- **As if God is not their God.**

(6) Sins that they think God will just overlook...

- **We are after all His children...**

- **"God knows my heart"...in other words, He knows what I mean when I do what I do...I really love Him but I can't help myself...He will forgive because that is the way He is...**

j. They show laziness in keeping God's commands...

(3) It is to be assumed that they began by being careless in:

- **They would not listen.**

- **They did not do any or all of His commands...other stuff got in the way, maybe...life got busy...**

(4) Their neglect turned into carelessness and carelessness turned into lack of desire to keep doing...then they go from careless to...

k. They show contempt for God's commands:

(8) They despise God's statutes.

(9) They hate God's rules...His judgments about their lifestyles...their choices to follow other gods...and such.

(10) They hate the authority associated with the commandments.

(11) They had contempt for His corrections...His punishments.

(12) It is to be noted: given all that God has said and has done for His people, even their disobedience would not have been their complete undoing if they had not been obstinate and impenitent.

(13) Their contempt for God's Word needed not lead them to ruin, if they had not had a total disregard for the importance of God correction and the justice of God. They scoffed even at God's severe providence that was given to lead some to repentance.

(14) And they then break God's covenant...by basically disowning Him...as the Northern Kingdom did and Judah would eventually do.

l. Though every breach of the commandment does not amount to a breach of the covenant or we would all be in a world of hurt every day...yet when men come to worship other things, such impiety leads to disowning God thus breaking the covenant of God. God made the covenant, but they break it. In fact, man is the only one who can break the covenant.

4. How did we say these texts support what we are seeing in verses 14-15 (See Exodus 23:20-22; Deut. 8:19-20, 11:26-28, 28: 15-68)?

Lessons from Leviticus
July 15, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What does God require of His people?
2. What is the point of the promises and curses? **Blessings for believers...and judgment for unbelievers...see Hebrews 12.**

C. Leviticus 26:16- 39

1. What punishment is on display for those who are disobedient to God's ways in verses 16-39?
 - a. **Visit them with panic... vs. 14-16**
 - (1) **Totally unprepared for the consequences of their behavior.**
 - (2) **This could be confusion of the worst kind...say Alzheimer's.**
 - (3) **Heart disease, diabetes, thyroid problems, respiratory issues, (COPD), asthma, drug misuse...withdraw symptoms from alcohol or drug use...social phobias**
 - (4) **This could be what happens with the lack of truth...chaos and anarchy.**
 - b. **Send a wasting disease...fever that consumes the eyes and makes a heart ache...vs. 16**
 - (1) **Malaria**
 - (2) **Glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration – over 11 million suffer from age-related macular degeneration...**
 - (3) **Diabetes which has been growing in numbers through the years...**
 - (4) **Sustained high blood pressure.**
 - (5) **Stroke, aneurysm**
 - (6) **HIV, venereal disease.**
 - (7) **Or an inability to see the right.**
 - (8) **Interesting how many people in the world wear some kind of eye aid.**
 - (9) **Heart attack ...or broken hearts with so many things falling apart.**
 - c. **The first 2 are physical and mental conditions that are indicative of this fallen world and all the conditions brought on by the Fall.**
 - d. **Will work hard to sow their seed for the next harvest...but by the time of harvest their enemy will enjoy it. Interesting...they came into the Promised Land and reaped what they did not sow...now their punishment is to sow and not reap...vs. 16**
 - e. **God's presence taken from them...no protection at all from their enemies...His presence is gone and so is their shield.... In fact, it is not just that His presence is gone by now He sees them as His enemies only deserving His wrath...vs. 17**
 - f. **7 fold punishments against the people...vs. 18, 21, 24, 28- abundant misery and judgments.**
 - (1) **Vs. 19...see the heavens and the earth will be against them**
 - ***"I will break the pride of your power..."-this is another way of saying..."I will bring you to your knees..."...or "I will break your arrogance."***

- **No rain...the heavens will not unleash rain..it will appear as iron to them**
- **rock solid and barren ground**
- **No fruit because can't cultivate.**

(2) Vs. 20-

- **Your strength shall be spent in vain- hard work... seeking to have kids to give them a land to live in.**
- **Your land will not yield increase.**
- **Your trees will not produce fruit**

(3) Vs. 22...

- **God will turn the wild beasts loose-**
- **Bereaving them of their children**
- **Destroying their livestock**
- **Make the peoples numbers few...God even uses animals to do His bidding.**
- **And making their roads deserted because no one will want to leave their homes because of the fear of the beasts.**

(4) Vs. 25...

- **the sword so he can execute judgment based upon their breaking the covenant.**
- **Pestilence in the cities**
- **They shall be delivered into the hands of their enemies**

Lessons from Leviticus
July 29, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. What is the point of the promises and curses? **Blessings for believers...and judgment for unbelievers...see Hebrews 12.**
2. Chapter 26 begins with the blessings of walking in God's ways...what is amazing about the end of the chapter in verses 40-46? **The people repent and God forgives them for the sake of His covenant...to always have a people...a remnant ... "for the sake of the elect."**

C. Leviticus 27

1. As the uninspired heading says, "Laws about Vows", these obviously were very important to God. What is this text communicating to these people concerning making vows? **See Numbers 30**
 - a. **Easiest application for the people then was: Don't make vows if you don't intend to keep them.**
 - b. **Once they are made: You better keep them for their will be severe consequences...because you being a child of God are also taking God's name in vain by not fulfilling your word.**
2. What does Jesus say about making vows?
 - a. **Matt. 5:33-37**
 - b. **Mark 7:10-12**
3. What other words does God use when talking about vows? **Dedicate...devote.** What is being communicated with each of these words?
 - a. **The serious nature of making a vow... a promise.**
 - b. **The depth of these vows...as absolute in most cases.**
 - c. **That their word needs to be their bond...as God's people they have God's reputation to uphold. He doesn't need us standing up for Him but our witness for Him among the nations demands a spotless integrity...or we bring shame upon His name.**

Lessons from Leviticus
August 5, 2018

A. Prayer

B. Review

1. Leviticus 27's uninspired title is "Laws about Vows". Vows were obviously important to God.
2. Between this text and the New Testament texts you looked at last week from Jesus's own words why does God care so much about how we believers make vows?
 - d. **The serious nature of making a vow... a promise.**
 - e. **The depth of these vows...as absolute in most cases.**
 - f. **That their word needs to be their bond...as God's people they have God's reputation to uphold. He doesn't need us standing up for Him but our witness for Him among the nations demands a spotless integrity...or we bring shame upon His name.**

C. Leviticus 27 continued:

4. How and where do we see God's grace in verses 14-25? **Where He allows for us to be redeemed from whatever it is we rashly pledged to Him.** And the point of that grace?
 - a. **See note: on whole chapter. Israelites under distress make rash vows that they wish they could take back later...and they can... (God's grace) but their rashness still cost them something for doing something so rashly.**
 - b. **When His children come to their senses...He wishes to show them grace.**
 - c. **He gives this grace linked with this discipline (extreme costliness to change their mind)...To discourage His people from making vows that they really don't intend to keep.**
 - d. **Think "foxhole"...or "on behalf of my dead mother..." prayers or vows...**
 - e. **In some cases they must change their mind...vs. 1-8...only Levites can serve the LORD in the temple...so when having made such a rash vow the person making such a vow must pay dearly.**
 - f. **Overarching principle: All things are God's!**
 - g. **Or in the case of "making a vow to give (dedicating) a home or land to the church (vs. 14-25)...and the donor wants to take it back for any reason they can (God's grace)...but he pays for that change of mind.**
5. When we look at verses 26-34, what is He teaching them about these things?
 - a. **The firstborn animal which is devoted to the Lord for sacrifice is the LORD's... no one can use them in a vow or promise of payment. It must meet God's criteria- Malachi 1:1-14**
 - b. **No one who has been found to have committed a capital crime can be redeemed...His law is upheld...His promises kept.**

- c. **The tithe is the LORD's.**
 - (1) We cannot withhold the tithe from God.- Malachi 3: 6-12**
 - (2) They had been withholding... but, interestingly... they might redeem their tithe but they will pay a steeper price than if they just gave it in the first place...God's grace to discourage...stupidity?**
 - d. **There may have been cases where the people so caught up with their desire for profit might consider this option...if the price they would receive for their crop would bring more than the cost to redeem it...**
 - e. **But then they would have also been required to give a tithe on what came in from the sale...and when they didn't do that they would be held responsible for stealing/ robbing from God who gives all that we have.**
6. So, what is it to teach us today?
- a. **We still try to push for loopholes...know this about yourself and others...and act contrary to our desire.**
 - b. **As God's people we are to speak truth no matter what. We are to be intentional with our words.**
 - c. **As God's people we are to keep the vows that we make unless otherwise providentially hindered.**
 - d. **As God's people our word is our bond... so we must not make excuses by saying...well, I never promised you anything....since I didn't use the words "I promise..." ...such things are hypocritical.**
 - e. **We must not make rash vows...that we will later wish we didn't make.**
 - f. **We must pay our tithe to God.... Give to God what is God's. We cannot hold back from God without consequences.**
 - g. **In all of these when withheld there will be consequences...when upheld we will reap the promised benefits of God.**
- D. Overview of Leviticus
1. What are some things you have learned from this book that you never knew was in there before?
 - a. **Some never saw the slavery issue explained the way the Bible defines it...and how different it is from what we know and think of slavery in our history.**
 - b. **The some sacrifices were handled by the priest and Levites and at other times God required the people to cut up their prize animal.**
 - c. **How important that Moses is in all of this...**
 2. What does all of this have to do with us today?
 3. Consider Rom. 12:1-2 a moment. Given the sacrificial background that we have from Leviticus what would this passage communicate to the people pf the Roman Church...the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers? Us today who are not bound by any of the ceremonial laws?